



*December 2025*



SCAN HERE TO JOIN EVENT



# CONSTITUTION IN CRISIS: THE HISTORY OF THE MISSING 28<sup>TH</sup> AMENDMENT

DECEMBER 13, 2025  
10 AM - 11 AM PST

PRESENTED BY  
THE ALICE PAUL CENTER FOR  
GENDER JUSTICE



**MOLLY GONZALES**  
ADVOCACY MANAGER

## *Co-President's Message... Will Be Back*

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## Public Policy:

### *Wins and Losses in the Legislature*

**By Amy Hom and Missy Maceyko, Co-chairs AAUW California Public Policy**

The 2025 legislative session has closed in California.

Kathy Van Osten, AAUW California's Legislative Advocate, summarized the session this way: "In 2025, 917 bills were sent to the Governor, of which he signed 794 bills and vetoed 123 bills. The 2025 Legislative Session was tumultuous as policymakers worked to address the impacts of ravaging urban wildfires in Los Angeles, to pass a State Budget that closed a \$12 billion deficit, and to address a multitude of impacts created by the violent upheaval of federal funding and policies that have or will decimate services for Californians, that threaten existing or future projects in the State, and that threaten our educational institutions."

With these issues in mind, AAUW California put together our 2025 Legislative Agenda, taking a support position on 26 bills, and for the first time in our recent history, taking an opposition position on 7 bills. With the blessing of the Public Policy Committee and the AAUW California Board, we were proud to advance this agenda, which confronted some of the most pressing issues that we face as a state, and a nation, around gender equity and social justice. We were also proud to take strong opposition positions this year, given the large number of bills introduced at the start of the session that were antithetical to AAUW California's values and Public Policy Priorities.

While our A-priority support bills did not fare well this session, we are happy to report that we had a great deal of success with the rest of our support-bills as well as with stopping the opposition bills from advancing.

**First, the bad news:** Our A-priority support bills were vetoed or gutted.

- **SB 771 was vetoed.** This A-priority bill, authored by Senator Henry Stern and sponsored by AAUW California, would have held social media companies liable if their algorithms aid or abet individual users who are breaking the law and intimidating or threatening others in online spaces. The Governor vetoed the bill, indicating that current civil rights laws have not been tested in the courts with respect to algorithms' complicity in hate crimes, and that until existing law is deemed insufficient by the courts, SB 771 is premature.
- **SB 418 was vetoed.** This A-priority bill, authored by Senator Caroline Menjivar, would have prohibited a health service provider from denying coverage for services based upon race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, including sexual preference or gender identity, intersex traits, and pregnancy. The Governor vetoed the bill, citing a concern that the bill's requirement to cover prescribed hormone therapy without utilization management is likely to drive up the cost of health care.

- **AB 1098 was gutted and amended.** This A-priority bill, authored by Assemblymember Mike Fong, would have prohibited a postsecondary educational institution from discriminating against a student based on their current, potential, or past pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions. According to the author's office, the bill had run into significant opposition from the public universities, and they chose not to continue to move the bill this year. Instead, the bill language was gutted and replaced with language that establishes the Office of the Interagency Council on Education within the Governor's Operations Agency. The amended bill was signed into law.

**Now, the good news:** Of our 14 support bills that made it to the Governor's desk, 11 were signed into law. Below are some important wins:

- **AB 621 - signed into law!** This B-priority bill, authored by Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, heightens penalties for companies whose platforms distribute deepfake pornography.
- **SB 669 - signed into law!** This B-priority bill, authored by Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire, authorizes up to five rural hospitals throughout the state to partner with licensed birth centers to provide perinatal services in rural communities.
- **AB 260 - signed into law!** Authored by Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, this bill protects access to medication abortion.
- **SB 627- signed into law!** Authored by Senator Scott Wiener, this bill bans law enforcement officers from wearing facial coverings during their duties. **This is the first such law enacted in the nation!**

And of the seven bills that AAUW California opposed, four have become two-year bills and three have died:

- **AB 579 is dead!** This A-priority bill, authored by Assemblymember Leticia Castillo, would have stated categorically that parents' refusal to acknowledge a child's gender identity can never be considered a form of abuse or neglect, and therefore cannot be considered in a custody dispute.
- **AB 25 is dead!** Authored by Assemblymember Carl DeMaio, this bill would have required an elections official to verify the citizenship of voters and authorized the official to require a person to provide documentation of citizenship for that purpose.
- **AB 1012 is dead!** Authored by Assemblymember Bill Essayli, this bill would have prohibited the provision of Medi-Cal to people without legal immigration status.

To see the full results of the 2025 Legislative Agenda, please go to the [Bill Tracking Report](#). The November issue of [Public Policy News](#) includes a Legislative Agenda Scorecard.

# Changemakers

## Sabrina Gonzalez Pasterski

### Theoretical Physicist

#### Researched and Written in First-Person Narrative by Phie Dai

I love flying and airplanes. I took my first flying lesson when I was 9, and I built and flew my own single-engine Cessna plane when I was just 14!



I am a proud first-generation Cuban American who took advantage of every STEM program offered by the Chicago public school system. My parents always told me I could do anything I set my mind to. My dream of studying aerospace engineering came true when I was accepted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). I graduated in three years with a perfect 5.0 GPA and became the first female valedictorian of the MIT Physics Department.

To be honest, I was kind of disappointed with aerospace engineering because most of my classmates were only interested in developing drones. I also learned that working in this industry meant spending a lot of time finding ways to navigate government red tape and working with the big personalities of a few billionaires who fund American space programs. When Jeff Bezos offered me a job at his Blue Origin aerospace company, I turned it down, and I also rejected an offer from NASA.

I came to realize that I wanted to be a theoretical physicist and decided to pursue a PhD at Harvard, focusing on black holes, gravity, and space-time research. I knew I had chosen the right path when one of my research papers was cited by Stephen Hawking! After completing my postdoctoral fellowship at Princeton, I joined The Perimeter Institute in 2021 and founded the [Celestial Holography Initiative](#). I'm leading research that aims to prove our three-dimensional universe might be like a hologram projected from a two-dimensional surface.

In 2016, I was invited by First Lady Michelle Obama to participate in her *Let Girls Learn* program. I love the idea of getting girls excited about STEM and have traveled to Cuba and Russia to promote STEM education for girls. I also created PhysicsGirl [website](#) and [YouTube channel](#) to inspire young women to study physics and follow my research.

The fun thing about physics is that I don't know what I will be working on in a couple of years or what problems I will or will not end up solving. I am excited about the future because I am confident and optimistic about what I believe I can accomplish!

## BRANCH NEWS

*Editor's Note: Due to security concerns, members' home addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses are not printed in the Twig unless permission has been explicitly granted. Check your roster for member information.*

### *Four Pivots Study Group to Meet in January*

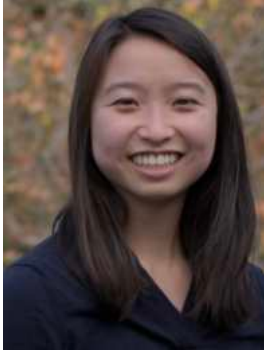
*The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves*, written by Dr. Shawn A Ginwright, asserts that we need a fundamental shift in our values—a pivot in how we think, act, work, and connect.

Learn about the second of four pivots--Connections--during AAUW-CA State President Charmen Goehring's book study group on January 15. The virtual meeting will be held from 7 to 8 pm, and you can click [here](#) to register. Everyone is welcome to attend, whether or not you read the section.

The first pivot was discussed in October's study group. The last two pivots will be discussed March 18 and May 19.

#### **New Member:**

### *Nicole Cheng*



Nicole Cheng, a transplant from the east coast, joined us at an event in October. Nicole has a bachelor of science degree in chemical and biomolecular engineering and a masters in engineering management, both from Johns Hopkins University.

In her spare time, Nicole has a passion for board games. She recently attended KublaCon in Burlingame, which is dedicated to providing a safe space where games of every imaginable kind can be played.

Nicole's first task as an AAUW member is to work with Social Media Coordinator Phie Dai to strengthen our LinkedIn presence. To this end, she requests that her contact information be limited to her

LinkedIn profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/nicolesycheng/>

### *Holiday Party This Sunday*

The annual holiday party will be held on Sunday, December 7th, and will feature finger foods and a white elephant gift exchange. Held at 3888 Artist Walk Common, Fremont, from 2:30 to 4:30 pm, guests are reminded to either bring finger foods or send \$10 by Zelle to Judy Wolf @ [bigbadwolfie@juno.com](mailto:bigbadwolfie@juno.com) or 510-468-2002.

Reservations should be made to Kimmi Tang at [ktbusiness123@gmail.com](mailto:ktbusiness123@gmail.com) or 510-585-5384.

if you want to participate in the gift exchange, bring a wrapped gift worth at least \$10 to the event.



## November Report From Your Board

From the board meeting November 7th:

**Action Items:** The final copy of the Milicent Shinn brochure was presented to the board. It is intended for the History Museum.

### President's Report (Syeda Inamdar):

- Syeda will work with the Branch and Foundation Treasurers to further discuss the way that finances should be reported.
- *Beyond the Bridge*, a documentary on homelessness and its solutions, was screened November 20 at Washington West, 2500 Mowry Ave, Fremont.

### Public Policy (Jeanne Delp):

- The public policy information is best found online (<https://www.aauw-ca.org/public-policy/>)
- A Voting Rights Case will be in the Supreme Court agenda.
- Jeanne attended a zoom presentation on *Harnessing the Power of AI for Classroom, Creativity, Change and Social Groups*.

### Program (Judy Wolf):

- One Book One Community Read event discussion of *The Coming Wave* was attended by 69. The presenter's information was more general than expected, and a second presentation, more focused on the book, is being considered.
- The holiday party is planned for December 7th from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm, at Artist Walk in Fremont.
- The Bi-branch Luncheon will be February 7th in Hayward.

**Membership (Jo Szeto):** Several new members attended the new members luncheon October 22nd at Jo's house.

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

## DEI Deconstructed

Diversity | Equity | Inclusion

### The Importance of "Belonging"

By Eileen Yap

**Diversity** opens the door. **Equity** and **Inclusion** offer a seat at the table. **Belonging** enables the person seated at the table to be seen, heard, and valued.



In psychologist Maslow's [hierarchy of needs](#), a historically groundbreaking theory on what motivates human behavior, belonging is placed in a key position. According to Maslow, belonging is the human need to feel connected and accepted. (Image above is by [Inclusivv](#).)

Advocate and educator, [Kim Samuel](#), writes in [this article](#): "Belonging isn't just a connection to other people, but also to place, power, and purpose. The experience of belonging is about connectedness through community, as well as rootedness in a place, a feeling of ownership in shared outcomes, and a sense of mission with others."

[Professor Erik W. Carter](#), whose scholarship focuses on creating inclusion for students with disabilities, offers ten elements of belonging: to be present, invited, welcomed, known, accepted, supported, cared for, befriended, needed, and loved. He suggests that it starts with ordinary gestures—"what pushes us from acquaintances to friendship": a warm greeting; an invitation to an event, coffee, a walk, or a shared meal; an offer to listen and learn.

Belonging is the [antidote to loneliness](#). Without belonging there is fear, say students in [this poignant video](#). How can we foster belonging? Explore more at our [DEI Page](#).

**DIVERSITY (Eileen Yap):** *The Four Pivots*, a zoom study book group, plans to meet January 15th, March 18th, and May 19th at 7 pm.

**STEM (Fahria Khan):** There are plans to host both Discovery Day and Dining with a Scientist next year.

**Finance (Phie Dai):** The totals in Fremont Bank are \$1407.02, checking balance, and \$7677.64, saving balance.

**Social Media (Phie Dai):**

- Phie and Charlotte Chin created a very effective 2-minute video for National's Five-Star Program.
- Phie and the IBC are planning a zoom presentation on *Constitution in Crisis* for December 13th from 10 am to 11 am.

**Foundation Report (Randy Fewel):**

- Death by Chocolate Bingo grossed \$5,026.49, with \$400 in expenses.
- The Ohlone College AAUW Club met in early October.

**Money, Money, Money:**

*Do You Have a Reserve?*

**By Judy Wolf**

Expert money managers advocate that you have at least a six-month reserve stashed away. Are you prepared for a job layoff? A long-term illness? Another government shut-down?

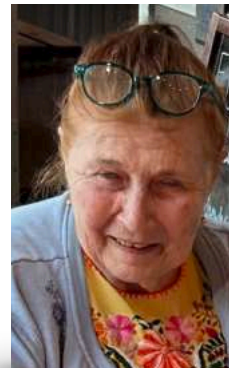
What do you need to do?

- Decide what your six month reserve should be.
- Decide how fast you want your reserve to be in place.
- Decide what amount of your income you can use to fund your reserve.
- Put that reserve income into a special account.
- Keep it there for that rainy day.

Over 42 million Americans (about 12% of the population) were in food lines during the government shutdown. These were people who did not have a reserve and depended on SNAP and other government programs to put food on their tables. A majority of air traffic controllers had not built up a reserve. Some of them were doing Uber and Lyft driving.

Do we need financial literacy programs to be taught in schools and colleges?

Something to think about!





## **Anusha's Corner:**

# *Ohlone AAUW Club Update!*

**By Anusha Dube**

*Editor's Note: Anusha Dube is a student at Ohlone College, majoring in data science.*

The Ohlone College AAUW Club was approved at the start of February. We currently have two co-presidents (one of whom is an AAUW 2024 Scholarship winner), a treasurer, a marketing director, a student voice representative, and an awards chair.

Ohlone AAUW held its first general meeting at the start of November, welcoming a handful of enthusiastic attendees eager to learn about the scholarships, leadership opportunities, and advocacy work offered by AAUW. Additionally, several student organizations, such as Girls Who Code and Society of Women Engineers, expressed excitement about collaborating on future projects. The meeting set a strong foundation for a year centered on empowerment, equity, and community engagement.

Looking ahead, the club has an idea of events in motion, including guest speaker sessions on social and gender equity issues, a film screening event (an idea brought to us by an AAUW member), donation drives to women's centers, and hands-on scholarship workshops once this year's AAUW scholarships are released in January.

Our club is open to anyone who wants to get involved or help out, whether by guest-speaking, helping with outreach, or sharing ideas to expand AAUW's presence on campus. Ohlone AAUW hopes to create a meaningful impact throughout the next year.

## **Leadership Team**

### **Board of Directors**

Co-Presidents - **Jennifer Foster and Syeda Inamdar**

Vice President - **Jo Szeto**

Secretary - **Maritza Nevarez**

Finance Officer - **Phie Dai**

Program Chair - **Judy Wolf and Kimmi Tang**

Membership Chair - **Jo Szeto**

Membership Treasurer & AAUW Fund Chair - **Jennifer Foster**

Public Policy Chair - **Jeanne Delp**

Parliamentarian - **Carolyn Hedgecock**

Diversity Chair - **Eileen Yap**

STEM Chair - **Fahria Khan**

### **Foundation for Local Scholarships**

President - **Kathy Garfinkle**

Secretary - **Randy Fewel**

Chief Financial Officer - **Bonnie Kellogg**

Programs Officer - **Sowjanya Vutukur**

Development Officer - **Judy Wolf**

### **Special Interest Group Chairs**

Afternoon Lit - **Joyce Ruiz**

Book Talk - **Margery Leonard**

Cultural Cuisine - **Judy Wolf**

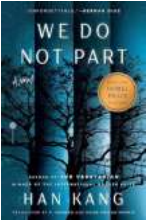



Great Decisions - **Joyce Ruiz**

One Book, One Community Read - **Margery Leonard**

Yoga for Body and Spirit - **Jo Szeto**

### **AAUW Diversity Statement**

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation on the basis of age, disability, gender, location, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

Interest Group Meetings		
Afternoon Lit	Afternoon Lit will meet December 16th at the home of Cora Assali at 2 pm. She will review <i>We Do Not Part</i> by Han Kang. Please let her know if you are attending.	
Book Talk	Book Talk Interest Group is to meet at the home of Jo Szeto on January 12th from 3 to 5 pm, when Jo will lead a discussion of <i>Earthly Remains</i> by Donna Leon.	
Cultural Cuisine	Cultural Cuisine is taking the month of December off. It will return next month.	
Great Decisions	Great Decisions will not meet in December. The new research books will be available in January, and New Year discussions begin on January 28.	
Yoga for Body and Spirit	This group meets every Monday and Thursday morning at 11:15 am at Jo Szeto's house. Lunch is included on Thursday. For more information, call Jo.	

## League of Women Voters Hosts Immigration Talk

"Issues in Immigration: Keeping Our Communities Safe" is the topic of the League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark, and Union City (LWV) Saturday, December 6th, at 10 am at Niles Discovery Church, Fremont.

Speaking will be James Woods, a retired attorney; Christopher Martinez, executive director of the East Bay Spanish Speaking Citizens' Foundation; and Alyssa Simpson, an attorney with the Alameda County Legal Immigration and Education Partnership.

The talk is one of a series titled Defending Our Democracy. The speakers will focus on what actions are being taken at the local level to assist those directly impacted.

## Important Dates

**Deadlines for articles:** 25th of the month before publication

Send items for The TWIG to Jennifer Foster at [jejenfo@yahoo.com](mailto:jejenfo@yahoo.com)

- The board of directors meets on **December 5th at 10am**. If you would like to attend a board of directors meeting but can't meet at 10 am on a Friday, write to us and let us know your schedule at [aauwfremontbranch@gmail.com](mailto:aauwfremontbranch@gmail.com).
- League of Women Voters is hosting a panel discussion on immigration **December 6th at 10 am** at Niles Discovery Church. For more information, click [here](#).
- Our annual holiday party is scheduled for **December 7th at Artist Walk in Fremont**. The party will be held from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm.
- Zoom Presentation on *The History of the Missing 28th Amendment* presented by Alice Paul Center for Gender Justice on **December 13th from 10am - 11am**.
- A discussion of the *Four Pivots* will be led by Charmen Goehring, AAUW-CA state president, on **January 15, March 18th, and May 19th**. Click [here](#) for more information.

## Support Our Members



Enjoy new and bestselling titles for all ages personally curated by Amy and her staff at Banter Bookshop in downtown Fremont! **AAUW Fremont book club titles receive a 15% discount.** Click on the photo to browse Banter's in-store events.



Katryn Bury is the author of the 'tween detective series *Drew Leclair Gets a Clue* (nominated for 3 book awards), and *Drew Leclair Crushes the Case*. Katryn's third title, *We Are Not Alone*, hit shelves October 29th.



Need a Notary?

AAUW Member Nkechi (Bridget) Uzoegwu has joined the National Notary Association and is ready to meet your notary needs.

 <h1>December 2025</h1>						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
7 HOLIDAY PARTY ARTIST WALK 2:30-4:30PM 	8 YOGA AT Jo SZETO'S @11:15AM 	9	10	11 YOGA AT Jo SZETO'S @11:15AM 	12	13  ALICE PAUL- HISTORY OF THE MISSING 28TH AMENDMENT ON ZOOM @ 10AM
14  HANUKKAH (12/14-12/22)	15 YOGA AT Jo SZETO'S @11:15AM 	16  AFTERNOON LIT @ 2PM	17	18 YOGA AT Jo SZETO'S @11:15AM 	19	20
21	22 YOGA AT Jo SZETO'S @11:15AM 	23	24  CHRISTMAS EVE	25  CHRISTMAS DAY	26  KWANZAA (12/26-1/1/26)	27
28	29 YOGA AT Jo SZETO'S @11:15AM 	30	31  NEW YEARS EVE	1/1  YOGA AT Jo SZETO'S @11:15AM 	1/2	1/3
4 YOGA AT Jo SZETO'S @11:15AM 	5	6	7	8 YOGA AT Jo SZETO'S @11:15AM 	9  BOARD MEETING @10AM AT Jo SZETO'S	10