

THE SPOKESWOMAN

<https://davis-ca.aauw.net>

Davis Branch Launches Women in Leadership Forum

By Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt, AAUW Davis Branch President

On January 30, 2025 our AAUW Davis Branch held the first AAUW Davis Speakers Forum in the Blanchard Room at the Mary L. Stephens Yolo County Library. Doors opened at 5:30 to welcome our speakers and guests and Laleh began introductions at 5:50. But before continuing, the photographer from the UC Davis Aggie interrupted to take a lovely picture of the speakers and key organizers in front of the large colorful United Nations poster of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.



Women in Leadership forum speakers. Left to right: Jolynn, Annie, Joanna, and Laleh (moderator). Photo credit: Sacha Chickering, The California Aggie

Laleh served as a warm and engaging moderator, with speakers offering thoughtful and occasionally humorous responses to her questions. All three of our presenters shared how their backgrounds and experiences led to unique pathways that have impacted their influential roles in today's world. The diverse audience (branch members, community members, and UCD students) actively participated by asking questions and appreciated the information shared by our speakers.

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February Calendar

Saturday, February 8, 9 am:
Book Group Discussion

Thursday, February 13, 7 pm:
Monthly Board Meeting via
Zoom

Wednesday, February 19, noon
to 1pm: Celebrate the 19th on
Zoom - UN Peacekeeping (see
article)

Friday, February 21: Deadline to
register for Lobby Days (see
article)

Save the Date!

Sunday, March 9, 2-4 pm: UNA
Davis International Women's
Day Program at I-House

Our first speaker, [Joanna Regulska](#), is the vice provost and dean of Global Affairs and a distinguished professor of gender, sexuality, and women's studies at the University of California, Davis (UCD). Moderator Laleh noted that UC Davis has been a leading university in visibly promoting the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) and asked why this agenda is important for UC Davis. Joanna responded by noting that the UN Sustainable Development Goals are part of UCD's commitment to solving global challenges and promotes understanding to help solve global inequities. Global Affairs at UCD strives to provide students with global learning experiences through the Provost's priority of [Global Education for All](#).

[Jolynn Shoemaker](#), our second speaker, is the Director of Global Engagements in Global Affairs at UCD. In this role, Jolynn leads the integration of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, both internationally and with the UC Davis community. She has supported numerous international initiatives for Global Affairs, including global strategic planning processes, regional engagement, and international agreements. Moderator Laleh asked Jolynn about how global SDGs could be impactful at the local level. Jolynn spoke about the Voluntary Local SDG Review that was completed with collaboration between UCD Global Affairs and the Sacramento City Council in December 2024.

Joanna and Jolynn shared valuable insights on ways to foster global connections and presented many details about how they are leading and supporting impactful change in our communities. In 2024, Joann and Jolynn co-authored the book, "[Global Goals, Global Education: Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals](#)."

Changing pace and focusing the program on a young professional and emerging leader, Estelle introduced our third speaker, [Annie Chen](#). Annie is a former UCD AAUW student organization board member and graduated in 2019 with a BS in Environmental Science and Management. Her experiences working and studying in multiple countries on human-nature interactions led her to a career path in science communication. Annie is a creator and co-owner of the Sustainable Lifestyle Brand, "[Sciencely Handmade](#)." She also works as the Science Communication Specialist for the [Tri-Valley Air Quality Climate Alliance](#). Through a cross-discipline and cross-cultural perspective gained in her career journey, Annie shared how she began converting or translating academic sciences, natural sciences, and air quality into approachable, accessible forms for the public. She underscored why accessibility and inclusivity are important for a well-rounded sustainable society. Annie's PowerPoint presentation outlined her path and passions for both science and art. She talked about how she "smuggled" science into art and art into science, which resonated with the audience.

After the program, audience members expressed their concerns and desires to create momentum to foster more opportunities for collaboration in learning and educating others about the UN Sustainable Development Goals. More small group conversations took place along these lines while audience members enjoyed savory and tasty treats. We are very thankful for the words of inspiration from our speakers as they emphasized the importance of leadership, education, and advocacy on both the local and global stage.

As thank-you gifts, Joanna and Jolynn received naturally scented candles from Annie's Sustainable Lifestyle Brand, "Sciencely Handmade." Annie received a beautiful lanyard, hand-woven by Verena Borton.

We acknowledge Shahla Farahnak for inviting the speakers, securing the meeting venue, and coordinating the program. Thanks to others who helped to make this program a success. Laleh Rastegarzadeh moderated the program; Laleh and Verena Borton set up the room and snack table; Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt provided tablecloths and brought a beautiful flower arrangement, as well as snacks and drinks; Estelle hosted Annie during her stay in Davis.



Annie describes her company's philosophy.

January Book Group Recap

By Carolyn Van Hoecke

After our December hiatus, the book group was well represented on January 11 on Zoom. Estelle Shiroma, Barbara Durst, Judy Flores, Cathy Tkach, Verena Borton, Valerie Olson, Karen Lemcke, Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt, Carolyn Van Hoecke, and Gwendolyn Kaltoft engaged in a lively discussion of Everett's novel "James," led by Cathy who had recently heard the author speak and who delighted in sharing some insights from that experience.

For the beginning of our new year, we picked a novel that is a creative retelling of the 1884 beloved but often banned book *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain. As in its source story, this new adult version also causes us to evaluate how race and class operate in a society and how social conventions may not align with what is fair, just, equitable, or even just common sense. To quote the *New York Times* "The pair's adventures on the raft as it twisted down the Mississippi River were largely, from Huck's perspective, larks. From Jim's — excuse me, James' — point of view, nearly every second is deadly serious. We recall that Jim told Huck, in Twain's novel, that he was quite done with "adventures." "

College professor and author Percival Everett has published 30 books with many winning major awards including the 2024 National Book Award for this book. His command of language is noteworthy as he weaves the web of friendly, prejudiced, cruel, and oddball characters, both familiar and newly created, into a story that starts with a well-known raft trip scenario and then expands the saga to tell how it all turns out differently.

In this version, Huck's companion Jim is educated and resourceful and has to pretend to be stupid to avoid undue attention. Because the two are separated for much of the way in this version, we get an opportunity to encounter more of James' character. A stolen pencil makes many appearances and becomes a symbol for communication at many levels, including literally life and death. Tellingly, at one point, in an effort to establish a written legacy and be recognized James adopts the last name "Faber" which is stamped on his pencil.

Our group spent time in analysis of the author's deft use of language to identify and separate the various situations and social classes. There was some discussion of the degree to which the dialects are the equivalent of code-switching. Members who grew up in multi-lingual households recalled speaking one way to some family members and another way to others. Likewise, the importance of differences in vocabulary and phrasing are even made apparent in the conversations between James and Huck. Throughout the story, it is always an issue of who is allowed to describe what to whom. The point was most fiercely made, and all readers were startled when at the end of the story, a white man is more flustered at being spoken to directly by a black man than fearful of the gun pointed at him.

We discussed the biggest surprises in this modern retelling and the consensus was the amount and cruelty of the violence. No question this is an adult's experience of slavery, not a child's discovery adventure. We considered whether this novel was written for educational content or intended primarily as a contribution to American literature and whether that was the same motive as Mark Twain had with his original. It was pointed out that "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" had a seven-year hiatus while Twain considered the commercial and sociological aspects of his story, and what differences existed in public understanding then and now.

At the end of the story, both James and Huck survive, but it is not entirely clear whether they will prosper. We ended our discussion with where we thought these characters would be 20 years later. Most guesses were that they would be settled in a free state or in Canada. To add academic fuel to your own speculation, readers are encouraged to watch the new four-hour PBS docuseries on YouTube: "[Great Migrations: A People on the Move](#)" from Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

The next book selections are:

- Saturday, February 8: "Small Things Like These" by Claire Keegan
- Saturday, March 8: "Tell Me Everything: A Novel" by Elizabeth Strout
- Sunday, April 13: "Sweet Fury" by Sash Bischoff (possible in-person meeting with author)

Post-Holiday Gathering on January 12

By Estelle Shiroma

Our annual branch gathering featuring a community non-profit organization was held on January 12 at Estelle's home. An enthusiastic group of 16 branch members and friends feasted on potluck snacks and listened intently as Tracy Fauver, Executive Director of [Davis Community Meals & Housing](#) (DCMH), spoke about the successful programs that have been implemented. These programs include: street outreach, a resource center and day shelter, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing. DCMH serves an average of 160 people per day at the Resource Center, serves about 60 free meals per week at St. Martin's church, supports residents in 160 permanent supportive affordable housing units, and provides an average of 6,250 bed nights of shelter to formerly unsheltered individuals and families each year. Photos of smiling staff and clients, along with anecdotes shared by Tracy, added a personal touch to her presentation. We were inspired by her stories about individuals and families who now have jobs and are living in permanent housing. At the end of the event, Tracy was presented with donations made by branch members. While DCMH is funded by numerous government grants, these sources of funding are not stable and they depend on community donations to fill the gaps. Tracy also emphasized that our donations come without strings attached and enable DCMH to apply them where most needed at a given moment.

If you are interested in volunteering for the meal service (cooking, serving, and cleanup) or helping at Paul's Place (organizing, home/building maintenance, working with people recovering and/or suffering from trauma, addiction, mental illness), you may email volunteers@dcmah.org.

AAUW Fund Luncheon Highlights AAUW Fund Recipients

By Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt

The Capital Counties Interbranch Council AAUW Fund Luncheon was held at the North Ridge Country Club in Fair Oaks on Saturday, January 25, 2025. Last year's luncheon, held on January 20, 2024, marked the first in-person meeting since the pandemic, with 51 attendees gathering in the large ballroom. This year, attendance grew to 70, and there was even a waiting list. Unfortunately, due to the reservation being made for the elegant yet smaller dining room, we couldn't accommodate more people.

The Davis AAUW made a strong showing with 12 members attending from Davis, Vacaville, Winters, and Woodland. The venue was impressive, as were the silent auction items. Verena's beautiful woven scarves were especially popular and attracted numerous bids. The food was delicious and the service was most attentive.

The Davis Branch was responsible for selecting the two Fellowship Speakers and providing the technology to host our first speaker on Zoom and showcase the second speaker's PowerPoint presentation. We are very grateful to the staff at North Ridge Country Club for their support. Special thanks go to Alexi Retallack, the current AAUW Auburn Branch President. With her expertise in communication access, Alexi ensured the event ran smoothly and was enjoyable for all. After the luncheon, Rhonda reconnected with Alexi, as they had previously worked together—a great reminder of the importance of AAUW connections!

Essence Lynn Wilson

I had the pleasure of introducing our first speaker, Essence Lynn Wilson, who received the AAUW American Dissertation Fellowship. This fellowship is designed to help offset living expenses for scholars as they complete their Ph.D. dissertations. It must be used during the final year of writing, and applicants must have completed all coursework, passed all preliminary exams, and received approval for their research proposals by the preceding November. The fellowship is open to applicants from all fields of study.

Essence is a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern California, focusing on Health Communication. She promotes mental wellness among youth through animation as her medium for outreach. Her dissertation project, "Black Jasmine," is a short animated film she co-created with Black youth to address mental health stigma. Essence shared her research, analysis, and the outcomes of "Black Jasmine" to illustrate the positive impact of her work. Her enthusiasm and professionalism made her presentation a highlight of the event.

She is a driven and focused 28-year-old part-time professor at California State University Northridge, where she earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees in Psychology. She is also proficient in French and serves as an Ambassador for the Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles, having earned both Bronze and Silver Awards. These achievements reflect her dedication, focus, and determination.

Essence has expressed deep gratitude for the support she has received from AAUW and is inspired by the organization's work and accomplishments. She has already made a positive impact on the future of Black youth and is committed to continuing to give back to future generations.

I plan to connect Essence with Joyce Weaver, the AAUW Fellowship speaker from 2024, who is actively involved in animation and game design. I hope that Essence and Joyce can collaborate and support each other's missions through their academic and creative visions.

Dena Valin Malakian

Our second speaker, Dena Valin Malakian, received a Community Action Grant, which provides funding to AAUW branches, AAUW state organizations, and community-based nonprofits for programs that promote education and equity for women and girls. The AAUW's General Operating Support Grants, part of the Community Action Grants, offer flexible funding to nonprofit organizations focused on advancing education and equity for women and girls in K-12. These grants can be used at the discretion of the organization and often play a key role in supporting the mission, sustainability, and innovation of a nonprofit. Since 1972, AAUW has supported hundreds of communities across the U.S. through its Community Action Grants.

Applicants must be dedicated to education and equity for women and girls in grades K-12. More than 51% of the organization's previous year's expenses and programming/services must be devoted to this purpose. Organizations with a focus on promoting gender equity in STEM fields and applicants serving geographically and/or demographically underserved communities are preferred.

In 2013, Dena joined The Friendship Club as Associate Director and played a key role in its transformation into Bright Futures for Youth. Initially focused on helping girls and young women, the program emphasized character-building, life skills, and opening doors to educational and career opportunities. In 2020, when The Friendship Club merged with NEO, Bright Futures for Youth expanded to include boys and young men, along with more programs, services, and team members.

With over two decades of experience in developing youth programs and leading organizations, Dena has embraced this challenge and is instrumental in the success of Bright Futures for Youth. Her mission is to ensure that young people feel accepted and loved for who they are, no matter where they come from, so they can develop positive self-images and treat themselves and others with kindness and respect. Thanks to Dena and her team, their outreach continues to support and uplift many young individuals. The Fellowship Scholarships have a tremendous impact, and AAUW plays a vital role in supporting these important initiatives.

Before joining The Friendship Club and Bright Futures for Youth, Dena served as the Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Nevada County and North Lake Tahoe from 2004 to 2013. She holds a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of California, Irvine, as well as a Master's Degree in Social Ecology. Dena also earned two Bachelor's Degrees from the University of California, Santa Cruz, in Anthropology and Psychology. A native of Nevada County, Dena returned to the area after graduate school. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, attending live music performances, and traveling.

Once again, I am impressed by the incredible Fellowships that AAUW offers to women who are making a meaningful impact on the world.

February Celebrate the 19th

From UNA-USA Davis February 2025 newsletter

Join UNA Sacramento for an engaging and insightful webinar, “UN Peacekeeping in the 21st Century,” featuring Dr. Jenna Russo, the Head of the Brian Urquhart Center for Peace Operations. This session will delve into the critical role of the United Nations’ peacekeeping forces, exploring their mission, successes, and the evolving challenges they face in today’s complex global landscape.

Dr. Russo will provide an in-depth look at how UN peacekeeping operations have adapted over time, addressing conflicts in diverse regions and navigating the shifting dynamics of international relations. Whether you're interested in global security, diplomacy, or the inner workings of the UN, this webinar will offer valuable insights into one of the organization's most visible and impactful functions.

Register [HERE](#)



UNCOVERED
A webinar series to explore global affairs and the United Nations

Join us in conversation with
Dr. Jenna Russo

Head of the Brian Urquhart Center for Peace Operations, as we discuss the mission, successes, and challenges of the United Nations' peacekeeping forces.

"UN Peacekeeping in the 21st Century"

Wednesday, February 19th
@ 12 pm (PT)

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Lobby Days 2025

By AAUW California Public Policy Committee

Lobby Days 2025 will be held on April 8-9, 2025. If you have not yet registered, there is still time.

This event is a wonderful opportunity to meet with state legislative offices and advocate for AAUW California's priority bills. Meetings will be held in person at the Capitol on Tuesday, April 8th, and virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, April 9th. We encourage all AAUW California members to participate.

Teams of 3 or 4 AAUW members will be matched with Assembly and Senate districts. For the in-person meetings on April 8th, each team will be scheduled to meet with around 3 legislative offices. For the Zoom meetings on April 9th, each team will be scheduled to meet with 1 to 3 legislative offices. Regardless of whether you are in-person or online, each meeting will last for 15 to 30 minutes.

It is not always possible to schedule AAUW members with their own legislators. However, be assured that these meetings are always impactful: because teams will be representing AAUW California as a bill sponsor and/or supporter, legislative offices will consider these meetings to be as important as constituent meetings.

If you are interested in participating, please complete BOTH of the following steps:

Step 1 - Register for the Lobby Days event by February 21st. Register for Lobby Days [HERE](#).

Step 2 - Register for the mandatory training which will be held on Monday, March 31st, 7-8 pm Pacific. Register for the training webinar [HERE](#).

We hope that you will join us in this act of advocacy to promote our legislative priorities and advance our values.

UNA Update *By Verena Borton*

Read about:

- UNA Annual Membership meeting
- UNA board election
- UNA's annual MLK service project
- Indefinite postponement of UNA-USA's Global Engagement Summit
- UNA-USA pushback against Executive Orders
- UNICEF news
- Seven crises on UNHCR's (UN Refugee Agency) radar in 2025
- International Women's Day on Sunday, March 9 at I-House, 2-4 pm

- UNA Davis held its Annual Membership meeting virtually on January 14, highlighting achievements during 2024 - including International Women's Day, UN Day, Human Rights Day, City Proclamation, International Festival and monthly newsletter – as well as outlining initiatives for 2025 – including events, progress toward financial sustainability, initiating social media for wider outreach, and hope for greater participation by youth through the newly launched UCD Campus Chapter.
- Results of the election of board members:
 - Edgar Trujillo - President
 - Molly Thompson – Secretary
 - Laleh Rastegarzadeh – Community Outreach
 - Lynn Dykstra – Advocacy Chair
 - Verena Borton – Treasurer and Membership Chair
- On January 19th we performed our traditional UNA Martin Luther King Jr. service project, namely pruning the Peace roses in the two beds south of the County building at 600 A St. that our chapter gave to the city 30 years ago. After soup and bread and lots of conversation at the Borton home, Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt, Lynn Dykstra, and Ray and Verena did the back-bending work on a sunny afternoon.

See article with more background information and photos below.

- The much-anticipated annual UNA-USA Global Engagement Summit at UN Headquarters, tentatively scheduled for February 28, and often attended by as many as a thousand members, was indefinitely postponed on January 31 due to the current UN liquidity crisis which has made it more difficult to schedule and host large gatherings at UN Headquarters, as well as to the complex federal spending situation in Washington, D.C. initiated by the Trump administration.
- On January 29th UNA-USA presented an in-depth briefing by the Better World Campaign exploring the impact of the presidential Administration change on the United States' engagement with the United Nations, analyzing shifts in policy priorities, funding commitments and offering insights into what these changes mean for UN programs and global initiatives. Unfortunately this important webinar was scheduled during work hours for west coast members who could therefore not join. On January 30th the following Push Back regarding recent executive orders was issued by UNA-USA:

“The United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA), representing over 20,000 Americans across 230 chapters, urgently calls for a strong U.S.-United Nations (UN) partnership to safeguard a just, peaceful, and prosperous world.

U.S. leadership has been pivotal in global achievements of the past 80 years through the UN, from advancing human rights and lifting over 1 billion people out of poverty to fostering groundbreaking scientific and technological advancements and supporting the world’s most vulnerable. When the U.S. invests in international organizations like the UN, it amplifies our values and extends our influence while fostering stronger ties with allies around the globe.

But right now, we’re at a crossroads. The Trump Administration’s move to withdraw from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Paris Climate Agreement threatens decades of progress. Take the World Health Organization (WHO)—it’s not just a health agency, it’s a global network working to prevent disease outbreaks and keep Americans and the world safe. Withdrawing from the WHO weakens our voice in global health and makes it harder to tackle emerging threats. Over the past 20 years, more than 50 countries have eliminated one or more neglected tropical diseases with support from the World Health Organization (WHO) and dedicated programs funded by generous donors. America's partnership with WHO keeps us safe, healthy, and prosperous by stopping diseases and tackling health emergencies worldwide.

The Paris Climate Agreement, signed by 194 parties, is another vital tool in fighting climate change. As we experience devastating wildfires, hurricanes, and floods across the U.S., continued participation is vital to protecting our communities and mitigating future damage.

The stakes are too high. We urge the Trump Administration to reconsider these decisions and keep the U.S. engaged with the UN. The world needs American leadership, and our future depends on it.”

- Our friends at the UNICEF office in New York wrote to us as longtime partners on January 31 about the impact of the “State Department issued stop-work guidance on the Executive Order on Foreign Aid that requires a pause in foreign assistance obligations pending a review of programs. The guidance covers all development and economic assistance and applies to international organizations like UNICEF, posing life-threatening implications for children around the world.” Verena was invited to a virtual briefing by UNICEF leaders on February 5th. Remembering our long tradition of Davis Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF campaigns, several generous donors contributed last fall to our “UNICEF Donations” bank account at First Northern Bank, 434 Second Street, Davis, CA 95616.

At our recent UNA board meeting we discussed possible ways to add a bit more to the account before asking the UNICEF folks to suggest a target for a substantial donation. The February 5th briefing emphasized repeatedly that flexible funding is critical in these uncertain times. **Please consider making a donation.** We welcome any and all donations made out to UNICEF Donations at the bank account (see address above) or sent to Verena Borton, 101 E. 7thSt., Davis, CA 95616 for deposit.

- Not that we need more disturbing news, but here is a list of seven world crises besides Gaza that the UNHCR has on its radar for 2025: 1) Sudan, 2) Democratic Republic of the Congo, 3) Lebanon, 4) Syria, 5) Ukraine, 6) Afghanistan and 7) the Rohingya crisis.
- **The UNA Davis International Women’s Day program on March 9th, 2-4 pm at I-House** will feature Forhat Chowdhury, Humphrey Fellow from Bangladesh, as keynote presenter, speaking about “Bangladeshi Women Paving the Way.” We are excited to announce that the program will also feature art work and very brief statements by members of local Girl Scout Troop 2195 about examples of girls and women around the world who have challenged stereotypes. The event is free and open to the public.

Thirty Years of History with the Peace Roses

As the Davis UNA chapter was preparing to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter in 1945, Ray Borton came up with the idea of gifting the City of Davis with 50 Peace roses, the iconic plant that became symbolic of the UN’s effort to ensure peace and security after the devastation of WWII.

In February 1995 UNA Davis provided the 50 rose plants and the city provided two long beds of soil to the south of what is now 600 A Street. Board members, with the assistance of one city employee, spent the day planting the roses. A marker was installed later.

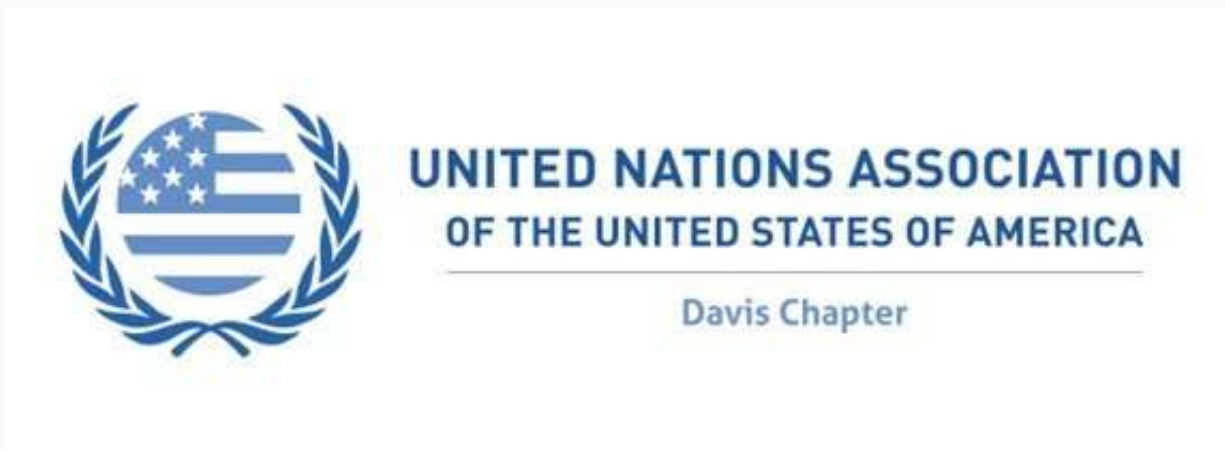
City finances during the economic downturn shifted the maintenance of the roses to Ray and Verena Borton, officially listed by the city as “adoptive parents,” and as the only surviving members of the 1995 board they have continued to care for the rose beds (in recent years as part of the County department in charge of watering and mowing that area south of the County building).

Roses need to be pruned every January. For a number of years now the pruning has become the chapter’s Martin Luther King Jr. service project, with participation by UNA members, AAUW members, and UCD students.

On January 19th Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt (President of the Davis AAUW branch and a Life member of UNA), Lynn Dykstra (newly elected Advocacy chair of the UNA chapter), and the Bortons enjoyed a hearty soup and animated conversation before heading down the street armed with clippers and other equipment to do the annual thorough pruning. We hope that by April we will once again be able to enjoy the beautiful blooms to remind us of the challenging efforts to secure worldwide peace as the United Nations prepares to commemorate the 80th anniversary of its founding.



The rose-pruning team. Left to right: Verena, Ray, Lynn, and Stephanie



AAUW CA News

So Many Ways to Show Love and Appreciation This Month

By Charmen Goehring, AAUW-CA President

February. The month of hearts, flowers, chocolate, and all things love. One way you can love others this month is to donate a gift card to an AAUW member who lost their home during the Los Angeles fires or had major smoke damage. A committee has been created to manage the collection and distribution of gift cards. After the Paradise fire in 2018, we collectively raised over \$150,000, which helped more than 30 members get their lives back on track. You can read more about the current effort [HERE](#).

February is also Black History Month and a wonderful time to show some love to our Black sisters and community. Search Yelp for Black-owned restaurants and businesses, visit a historically Black theater or concert venue, read a Black newspaper, or check out a Black church. You can also try this Black History Month Challenge. Step out of your comfort zone a bit and discover some wonderful new things about our Black Communities.

#BECAUSEOFTHEMWE CAN

BHM CHALLENGE

- AFFIRM A BLACK CHILD
- DONATE TO AN HBCU OF YOUR CHOICE
- FIND A PERSON IN BLACK HISTORY THAT YOU SHARE A BIRTHDAY WITH
- SHARE A PHOTO OF AN ANCESTOR
- RESEARCH BAYARD RUSTIN
- WATCH THE "THEY'VE GOTTA HAVE US" DOCUMENTARY
- TAKE A VIRTUAL TOUR OF THE NMAAHC
- BUY & READ A BOOK BY A BLACK AUTHOR
- RESEARCH BARBARA JORDAN
- FIND AN EVERY DAY ITEM CREATED BY A BLACK INVENTOR
- INTERVIEW AN ELDER
- RECREATE AN ICONIC BLACK PHOTO
- RESEARCH FLEET WALKER
- SUPPORT A BLACK BUSINESS
- DOWNLOAD 3 BLACK-OWNED APPS
- COOK A FAMILY RECIPE
- RESEARCH ELLA BAKER
- CALL YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE & TELL THEM TO AUTHORIZE THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT
- HELP SOMEONE REGISTER TO VOTE
- RESEARCH BROCK PETERS
- LEARN ABOUT HISTORIC BLACK LANDMARKS IN YOUR CITY
- DONATE TO A BLACK CHARITY/FOOD BANK
- RESEARCH PEG LEG BATES RESORT
- LEARN THE FULL VERSION OF LIFT EV'RY VOICE AND SING
- DONATE SUPPLIES TO A BLACK TEACHER
- OPEN UP AN ACCOUNT WITH A BLACK OWNED BANK
- RESEARCH IDA B. WELLS
- PLAN A VIRTUAL CELEBRATION WITH YOUR FAMILY ON THE 28TH

BECAUSE OF THEM WE CAN

28 DAYS, 28 WAYS TO CELEBRATE

Why AAUW Public Policy Priorities Matter

By Nancy Major, Member AAUW California Public Policy Committee

Why do AAUW's Public Policy Priorities matter? They shape the actions that we take as an organization, socially and legally.

AAUW's mission is to advance equity for women and girls. Our Public Policy Priorities guide how we encourage active citizenship toward the goal of advancing our mission. There are four branches to our Public Policy Priorities: Economic Security, Equal Access to Quality Public Education, Social and Racial Justice, and Increased representation of Women in Leadership roles. Each of these priorities is further broken down into several action-oriented subcategories, such as enforcement of Title IX and passage of the ERA. Our 2023-25 priorities can be found at <https://www.aauw-ca.org/public-policy-priorities-ppp-revised/>.

As active participants in society we can help shape the laws and society that govern us, such as healthcare, environmental policies, sex education, curriculum and book banning, housing, childcare, voting rights, immigrants' rights, sexual harassment, domestic violence, racial and LGBTQ discrimination, and Title IX enforcement. We "advocate" or promote our mission through research, education and lobbying for legislation on the international, national, state, and local levels.

History has shown that our advocacy has made a big impact on national, state and local laws. In California alone, you can see the laws that AAUW sponsored, authored, and/or promoted, including those that were passed in the most recent session by going to [AAUW California Bill Tracking Report 2024 - Google Sheets](#). AAUW is also doing impactful work internationally, working to curtail human trafficking and promote civil and human rights for all immigrants, including through participation in the UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Over the next four years, there will be a lot of opportunities to use this legislative advocacy to push back against attempts to overturn long standing human rights and civil rights protections.

Our Public Policy Priorities also shape our efforts to push forward programs that break through educational and economic barriers for women such as speaker programs, scholarships, oversight of local school boards, leadership and salary training, STEM opportunities for students, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs.

Why do our Public Policy Priorities matter? They make us the most effective advocates for our collective mission to protect and expand gender equity. At the branch and individual levels, we can take advantage of as many opportunities as possible to operationalize our Public Policy Priorities, and through this work to actively promote AAUW's mission. AAUW as an organization relies on the branches to stay informed and to keep track of where our Public Policy Priorities may fall short, to form coalitions with local allies who have similar missions, and to assign branch members to focus where we can have the most impact.

Podcast: Is DEI Illegal?

By Missy Maceyko, Co-Director, AAUW CA Public Policy

In advocating for gender equity and social justice through policy and legislation, there is a direct link between public policy work and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work at AAUW California. Co-Director Missy Maceyko has recorded a recent podcast episode on understanding DEI work in light of the federal attack on DEI. The podcast also touches on programs and actions in which you can and should continue to engage in your organizations – those that historically overlap with DEI work, but that are not always coded as DEI, such as mentorship programs and/or training in how to speak across differences. These programs and actions can help keep your organizations healthy and functional in an already diverse world while promoting pluralism.



Click [HERE](#) to access on YouTube

BE AS ACTIVE AS YOU CAN, BUT STAY A MEMBER!

“If you think you are too small to make a difference, you haven’t spent the night with a mosquito.” African proverb

Formatted by Emmi Kuimelis