Dear Editor,

DEMOCRACY MATTERS and the future of our democracy is incumbent upon the development of communication and critical thinking skills of our young people. As President of the League of Women Voters Alameda (LWVA), I am happy that this historic organization has embraced this challenge. In partnership with the College of Alameda, (CoA), we’ve created the Democracy Matters: LWVA/CoA High School Civics Scholarship Program to help prepare our youth to enter society informed and willing to engage in the government process with tested communication and critical thinking skills.

This year, the LWVA/CoA High School Civics Scholarship Program is conducting a Speech Tournament that will feature six students from Girls Inc., Alameda High, and Alameda Science and Technology Institute. These students were selected after submitting an online application and a video tackling the topic: Should the Voting Age be Reduced to 16? On April 22 at 2:00 in Building F at the College of Alameda, they will present their positions to the public before a panel of judges that include: Congresswoman Barbara Lee, Honorary Judge; Timothy Karas, President, College of Alameda; Alameda City Council Members Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft and Jim Oddie; and Jane Yee, a Bay Area civil litigation attorney.

The winner will receive a $1000 scholarship, the runner-up, $500. All participants will earn a college credit in Communications from the College of Alameda.

It is my hope that you will encourage your readers to attend and help support and encourage our high school students to understand not only how government works, but also the role citizens must play to make democracy work for all.

Sincerely,

Alice Fried, LWVA President