



FUTURE OF AAUW CONNECTICUT OPTION 1 – STREAMLINED STATE ORGANIZATION

The following option will be presented and discussed at **September 12, 2009 AAUW Connecticut State Board Meeting**. Please review the information advance of the meeting.

SUMMARY:

Connecticut AAUW (the State Board) continues to exist as a mission-based organization, with a limited focus, two meetings per year, and a reduced number of positions on the state board/leadership team.

Proposed focus of CT AAUW at the state level:

- Outreach to and partner with colleges and universities in the state on topics of mutual interest and value: leadership development; financial literacy (WAGE and Start Smart), campus or community action projects (such as voter registration, Pay Equity Day, etc) initiated by either a branch or the campus. This would be part of a recruitment/retention effort for College / University (CU) partners. It will also provide a rich base of potential members from the student and faculty ranks.
- Plan and develop a Fall Conference 1) to bring together state, branch and College / University (CU) campus representatives to strengthen ties with the institutions, and provide guidance and support to campus representatives in performing their roles, and 2) to showcase National Conference of College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) attendees so they can share their experiences at the conference and follow-up activities on campus.
- Plan and develop the spring Annual AAUW/CT Meeting with a College / University (CU) or other mission-based theme. This meeting would also handle the AAUW/CT business, allow branches to share their accomplishments, and help create community.
- Encourage participation in and provide scholarships for the National Conference of College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) in June.
- Continue our collaboration with longstanding partners such as the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF) and other like-minded organizations.

Proposed focus of CT AAUW at the state level (cont.):

- Continue to participate in selected advocacy and public policy initiatives.
- Provide necessary communication, support to branches via email, website, and newsletter on state-level programs.
- Reach out to new leaders from the ranks of branches and MALS to involve them in specific projects or areas of interest or responsibility.

What would change:

- We would have a reduced number of positions to fill at the state level.
- We would take advantage of the National AAUW's new programs for communicating directly with the branches and members.
 - Education Foundation (EF), Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF), Membership and Programs would be handled at the branch level. Branches would communicate directly with the National organization for these areas.
 - Branches can take advantage of Programs-in-a-Box and other resources available on the AAUW Website.
 - Avoid duplicating e-mails that are sent directly to state and branch officers from the association.
- We would no longer hold four state meetings a year, trying to develop interesting programs at a reasonable cost, and getting people to attend.

Proposed Board Positions

President / Policy Leader (co-leaders are an option)

Administrative Leader*

College / University Chair (co-chairs are an option)

Finance Director (1)

Nominating Committee (3 – we recommend these be selected from Branch Presidents)

Public Policy / Coalitions (1-3)

Branch Presidents

**Note: Many organizations such as ours are finding it is useful to have a paid part time administrator to handle the administrative duties of office, leaving policy work to volunteers. An estimated average of 8-10 hours per week could help, and depending on pay, could cost AAUW 5-10,000 per year. We envision the administrator would: help with the logistics and program coordination for the two annual meetings, support logistics for the College / University programs, handle minutes and planning work, do the newsletter and website, stay abreast of National AAUW initiatives and provide support for all state Board members.*

What is Required

Immediately:

- One or more persons to serve as:
 - President / Policy leader
 - Administrative Leader
 - Nominating Committee Members

Longer Term:

Regular interest in branch members participating in state level meetings, serving on the State Board, and supporting the state administrative activities either financially or with volunteer hours.

History and Explanation of the Proposal

History:

Like many organizations, AAUW has been working over the last few years to find ways to:

- Simplify the organization to enable it to be more nimble and able to change
- Connect the members directly to the national organization requiring less administrative overhead.
- Tighten the links between members and the Association, to allow the association to be more responsive to members and to allow the association to directly reach out to all members.

To accomplish this, AAUW has streamlined the Bylaws and is allowing states and branches a lot of flexibility in changing their bylaws. As we undertake this process, AAUW has noted:

We strongly encourage you and your board or branch to spend time assessing your branch or state needs, purpose, and goals before any changes to your structure. (Source: AAUW Structure Transition Summary Briefing, www.aauw.org)

Rationale for **this** Proposal:

Since the adoption of an alternative board structure at the 2008 State Convention, we have continued mission-based programming primarily through College/University outreach, including support of the National Conference of College Women Student Leaders. In addition, we have volunteers who have continued to track national and local policy, particularly of our coalition partners such as: Planned Parenthood, Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), Connecticut Women's Education and Leadership Fund (CWEALF). This option allows us to continue with all of these functions.

In order to maintain these functions, we need to have oversight to ensure that we are representing the goals and desires of our membership on policy and administrative items.

(For example, to determine which functions to fund or which legislation to support.) In addition, we need someone to coordinate these functions between the state and the branches, and nominating committees to fill vacancies.

We feel that this Option allows us to continue these functions while significantly reducing the staffing from the 18 elected and appointed members (not including branch presidents) we have had during this past year to approximately 6 elected or appointed members going forward (not including branch presidents).

Rationale for changing the State Structure:

The terms of all the officers listed in our current bylaws have expired. Some have been filled by outgoing officers who volunteered to continue to serve. We had no success in trying to fill these offices through our usual nominating process. Although we have operated with alternative, interim organizational structures through adoption of resolutions, we cannot exist as an organization without new leadership coming forth and without revision to our bylaws and adoption of the new ones.

The passage of new AAUW Bylaws at the 2009 Convention allows state (and branch) organizations a great deal of flexibility. State organizations may function with the two required officers for administration and finance, may join with other states, or may choose not to continue. AAUW/CT has to decide its future.