



## **FUTURE OF AAUW CONNECTICUT OPTION 2 – COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY FOCUS**

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 to handle the College/ University Function, a function uniquely suited to a state level organization. According to the 2009 AAUW Bylaws, the only *required* positions for the state agency are president or administrative officer and finance officer. In addition, we would need a Board of Directors to make decisions about filling positions or provide state guidance to any elected or appointed officers.

### **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.
- Provide necessary communication to branch presidents.
- Reach out to new leaders from the ranks of branches and MALS to involve them in specific projects or areas of interest or responsibility.

### **Proposed Board Positions**

Administrative Leader serving as College/University Chair (co-chairs are an option)

Finance Director (1)

Branch Presidents (a subset of whom would serve as the nominating committee)

### **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, Programs and Public Policy would all 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.

### **What is Required**

Immediately: We have volunteers currently serving in this capacity and willing to continue. We welcome other volunteers who would like to join us in this capacity.

Longer Term: Continued participation of branch members in the fall meeting and continued partnership between the branches and the state organization to create community and continue to develop upcoming leaders to support these functions.

### **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](http://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. As a result the number of College/University partners has grown from 12 to nearly 20. We have identified an interest in Colleges and Universities leaders and students across the state, and we have identified a number of new program areas that we feel are important to address as a state board, and hopefully, in conjunction with the branches.

While we believe that Colleges and Universities are an important source of furthering women's rights and growing our ranks, many of these institutions are not located in proximity to branches. Moreover, one of the AAUW changes at the national level has been to assign staff to focus on the College and University community. We feel like this is an area where the state can serve a unique function.

#### 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, and 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.

