[**STATE & BRANCH TOOLS**](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/state-branch/)

**Membership Matters: A News Hub for Leaders**

**September 2021**

*Resources, tips and tricks for AAUW state and branch leaders*

**Bragging on Branches (and States!)**

It’s been a fantastic year for the Five-Star National Recognition Program. A huge thank you to the more than 100 participating branches and states who put their best work forward and being celebrated for their effort to achieve gender equity on behalf of women and girls.

Kudos to the following AAUW affiliates on their five-star achievements: AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek, AAUW Beach Cities, Palos Verdes Peninsula (California); AAUW Longmont (Colorado); AAUW Greensboro (North Carolina); AAUW Carlisle (Pennsylvania); Mt. Vernon Branch (Virginia); Washington Online Branch.

AAUW National is excited to announce that the program is restarting for FY22 providing another opportunity for your branch or state to be recognized for furthering AAUW’s mission. Join us to learn about the updates to the program and how your AAUW affiliate can be recognized for its work.

**Success Stories**

**News & Resources**

AAUW Gatherings Guidelines: Safety First!

Given the current state of COVID we wanted to provide additional guidance on branch and state in-person meetings. Safety continues to be our most important concern and **we continue to strongly encourage that states and branches hold events virtually**. This is the easiest and best way to keep all members and other event attendees safe.

Holding any in-person event presents a level of risk that must be considered. If you are thinking of holding an in-person or hybrid (some people attend in person while the event is also held virtually) event, you should consider the potential **legal and health risks** that holding in-person events may hold. Given the myriad of state and local guidelines, AAUW cannot provide legal advice to state or branch affiliates, but there are some suggestions that you may wish to consider before holding an in-person event:

* **Observe all local and state guidelines. Require (and enforce!) masking** even if your state/locality doesn’t require it and **observe social distancing**.
* Require vaccination for in-person attendance **unless your branch is prohibited from enforcing a vaccination requirement by applicable state and local law.**
* **Communicate clearly in event invitations if vaccinations are required** **and provide a virtual option** for those not comfortable attending or are unvaccinated (including those who are unvaccinated because of a disability or their religious beliefs).
* **Understand meeting cancellation charges.** If you sign a contract to hold an event at a venue you may encounter significant cancellation challenges. This was the case in spring 2020 when many AAUW affiliates cancelled state conventions only to have challenges in cancelling their contracts without penalty. If you are set on holding an in-person event at a venue, understand the conditions under which you and the venue can cancel and any associated cancellation charges. AAUW national cannot cover cancellation penalty fees for affiliates.

We understand the community that AAUW provides and the desire to see each other in-person while we also recognize this unique situation calls for changes to how we normally do our work. Please join us in ensuring the safety of our members while we continue to fight for equity for women and girls.

AAUW Welcomes New Legacy Circle Members

We gratefully acknowledge these visionary AAUW members and supporters who have recently joined the Legacy Circle: Eileen Hanson-Kelly (North Carolina) and Anonymous. By making a planned gift to AAUW National, each has embraced equity for future generations of women and girls as part of her personal legacy.

If you would like to learn more about the AAUW Legacy Circle or if you have questions about planning your gift, please contact AAUW Director of Advancement Heather Miller at 202.785.7766. We would be delighted to celebrate you, too, as a new member of the Legacy Circle!

Branch Membership Renewal Deadline Extended

Branch finance officers should submit membership dues for fiscal year 2022 using the Membership Payment Program (MPP) located within the Membership Services Database [(MSD)](https://ww3.aauw.org/login/?redirect_to=/aauw_redirect/wp_redirect_msd.php). For those unable to use this online payment method, please use the Additional Dues Report Process also located within the (MSD). Those members who expired 6/30/2021 should **renew by October 31 to be restored to good standing!**

Finance Officers Must Respond — Don’t Lose Your IRS Tax Status

All AAUW-affiliated entities must file a tax return with the IRS each year. If your annual gross receipts are normally $50,000 or less, you can file Form 990-N. Alternatively, we can do this on your behalf if you complete the group exemption form in the [Membership Services Database](https://ww3.aauw.org/login/?redirect_to=/aauw_redirect/wp_redirect_msd.php) by **October 15.**