**September 2020**

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

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

Congratulations to the following branches on their Five-Star achievements: (California) Beach Cities, Citrus Heights–American River; (Michigan) Midland; (New Mexico) Los Alamos; (Pennsylvania) Easton; Woodbridge; (Texas) West Harris County; (Virginia) Fairfax City. Thank you all for your support and participation in the [Five-Star National Recognition Program](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/5-star-program/).

We’re also proud of these branches for completing the program: (California) AAUW Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette, (Missouri) AAUW Ballwin-Chesterfield and (Wisconsin) AAUW Racine for completing the program! Read their success stories below to find out how they achieved their goals.

Finally, big kudos to AAUW Florida on achieving their first star and AAUW Virginia for being the first state to hit the three-star mark. Excellent work! We look forward to recognizing more state affiliates for their efforts to advance gender equity.

**Success Stories**

Get inspiration and advice from this month’s five-star branch leaders.

AAUW OML's board members

**ORINDA-MORAGA-LAFAYETTE (CALIFORNIA)**

**‘We Knew We Were a Five-Star Branch’**

“Our branch always aligns our goals with AAUW National’s priorities. When we saw the program requirements, we knew we were a Five-Star branch and set out to document what we were already doing.

Every year, we offer programs that match up with AAUW’s public policy priorities. In 2019-20, we had initiatives related to Title IX and the Census, and we sponsored a Work Smart salary-negotiation workshop.

We have a dynamic website and Facebook page. Our public policy co-chairs have been signing people up for Two-Minute Activist and the Action Network for years. We met with our assemblywoman to advocate for equity legislation. Finally, we updated our strategic plan and formalized our succession plan.

Our members are generous and committed. We will increase advocacy and continue AAUW policy-related programs. We added a new “Girls4STEM” webinar program for high-school girls. We also offer an annual one-day STEM Conference for middle-school girls, Tech Trek, scholarships for high-schoolers and NCCWSL (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders) attendees, and volunteering at a Title I school, we hope to always be a Five-Star Branch.” *—Denise Burian, past president 2018-20, and Marielle Boortz and Alison Mackenzie, co-presidents*

**AAUW RACINE (WISCONSIN)**

**Build on What's Working**

“When we first learned about the Five-Star Program, we recognized it would serve as a review of our strategic efforts. We began by evaluating what we had already been doing.

First, we focused on the Advancement requirements. With 200 members, we have been fortunate in maintaining our numbers. Being successful in fundraising with twice-yearly used book sales, we designated some of the proceeds to move to AAUW’s Greatest Needs Fund.

With a public policy chair who meets with a statewide public policy committee, we are kept informed of important legislative issues. In addition, we conduct a public policy training day each year. We encourage Two-Minute Activist signups and have program topics in those areas.

We revised our branch website and newsletter to link with AAUW National on economic security. In several areas, we had to write new policies. Similarly, we created a formal strategic plan.

Our advice for other branches is to review your programs and activities during the past year. Once you recognize your successes, you can move on to the less familiar activities in your efforts to meet the requirements of the Five-Star Program.” *—Margaret Tungseth, president of AAUW Racine (Wisconsin)*

**Ballwin-Chesterfield (Missouri): Program-Driven Success**

“When we read about the Five-Star program, we realized we were already doing everything required. All we had to do was find the format AAUW desired.

A large, active branch, Ballwin-Chesterfield is program-driven. We begin branch meetings with the mission statement, and we choose speakers who reflect AAUW priorities. We lobby for pay equity during each Missouri legislative session.

To advance women and girls, we award four scholarships each year to women seeking to complete degrees, particularly in STEM fields, and work with school girls to encourage them in STEM careers. We advocate for the Work Smart salary-negotiation program by working with collaborating organizations, publicizing the online course to friends and family, and holding workshops at local libraries.

In everything we do, we are working toward gender equity. Your branch may already meet many of the requirements. Look at what you do already. Then you may see where you can add work for pay equity or Title IX, for example. Ask the AAUW National staff for templates and help with the forms.”

Jan Horner and Sage Taber, co-presidents

**News & Resources**

5 Ideas for Virtual Fundraising

Branch fundraising may happen differently this year, but it must happen. There’s never been a more important time to champion equity. Check out these [five creative ideas](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/state-branch/5-ideas-for-virtual-fundraising/) for leveraging online platforms — including virtual wine tastings, auctions, tours and more — and then send your ideas to branchrelations@aauw.org. Then we’ll schedule our own virtual event to swap ideas and success stories. Stay tuned for more on that!

Reminder: State Portal for Five-Star

A reminder to state leaders that the state portal for the [Five-Star Recognition Program](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/5-star-program/) is now open for applications. As with the branch portal, you don’t have to submit all of your work at once. Get your application in today, so your state can start making progress towards your first star!

Renew Membership by September 30

Encourage your non-renewed members to renew by September 30 so they remain in good standing and continue to receive member benefits, including action alerts, networking opportunities and discounts on insurance, prescriptions and more. We urge membership vice presidents and finance officers to work together to verify branch membership rosters through the [Membership Services Database](https://ww3.aauw.org/login/?redirect_to=/aauw_redirect/wp_redirect_msd.php). Report any discrepancies to connect@aauw.org.

It’s Time to File Your 990 for 2020

The October 15 deadline is fast approaching to request that AAUW file the 990N on behalf of your state or branch for 2020. 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. We can also file Form 990-N on your behalf if the finance officer completes the group exemption form in the [Membership Services Database](https://ww3.aauw.org/aauw_redirect/wp_redirect_msd.php).

Welcome New Legacy Circle Members

We gratefully acknowledge these visionary AAUW members and supporters who have recently joined the Legacy Circle: Peggy S. Cabaniss (California), Patricia E. Squire (Oregon) and Linda A. Welsh (Texas). 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 have included AAUW National in your estate plans, please contact AAUW Director of Advancement Heather Miller at 202.785.7766 to let us know so that we may celebrate you, too, as a new member of the Legacy Circle!

Build College and University Relationships

AAUW offers great opportunities for [students and campus professionals](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/students-campus-professionals/) through educational funding, professional development, networking and learning opportunities! If your local college or university campus is not currently a member, please share the benefits we offer and invite them to [join/renew](https://ww2.aauw.org/cu-join/)!

A Wealth of Webinars

If you’ve missed any of our recent member webinars, head over to the [2020 convenings hub](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/2020-convening/), where you’ll find the recordings for “Policy v. Practice: The Continued Fight for Equality,” “COVID-19 and the Labor Economy: What’s Next?,” and “Archeology of the Self: Sustaining Racial Literacy in the Movement for Change.” AAUW’s second Virtual Board Town Hall will also be available on the website next week, so please stay tuned!

Reminder: Virtual Meetings Only

COVID-19 is still all around us, and the safety of our members and staff remains AAUW’s top priority. We strongly advise states and branches to avoid holding any in-person meetings or events at least through the end of the year, and in compliance with local and state guidance. We are proud of the affiliates holding creative and successful virtual meetings, elections and programs. Keep up the great work!