**October 2020**

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

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

We know 2020 has been an extraordinarily challenging year, so we are even more appreciative of our branches that continue to support the work of AAUW with their gifts to AAUW’s Greatest Needs Fund. We would like to especially thank the AAUW Naperville (Illinois) branch and the AAUW State College (Pennsylvania) branch for making gifts of over $4,000 to Greatest Needs in this fiscal year.

Congratulations to the following branches on their achievements in the [Five-Star Recognition Program](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/5-star-program/): (California) Sacramento; (Illinois) Crystal Lake; (New Mexico) Los Alamos, Silver City/Southwest New Mexico; (Pennsylvania) Bethlehem, Easton; (Washington) Walla Walla, Washington Online Branch. We appreciate your participation and all you do for equity.

Huge kudos to AAUW North Hills Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania) and AAUW Indiana County (Pennsylvania) on hitting the four-star mark, and to AAUW Woodbridge (Virginia) for completing the program with all five stars! Read their success stories to learn more about the strategies they used to achieve their goals.

**Success Stories**

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

**AAUW NORTH HILLS PITTSBURGH (PENNSYLVANIA)**

**A Chance to Expand Their Horizons**

“The reintroduction of the AAUW 5-Star program in 2019 gave our branch a chance to reflect on our achievements and goals. We worked together to evaluate how we are aligning with AAUW National and State in achieving our mission.

The 5-star initiative made us think outside the box. Our public policy chair worked within our branch and coordinated with other organizations to work on gender equity, race relations, social justice, human rights, economic health and educational opportunities. We participated in activities to raise awareness for gender equity. Our program VP coordinated our programs to focus on the core mission of AAUW. We also opened our programs to the public to recruit new members.

The program allowed us to expand our horizons and open our branch up to new experiences. We were able to network, brainstorm, problem-solve and discover new ideas.”

*—Deborah Rosenfelder, president*

AAUW Woodbridge (Virginia) Success Story: Small Branch with 5-Star Attitude

“When the 5-Star program was announced, we knew we had the right mindset: Our programs are mission-based and our history of community outreach aligns with AAUW’s priorities. Though our branch averages 30 members, it benefits from the efforts of ‘many-hatted’ officers and chairs and a diverse roster of generous members, mirroring our community, champion advocacy and collaboration.

The 30-year history of our “SUCCESS!” STEAM Careers Conference was sparked by AAUW’s study that led to “Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America.” Targeting middle and high school students and the adults in their lives, we host presenters, displays, and packets emphasizing equity, women’s herstory, overcoming barriers and diverse role models. We have welcomed new members and speakers for branch programs, earned the support of women’s organizations, garnered business partnerships, and established a roster of 1,000+ alumnae with two generations of inspired young women and informed parents and teachers.

For decades, we’ve participated as a judging team for the regional science fair, which empowers young women to be aspiring STEM professionals. Our new endeavors focus on the social justice of inclusion — “The Culture of Muslim Women” — and virtual book conversations on systemic racism and Latinx/Native American herstories.”

*Sandy Lawrence, president and Susan Bardenhagen, program/membership leader*

**AAUW INDIANA COUNTY (PENNSYLVANIA)**

**Working Toward Equity for 85 Years and Counting**

“Our branch is located in rural Western Pennsylvania, and this year is our 85th anniversary. We were inspired to pursue success in AAUW’s 5-Star program.

We enhanced our gender equity work tremendously. We hosted guest speaker Patricia Ulbrich of the ‘In Sisterhood Project’ to talk about the women’s movement in Pittsburgh. The highlight was our ‘Suffragist Soirée,’ in Feb. 2020, a concert to celebrate 100 years of women’s voting rights.

In the area of communication, we bolstered our online presence with weekly website updates. This October, 75 people attended our webinar featuring epidemiologist and AAUW member Alison Simmons, who gave excellent information about COVID-19 in Indiana County.

Our public policy chair emails timely notices to our members and then shows people how to send petitions to local representatives through our website. Perhaps most important, our website houses our governance plan outlining officers’ responsibilities.

Our branch received an award this spring for increasing membership by 25%. In 2019-20, we spearheaded a fundraiser trivia night and a holiday silent-auction fundraiser. We had to reschedule a field trip to the Women’s Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, N.Y., but we look forward to hosting it post-pandemic!”

*–Susan Wheatley, Secretary*

**News & Resources**

State Leaders: Don’t Forget to Seek Five-Star Success

A reminder to state AAUW leaders: Our [state portal](https://ww3.aauw.org/five-star-state-application/) is now open for applications. Like the branch portal, you don’t have to submit all your work at once — so don’t delay! Get your applications in today so you can start making progress toward that first star. Have questions about the state application or portal? Reach out to [Fivestar@aauw.org](mailto:Fivestar@aauw.org) to ask how we can help you get started.

A Wealth of Webinars

After offering weekly webinars for many months, we’ve now built up an impressive library of content for members to explore at any time. Head over to the [2020 Convenings Page](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/2020-convening/) to find recordings for “Managing Burnout Through Self-Compassion,” “Justice Ginsburg’s Legacy and the Future of the Court,” and “AAUW Virtual Board Town Hall: Dues and Education Requirement.” Also be sure to watch “Programming During a Pandemic” to hear from fellow AAUW branch and state leaders. For more virtual fundraising ideas, take a look at [5 Ideas for Virtual Fundraising](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/state-branch/5-ideas-for-virtual-fundraising/). Thanks to all who give feedback on our post-webinar surveys. Have ideas for a webinar topic? Let us know by reaching out to [Equity@aauw.org](mailto:Equity@aauw.org).

File Your Form 990

All AAUW state and branch finance officers must file taxes with the IRS. If you did not complete the BRANCH FILE IRS FORM 990N located in the member services database so that the national office can file for you, then you must file independently at [www.irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov/) by November 15.

Verify Member Rosters

We urge membership vice presidents and finance officers to work together to verify your members using the Branch Member Roster in the [Member Services Database](https://ww3.aauw.org/login/?redirect_to=/aauw_redirect/wp_redirect_msd.php). After November 30, non-renewed members will be dropped from your branch roster and will not be able to renew online. AAUW benefits and services will be discontinued for anyone who has not renewed. Report any membership discrepancies to [connect@aauw.org](mailto:connect@aauw.org).

AAUW Welcomes New Legacy Circle Members

We gratefully acknowledge these visionary AAUW members and supporters who have recently joined the Legacy Circle: Jeane R. Caveness (California), Janet Key (Texas), Anne L. May (New Mexico), Martha Vaguener (Florida) and Louise K. Yakey (New Mexico). 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.