

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN (AAUW)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
November 14, 2025**

A videoconference meeting of the AAUW Board of Directors (the “Board”) was held on November 14, 2025. The meeting began at 1:00 pm Eastern time.

Directors Present:

Dianne Owens, Chair
Melissa LaDuke, Vice Chair
Christine Schmitz, Finance Chair
Hope Tryon Bennett
Aaliyah El-Amin
Jeanie Latz
Shaila Rao Mistry
Edwina Frances Martin*
Hope Ricciotti
Auntaneshia Staveloz
Monique Taylor
Mayida Zaal
Gloria Blackwell, CEO (ex officio)
*Joined late

Directors Absent:

Kimberly Adams
Jenna Kirkpatrick Howard
Sona Pancholy

Staff Present:

Ortencia Arellano, Director of Fellowships & Grants
Carsyn Baxter, Senior Associate, Special Projects
Katrina Sun Breese, Senior Director, Institutional Advancement
Tom Chappell, Vice President of Finance

Guests Present:

Michelle Beckenbaugh, Mercer International
Scott Goldschmidt, Thompson Coburn, LLC
Rebecca Joyce, Mercer International

Call to Order and Welcome

Dianne Owens, Board Chair, called the meeting to order stating a quorum was present. After an introductory exercise, Ms. Owens appointed Jeanie Latz as secretary pro tem for the meeting in Sona Pancholy’s absence.

Strategic Plan and Organizational Updates

The CEO reviewed the three pillars of the AAUW Strategic Plan:

- Providing educational funding for women
- Championing inclusive policies in higher education and the workplace
- Strengthening national branch alignment

Ortencia Arellano detailed the recent awards of \$5.3 million to 222 fellows and grantees through six award programs. The awardees participate in 42 institutions of higher education and represent 33 different countries. Fifty-six percent are first generation students; 60% lead single parent households; and 23% reside in states with lower-than-average incomes.

Ms. Arellano also discussed the impacts of the shifting higher education landscape on the AAUW Fellows including academic & professional instability; increased stress and disillusionment; diminished sense of belonging; loss of confidence in institutions; and travel bans and visa delays. In response to these challenges, she previewed a new community engagement strategy with key objectives of providing programming which will enhance network support for awardees and deliver a lasting, equitable impact.

Branch Alignment Activities

Melissa LaDuke detailed the recent Liaison meetings with the state presidents. She summarized some of the learnings from the calls. The presidents seek timely, readily access to needed information and are especially interested in a tutorial on the financial aspects of collecting dues and the resulting paperwork. Ms. LaDuke reviewed the dates on the next meetings and asked the directors to attend whenever possible.

Mercer Investment Update

Christine Schmitz, Investment Committee Chair, introduced Michelle Beckenbaugh and Rebecca Joyce, representatives of Mercer International, who joined the meeting. Ms. Beckenbaugh described the acquisition by Mercer Global Advisors of GRF, AAUW's former investment advisors. She described the long-standing trust which has developed between the parties.

Ms. Beckenbaugh commented on the strong performance of the portfolio with all sectors performing well. She acknowledged that this high level of growth should not be expected over the longer-term.

Ms. Joyce then reviewed the asset allocations of the portfolio and the risk/reward performance. She also addressed adjustments to the allocations given the future expectations of the market and acknowledged the amount of risk in the market. She advised Mercer's services also included an annual review of the Investment Policy Statement.

Ms. Schmitz concluded the presentation with a comment about the extensive background and knowledge of the members of the Investment Committee.

Higher Education Challenges-- Legal Perspective

Scott Goldschmidt, a partner with Thompson Colburn, LLC, then joined the meeting. As a former university deputy general counsel, Mr. Goldschmidt advised that he currently provides higher education institutions and other education entities with a general counsel's assessment of legal, regulatory and compliance challenges. Matters discussed confidentially, to maintain the attorney-client privilege, included: (1) the current state of the Department of Education; (2) potential risks to organizations supporting higher education; and (3) Board assessment of and strategies to manage such risks.

After discussion, Mr. Goldschmidt left the meeting.

Endowment Background and Opportunities

Katrina Breese provided an overview of AAUW's endowed funds—how they have been solicited, restricted, and managed. AAUW now manages 915 named endowed funds across three major programs. The guiding principle in the management of the funds is to honor the spirit of the donor intent rather than the literal wording when necessary to provide relevant and impactful assistance.

Ms. Breese also outlined current issues and strategic considerations in higher education and proposed a number of opportunities for AAUW to consider in response, such as (1) broadening eligibility for grants to nontraditional scholars, hybrid academic-professional roles, and interdisciplinary research; (2) modernizing donor alignment in ways that honor donor intent; (3) updating impact metrics measuring leadership, innovation, and community outcomes; and (4) reengaging donors by sharing stories that link fellows' work to donors' visions.

Strategic Plan Tracking and Progress

Tom Chappell reviewed the highlights of the October 31, 2025, financials and strategic plan dashboard for the same period emphasizing the sources of the current contributions and awards disbursed to recipients. He advised that as of the end of the first quarter, the Organization is on target for a year-end balanced budget.

Ms. Breese stated that the time for acquiring commitments for the year-end contribution match was drawing to a close--\$10,000 short of goal. She asked directors who had not yet contributed to the match to contact her after the meeting.

Ms. Blackwell reported on the advocacy goals stressing the increase in first-time action takers and active-action takers along with the number of advocates who composed and sent original letters to their Congressperson.

Committee Discussions

Ms. Owens facilitated discussions of the activities of the member-facing Board committees. The following initiatives were detailed.

Shaila Rao Mistry, Chair of the Governance Committee, reviewed the activities of the four subcommittees including the development of two toolkits— (1) a comprehensive toolkit helping branches operate more effectively by rightsizing; and (2) a toolkit providing step by step instructions for amending state and branch bylaws.

Ms. Breese discussed the inclusive practices of the Committee and the development of an upcoming webinar. Ms. Staveloz suggested utilizing the Committee’s help and expertise to assist the inclusive members task force.

Ms. Blackwell reported that the Public Policy and Advocacy Committee is also finalizing the content of a webinar about the different ways to reach out and influence one’s congressperson.

Ms. Owens, Chair of the Advancement Committee, explained the process of preparing the ongoing monthly newsletter that the Committee sends to the state presidents. She also described the Committee’s webinar scheduled for the following day which features the practices of four branches—Carlsbad, NM; North Hills Pittsburgh, PA; Rapid City, SD; and Morgan Hill, CA.—in growing membership.

Consent Agenda

Jeanie Latz then directed the Board’s attention to the Consent Agenda items, noting there are two items for action—the minutes of the September 2025 board meeting and the membership consent calendar. She also referenced two items for information purposes—the September 2025 Finance Memo and the October 1, 2025 Executive Committee minutes.

There being no further discussion and following a motion and a second, the Board approved the following resolutions:

Resolution Approving the Minutes of the September 17, 2025 Board Meeting

The Board of Directors of AAUW approves the minutes of the September 17, 2025 board meeting as presented.

Resolution Approving the Membership Consent Calendar

The Board of Directors of AAUW approves the Membership Consent Calendar dated October 31, 2025, as presented.

Other Business

Hearing no other business, Ms. Owens thanked Ms. Blackwell and the staff for their time and adjourned to Executive Session.

Executive Session

The Board met in a short Executive Session with the Board members in attendance.

Adjournment

The meeting was then adjourned.