

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN (AAUW)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

December 17, 2025

A videoconference meeting of the AAUW Board of Directors (the “Board”) was held on December 17, 2025. The meeting began at 4:05 PM Eastern time.

Directors Present:

Dianne Owens, Chair

Melissa LaDuke, Vice Chair

Christine Schmitz, Finance Chair

Sona Pancholy, Secretary

Kimberly Adams

Hope Tryon Bennett

Aaliyah El-Amin

Jenna Kirkpatrick Howard

Jeanie Latz

Edwina Frances Martin

Gloria Blackwell, CEO (ex officio)

Staff Present:

Carsyn Baxter, Senior Associate, Special Projects

Tamela Blalock, Senior Director, Operations & Administration

Katrina Sun Breese, Senior Director, Institutional Advancement

Tom Chappell, Vice President, Finance

Meghan Kissell, Senior Director, Policy and Member Advocacy

Guest Present:

Jennifer McCahill, GRF CPA and Advisors

Directors Absent:

Shaila Rao Mistry

Hope Ricciotti

Auntaneshia Staveloz

Monique Taylor

Mayida Zaal

Call to Order and Welcome

Dianne Owens, Board Chair, called the meeting to order stating a quorum was present. The Chair reminded the directors of the rules governing the meeting including the organization's Civility Statement. After a brief introductory ice breaker, Ms. Owens turned the meeting over to Ms. Jenna Howard, Chair of the Audit Committee.

2025 Financial and Pension Audits

Ms. Howard introduced Ms. Jennifer McCahill from GRF CPA and Advisors to report on the results of the recent audit. Ms. Howard advised that the Audit Committee had held pre-audit discussions with the external auditors and reviewed the year-end financial statements, as provided to the Board, in detail.

GFR has served AAUW for 5 years now. GRF conducts an independent audit of consolidated financials, and two required communications letters. They also help prepare federal and state tax forms and audit the organization's two retirement plans.

Ms. McCahill reported that the auditing process had proceeded as expected. She reviewed the required communications relevant to the auditing standards and auditing methodology, noting there were no new standards adopted to consider. GRF reviewed estimated notes in the financials which if they were to change may impact the results. They have confirmed the reasonableness and methodology in preparing the estimates.

There were no difficulties in performing the audit, and the staff are very well prepared for this process. Ms. Cahill noted that the process demonstrates good financial

management throughout the year. She noted there were no disagreements with management, and no material misstatements were identified during the audit.

After reviewing the audit letters, she advised that the audit opinion provided was unmodified (clean). Ms. McCahill then reviewed and commented on the financial statements. There were no recommendations and no material or significant findings.

There being no questions or comments, the following motion was made, seconded and approved.

Resolution Accepting AAUW's FY 2025 Audited Financials

The Board of Directors of AAUW accepts AAUW's FY 2025 Audited Financials as presented to the Board.

Ms. McCahill and Mr. Tom Chappell, Vice President, Finance then left the meeting.

Ms. Owens then called upon Ms. Gloria Blackwell, CEO, and Ms. Meghan Kissell, Senior Director of Policy and Member Advocacy, to provide updates.

Organizational and Strategic Plan Updates

Ms. Blackwell began by introducing Ms. Tamela Blalock, Senior Director of Operations and Administration, and she noted the extensive onboarding underway. Ms. Blackwell also described year-end staff training, survey discussions, and time spent celebrating the team's success.

She noted the highly successful alumnae recognition event, recognizing Ms. Auntaneshia Staveloz for her role in hosting the discussions. Ms. Blackwell highlighted the strong attendance from current fellows, members, and previous leaders of AAUW national and the event's ability to contribute to significant brand development through social media engagement.

Focusing on audience development and increased engagement are key strategic initiatives. Views, impressions, and the number of contacts across all channels are increasing. The Fellowship & Grants programs help further this significantly. As does events such as AAUW's participation at the United Nations General Assembly.

Ms. Blackwell noted that the strategic dashboard update is in the materials circulated to the board. Of particular note is that alumnae giving has significantly increased between November and December, demonstrating success on key strategic initiatives.

The Policy team continues to be front and center in how AAUW remains visible and demonstrates value. Ms. Blackwell called upon Ms. Kissell to provide further update.

Ms. Kissell noted the unusual policy landscape in that higher education and policy actions related to agencies and regulatory matters are demanding greater attention. AAUW has experienced some higher education speakers reluctant to speak due to concerns of attacks on their institutions.

As the team prepares for 2026, Ms. Kissell noted that the implementation of the so-called “Big Beautiful Bill” will have implications for AAUW’s constituents, for example, the definition of professions and the impact that will have on access to student loans.

Ms. Kissell reminded the Board that the policy team is focused on member engagement and increasing the number of activated members. AAUW branches were visible at “No Kings” marches, Ms. Blackwell spoke on voting rights, and AAUW is participating in upcoming Supreme Court cases on transgender rights. The national team has experienced increased speaker requests - up to 46 from 24 last year. By attending the state liaison calls the local leaders are more aware of support from the national team.

Both Ms. Kissell and Ms. Blackwell noted the partnership with League of Women Voters and the opportunity that provides at both national and at the branches. Overall, they report that AAUW is beginning to see the impact of these efforts.

Ms. Owens then called upon Katrina Sun Breese, Senior Director, Institutional Advancement.

Branch Alignment and 5-Star Survey

Ms. Breese provided an update regarding progress related to branch alignment. A significant focus has been to ensure increased responses to the survey. This past year 400+ branches responded.

For 155 branches who did not respond, Ms. Breese and the team are trying to understand the barrier to completing the survey. They have engaged state presidents and state liaisons and provided them a poll to seek information. So far 19 responses have come in with a February deadline.

Based on initial data, Ms. Breese noted that 25% reported not knowing about the survey or having missed the invite. Some did not realize they needed to complete. The next most significant reason was individuals were unsure of the reason or the purpose for the survey. Other reasons cited were timing, uncertainty of the branch’s future, lack of leadership, or too few members. Outlier responses noted technical issues, preference for paper or request for a phone survey.

As the team prepared for the coming year’s survey they will take this into consideration. They are considering a future shift in communications to call attention to the affiliate agreements, which require reporting to national - adding to the “mandatory” communication in this year’s language.

Ms. Breese has set a goal of 100% participation and she shared ideas on steps the team will take to reach that goal. In her conclusion, she noted that this is one part of the overall strategy to increase membership and drive financial impact - gaining a better understanding of the branches, ensuring alignment, and engagement are critical to further those goals. This year’s survey will launch in April.

Ms. Mel LaDuke, Vice Chair, noted that state liaisons have identified some of the information that they would like to help ease their effort and the team is working to meet those as feasible.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Pancholy then directed the Board's attention to the Consent Agenda items, noting there are two items for action, namely the minutes of the November 2025 board meeting and the membership consent calendar. She also noted that the minutes of the November Executive Committee meeting were included.

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

Resolution Approving the Minutes of the August 6, 2025 Board Meeting

The Board of Directors of AAUW approves the minutes of the November 14, 2025 board meeting as presented.

Resolution Approving the Membership Consent Calendar

The Board of Directors of AAUW approves the Membership Consent Calendar dated December 2, 2025, as presented.

Ms. Pancholy then called attention to the Board Effectiveness Survey, reminding members of the importance of their input reflecting how the board overall and they individually are fulfilling our roles.

Other Business

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

Executive Session

The Board met in Executive Session with attending Board members present. There was a brief discussion regarding a desire to understand whether there continues to be a focus on increasing national membership and what steps are underway towards that.

After review, there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 PM.