

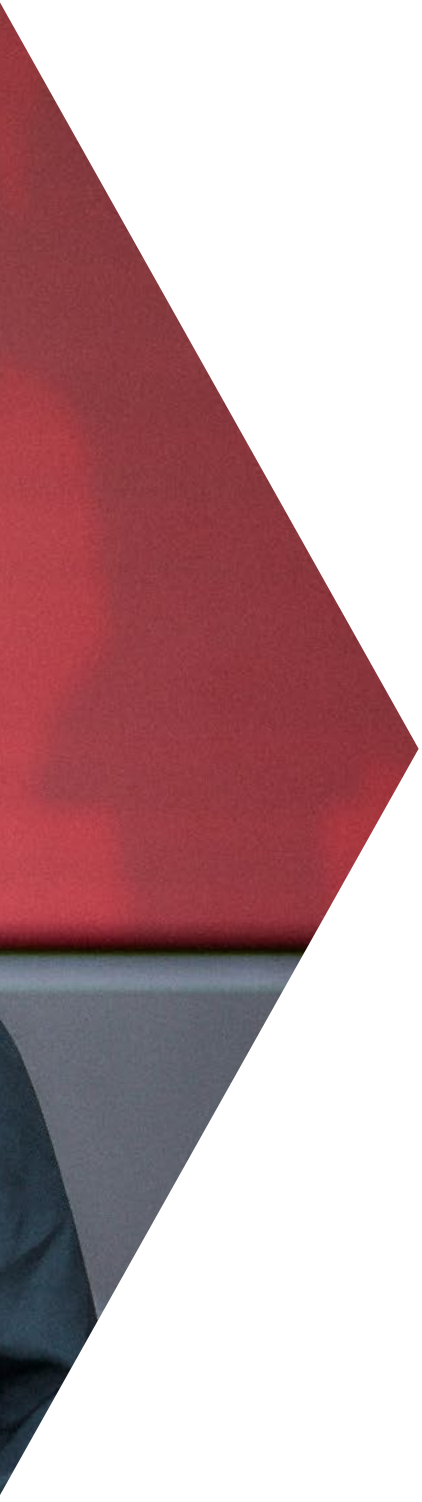
AAUW

# Focused Forward

**FY26 Annual Report** (July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026)
American Association of University Women (AAUW)

Advancing Equity for Women and Girls through Research, Education, and Advocacy





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(LEFT)
**Jolie Sifa Kpaka,**
International Fellow, 2025–26

(FRONT COVER)
**Brianna Huynh,**
Selected Professions
Fellow, 2025–26

# This Is What Focused Looks Like

## OUR MISSION

***AAUW advances equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.***

AAUW is the largest noninstitutional funder of women's graduate education. Though we are nonpartisan, we are not values-neutral. We advocate for federal, state, and local laws and policies that remove barriers to higher education and the workplace.

## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



### 1 Invest in Women's Potential

Expand pathways to higher education, research, and leadership by investing directly in women, particularly those in underrepresented fields.



### 2 Advocate for Lasting Change

Advance inclusive policies that remove barriers to success in higher education and workplaces.



### 3 Strengthen Our Collective Impact

Equip AAUW's branches, states, and supporters to advance our mission while strengthening the financial and operational foundation needed for lasting impact.

# OUR STRATEGIC IMPACT IN FY26

## We turned investment into opportunity for women's potential.

**$125M** in endowed funds
from nearly **1,000** completed endowments

**$6.4M** awarded
in fellowships & grants to **269** women and organizations

Among FY26 women directly funded:
**42%** are first-generation college students,
**36%** lead or hail from single-parent households, and
**62%** are women of color

**$1M+** in global impact
Out of the $6.4M awarded, **$1M** went to women in 34 countries, covering 39 International Fellowships, and 7 International Project Grants

## We turned research into tools to advocate for lasting change.

**3,300+** people
advocated for change with AAUW for the first time

**1,800+ women** registered for Salary Negotiation and Financial Literacy trainings

**6,295 public comments** challenging proposals threatening gender equity

**4x** the typical U.S. raise:
Level Up negotiators averaged 14% vs. 3.6% nationally

## We moved as one national network to strengthen our collective impact.

**156% increase**
in Five-Star Branch achievements, rising from 57 in FY25 to 146 in FY26

**1M** users
viewed the website 1.5M times

**$6.2M**
contributed in dues and donations

**Top-Rated** for fiscal responsibility:
4-star Charity Navigator rating and Candid Platinum Seal of Transparency

# A Message from our CEO



**Dear AAUW Community,**

Higher education came under pressure. Protections women fought hard to win were called into question. Nonprofits committed to equity in education felt the ground shift beneath them, and many of our peers pulled back. AAUW did not. We stayed focused. We kept funding women. We kept speaking out. And we kept faith with a mission that has carried us for over 145 years.

Fiscal year 2026, which ran from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 (FY26), was the first full year of our 2025 Strategic Plan in action, and it proved its worth. The plan became our compass, shaping priorities, guiding decisions, and directing every resource toward the work that matters most. Staff, members, branches, donors, alumnae, and advocates rallied behind a shared purpose. We strengthened our advocacy, deepened our engagement, and built an AAUW with the impact and staying power to last.

Here's what that looked like: We funded fellowships and grants to help women pursue higher education and invested in community programs supporting women and girls. We stood up for higher education when it was under attack. We gave alumnae new ways to stay connected to the mission. We equipped branches and states with new tools, and we mobilized supporters around the issues that matter most.

We did it all for one reason. When women can take their full place in society's intellectual, economic, academic, and professional life, everyone rises. It starts with education. That is where opportunity, economic security, and gender equity take root, and that is why this mission is worth fighting for and funding every single day.

None of this happened alone. In an extraordinarily challenging year, our community rose to meet the moment. Members walked the halls of Capitol Hill and made their voices heard in statehouses. Donors gave generously, then gave again, carrying us past our goals even as the need kept growing. Alumnae stayed close and lent their voices to the cause. Branches organized, advocated, and welcomed new members. Panelists reviewed applications, and we awarded the next generation of scholars. And our staff made every dollar go further, amplifying AAUW's voice, strengthening support for awardees, and building a more stable financial future. So, when people ask what AAUW is made of, the answer is simple. We are people who stand up, speak out, and refuse to stop moving forward.

We close this year more unified, more focused, and better positioned than ever to grow our impact. And we are not slowing down. The true measure of this year is not only what we accomplished, but what we built in the systems, relationships, and financial foundation that will sustain our progress.

"Focused Forward" is more than a title. It is how we met this moment, and it is how we will meet whatever comes next. Together, with clarity and courage, and with an unwavering commitment to equity for women and girls, we move forward. Our best work is still ahead of us, and I can't wait to build it with you.

With gratitude and resolve,

*Gloria L. Blackwell*

**Gloria L. Blackwell**
Chief Executive Officer, AAUW

# A Message from our Board Chair



**Dear Friends,**

My AAUW story began long before I chaired its Board. I have served this organization at every level, from branch and state leadership to national service, and I have supported it as both a volunteer and a donor. Every step has deepened my belief in this community and in what we can do together. That is why serving as your Board Chair is such a privilege and an honor.

Over the years, I have watched AAUW turn commitment into real change in women's lives. Fellowships and grants open doors for scholars, professionals, and community leaders. Research and programs turn knowledge into action, helping women learn, lead, advance, and shape their own futures. Advocacy carries our collective voice into the rooms where decisions about education, work, and community are made. And behind it all is a force that rarely makes headlines but makes everything possible: financial and operational strength.

People like you build that strength. Your generosity provides a diversified base of support that enables AAUW to remain independent, adapt quickly, and keep its commitments in an uncertain year. Planned gifts create resources that will support women for generations. Annual gifts provide the steady funding that powers our programs, advocacy, research, and operations right now. And gifts to AAUW's Greatest Needs, Public Policy, and Defending Higher Education funds give us the freedom to act the moment a challenge arises. That flexibility kept us focused throughout FY26.

Now we have to keep building. Every gift, whatever its size or form, makes AAUW more resilient, more responsive, and better prepared for whatever lies ahead. It is a vote of confidence in AAUW's mission and in a future where every woman and girl has the opportunity she deserves. It is a promise that AAUW will be here to fund the next scholar, equip the next advocate, strengthen the next community, and meet the next challenge with focus and resolve.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for standing with AAUW and for investing in the strength behind our impact. Your generosity powers the work in front of us today and carries it forward for generations of women still to come. I am proud to do this work alongside you.

Warmly,

*Dianne Owens*

**Dianne Owens**
Chair, AAUW Board of Directors
AAUW Lompoc-Vandenberg (CA) Branch



**Di Jin,** American Postdoc Leave Fellow, 2025-26 conducting research in the lab

# Together, We Met the Moment

In a year when many women faced growing barriers to educational and professional opportunity, AAUW's independence from federal funding allowed us to keep fellowships, grants, and programs going without interruption. Members, donors, and advocates came together to ensure women could keep pursuing their degrees, their research, and their leadership — even as higher education, diversity and inclusion programs, and federal supports faced mounting pressure. Their collective generosity funded scholars across the country and around the world, strengthened communities, and made clear that opportunity for women would continue, no matter the climate.

*"I am a third generation member and most motivated by AAUW's mission to allow women all rights and opportunities given to white men in this country."*

**— Donna Holmes,** AAUW Sacramento Inc. (CA) Branch

**In Memoriam: Dr. Bets Brown, Former Member, AAUW Waterville Area (ME) Branch**

Dr. Herb Wilson, in accordance with the last will of his wife Dr. Bets Brown, established the **Sarah Woodin & David Wethey Endowed Career Development Grant**. In her last days, Bets, a 1981–82 Career Development Grant recipient, and Herb established this endowed fund in honor of their mentors who have helped steward brilliant careers and lasting friendships. This **$192,000 gift** will provide up to $8,000 a year to women looking to advance their careers, change fields, or re-enter the workforce.




*"Receiving AAUW's Award was truly life changing. Without this award, I would not have graduated. The fellowship gave me financial stability and peace of mind to focus on my research."*

— **Paula Lezama,** American Dissertation Fellow, 2025–2026

## Supporting Women's Potential

Powered by the generosity of its supporters, AAUW awarded nearly $6.4 million in support to 269 scholars, professionals, plaintiffs, and community organizations during the 2025–26 award year:

- **144 American Fellowships** totaling $3,998,000 — *Advancing scholarship and research*
- **39 International Fellowships** totaling $920,000 — *Opening doors to global scholars*
- **20 Selected Professions Fellowships** totaling $400,000 — *Opening pathways into underrepresented fields*
- **28 Career Development Grants** totaling $178,615 — *Powering career advancement and transition*
- **25 Community Action Grants** totaling $593,778 — *Creating early pathways for girls in STEM*
- **7 International Project Grants** totaling $100,000 — *Turning alumnae leadership into community impact*
- **6 Legal Advocacy Fund cases** totaling $195,000 — *Case support addressing systemic challenges*

This support reached awardees across 42 states and U.S. territories and 34 countries. **Behind the numbers was a clear signal of demand: 3,066 women applied, a testament to how many are still reaching for opportunity — and how much this support matters.**



**Hana Arts,** Community Action Grantee, 2025–26

**$6.4 million**

in funding to 269 scholars and community organizations

## Lives Changed, Communities Strengthened

The women supported by AAUW's community are researchers, educators, entrepreneurs, and changemakers worldwide whose work reaches far beyond their own careers. At the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, AAUW fellowship and grant alumnae took the stage at a United Nations General Assembly side event in New York City "From Scholarship to Solidarity". This demonstrates how educational opportunity becomes a catalyst for collective action and lasting change. Additionally, in May 2026, AAUW joined women's rights organizations worldwide in calling for gender equality to remain central to the UN80 reform process — strengthening UN Women, protecting gender-focused programs, and preserving meaningful civil-society engagement. These efforts reflect a community committed to expanding opportunity for women and defending the forums where their rights, representation, and leadership are advanced.



**Gloria L. Blackwell,** AAUW CEO, at "From Scholarship to Solidarity," an AAUW side event during the 70th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70) in New York City.

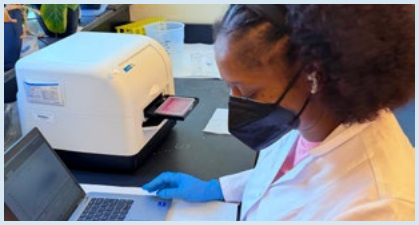
### 2025–26 Awardees Creating Global Change




**Hadiza Abdullahi** (International Project Grantee) — used her grant to launch STEMifyHer in Northern Nigeria, which empowers young women in STEM through capacity building, leadership, and innovation, reaching 440 participants and 74 mentors and opening new pathways for girls in science and technology.



**T'erra Ross** (Career Development Grantee) — started LeadHERship Circle in Denver, CO, which equips girls in grades 9–12 with the skills, confidence, and community to lead with equity, authenticity, and compassion. Girls saw a 68% improvement in grades in eight weeks.



**Grace Kyei** (International Fellow) — published four peer-reviewed articles. Her work in Ghana addresses vaccine hesitancy and gender roles, informing public health policy and cancer prevention in low-resource settings.

## We Stood Up for the Conditions That Allow Women to Thrive

In October 2025, Gloria joined members on the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court during *Louisiana v. Callais* to speak out for voting rights and fair representation. As new barriers to voting rights emerged, AAUW mobilized its largest federal advocacy effort of the year, with **nearly 15,000 letters written by members** and supporters opposing the SAVE Act. Alongside members and coalition partners, AAUW spoke out against attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion and stepped up in a year when many questioned the value of higher education — reaching audiences through **22 media mentions**, more than **1.5 million website views** from **1 million users**, and over **1 million social media views.**



**Gloria L. Blackwell,** AAUW CEO at the *Louisiana v. Callais* rally at the Supreme Court. Voting rights are civil rights, and fair representation gives women, especially women of color, a voice in the decisions that shape their education, pay, and opportunities.



*"The support I received as a Selected Professions Fellow helped shape my path — and I've seen firsthand how access to opportunity can change lives. I'm inspired by AAUW's commitment to ensuring that every woman has the chance to reach her fullest potential and, in doing so, lift others along the way."*

— **Yie-Hsin Hung,** Selected Professions Fellow, 1985-86, Alumnae Recognition Award Winner 2025, and CEO of State Street Investments

## The Impact Endures

In FY26, alumnae stepped into the spotlight. AAUW presented its first in-person Alumnae Recognition Award since the pandemic to **Yie-Hsin Hung, a 1985–86 Selected Professions Fellow** and one of Forbes' *100 Most Powerful Women* — honoring a career that began with an AAUW fellowship.

We also built lasting ways for alumnae to stay close to the mission beyond their award year. We launched a new Community Action Grant Impact Network and newsletter that keeps current and former grantees connected to AAUW and to one another through quarterly case study meetings. In these meetings, grantees come together to work on a specific issue, providing a community of experts with solutions and support.

### Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF)

Founded in 1981 by AAUW members, the Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) has provided millions of dollars in support to help level the playing field for individuals advancing gender equity through the legal system. In FY26, AAUW provided **$195,000 to six cases** addressing persistent systemic challenges: workplace discrimination, campus policies that silence survivors, and unequal treatment of women in athletics and academia.




**AAUW members** on the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court during *Louisiana v. Callais* to speak out for voting rights and fair representation.



(FROM LEFT TO RIGHT)
AAUW Alumnae: **Sandra Castro,** Ph.D., Senior Associate Dean, College of Professional and Continuing Studies, Adelphi University; **Gloria L. Blackwell,** AAUW CEO; **Sophia Dadas,** Head of Market Growth & Transformation - Consumer Banking & Lending, Wells Fargo; **Anna Mahoney,** Ph.D., Executive Director, Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Public Policy, Dartmouth College

# People Powered the Mission

## With Gratitude — Donor Recognition

AAUW's mission is powered by a community of supporters who give generously and consistently. We are honored to recognize the donors whose commitment sustained our work in FY26.




**Bani Mahadeva,** pictured far right

### Champion Donor

In 1954, **Bani Mahadeva,** AAUW Greater Rochester Area (NY) Branch, left India for UCLA as an AAUW International Fellow. She went on to found one of the first Women's Studies programs in the U.S. at the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh. Today, as a Legacy Circle member and AAUW member since 1968, she is paying it forward by funding International Project Grants so other women can reach their dreams.



*"Without the support of AAUW, I would not have been able to afford graduate school. This financial flexibility opens pathways for me to pursue my professional goals, and for that, I am deeply grateful."*

**— Casey Hanauer,** Selected Professions Fellow, 2025–26

## AAUW Champions

**$5,000+ Fiscal Year Cumulative Giving**

### $50,000+

Bani Mahadeva

### $20,000–29,999

Diane Boose

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### $10,000–19,999

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**The community came together to advance equity for all through two matching gift campaigns:**

- **December National Match:** 116 members of the organization's leadership community — National Committees, Board, staff, state presidents, and volunteer leaders — contributed over $105K to build the match pool, inspiring an additional $129K from the broader AAUW community, bringing the total to $234K raised in support of equity for women and girls.
- **Public Policy Match:** In June, an anonymous donor honored her mother with a historic $250,000 gift to inspire a matching gift campaign for AAUW's Public Policy and Member Advocacy work, advocacy for pay equity, workplace protections, and Title IX enforcement.



**Sumeyye Seker,** International Doctoral Degree Fellow, 2025–26

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Mary Zupanc

## AAUW Legacy Gifts

**We honor the following donors whose bequests and other planned gifts were received during FY26.**

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Jacqueline Ostergaard
Haim Schlick
Gayle Taylor
Mary Thompson
Marilyn Wasserkrug
Sylvia Wedmore
Ada Belle Clark Welsh
Marina Whitman

## AAUW New Legacy Circle Members

**We welcome the following donors who joined the Legacy Circle in FY26 by including AAUW in their estate plans.**

Rebecca Ahrendsen,
AAUW Clarion (IA) Branch

Patricia Ashe,
AAUW Asheville and The GEM Fund (NC)

Michelle Baer,
AAUW California Online Branch

Virginia Baxter,
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AAUW Mission Viejo-Saddleback Valley (CA) Branch

Jeane Lindeke,
AAUW Chicago Inc. (IL) and AAUW Boulder (CO) Branch

Jennifer Malherbe,
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Martha Manske,
AAUW Gresham Area (OR) Branch

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AAUW St. Louis (MO) Branch

Denise Montoya,
AAUW Long Beach Inc. (CA) Branch

Sigrid Moranz,
AAUW Laguna Beach (CA) Branch

Denise Murden,
AAUW Portsmouth (VA) Branch

Danielle Oswald,
AAUW Alexandria (VA) Branch

Deborah Roney,
AAUW Huntingdon (PA) Branch and AAUW Washington (DC) Branch

Susan Rudolph,
AAUW Northeast Tarrant County (TX) Branch

Su Ryden,
AAUW Aurora (CO) Branch

Karen Schulz,
AAUW Wheaton-Glen Ellyn NFP (IL) Branch

Katherine Seidl,
AAUW Harrisburg (PA) Branch

Cheryl Spraetz,
AAUW Longmont (CO) Branch

Cynthia Strange,
AAUW Colorado Springs (CO) Branch

Marilyn Van Ausdall,
AAUW Monmouth Area (IL) Branch

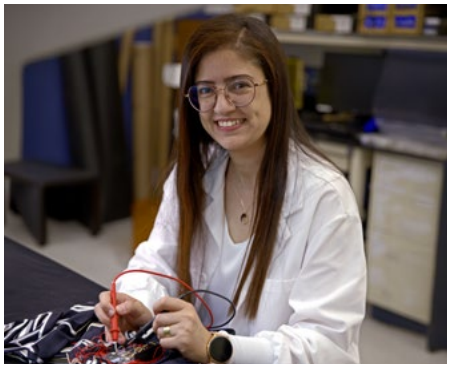
Kay Yount,
AAUW Tarrant County (TX) Branch

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If you would like to learn more about the **Legacy Circle,** email planned-giving@aauw.org.

## Corporate and Organizational Supporters

We thank our coalition allies and our corporate and foundation supporters, including **The Coca-Cola Foundation, Joseph Weston Foundation, Brides for a Cause, Moderna Charitable, Liberty Mutual, and Morgan Stanley,** whose investments powered economic empowerment programs, fellowships and grants, and AAUW's Greatest Needs Fund.



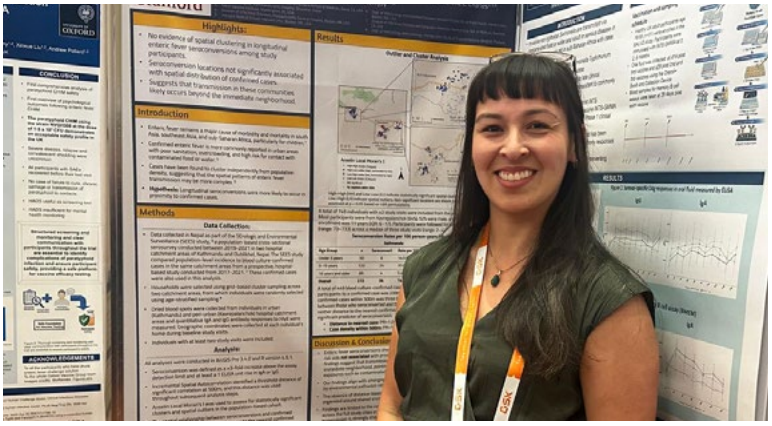
**Rawan Omar,** International Fellow, 2025–26, conducting research



**Miami Dade College Foundation, Inc,** Community Action Grantee, 2025–26

# One Issue, Every Angle: Pay Equity

Unrestricted giving lets us take on pay equity from every angle. Through research, *The (Not So) Simple Truth About the Gender Pay Gap* gave women and policymakers clear numbers on how the gap affects different women. Through education, our negotiation training helped women learn their worth and ask for it. Through advocacy, members, alumnae, and partners pushed for policies that close the gap for good. We worked on one issue in three ways, and flexible support from donors made all of it possible.



**Kristina Lai,** American Dissertation Fellow, 2025–26, presenting a poster at an international conference

## The Evidence

AAUW's research report, *The (Not So) Simple Truth About the Gender Pay Gap*, revealed the reality that **the gender pay gap tells very different stories for different women**. In 2024, women working full-time, year-round earned 81 cents for every dollar men earned. When we consider all working women — including part-time and seasonal workers — women earned 76 cents per dollar. Over a 40-year career, the gap for full-time workers adds up to about **$542,800 in lost wages.** For many women of color, the losses are far higher, **exceeding $1 million over a lifetime** — while women with disabilities, LGBTQ+ women, and caregivers face additional barriers to economic security.

**Women's earnings ratio compared with men, 2022–2024**
Full-time, year-round workers vs. all workers (including part-time and seasonal workers)

| All women vs. all men | 2024 | 2023 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Working Full-time, Year-round (%) | 81 | 83 | 84 |
| All workers (%) (Including Full-time, Part-time, and Seasonal Workers) | 76 | 75 | 78 |

Source: AAUW analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data.

The findings underscore why AAUW's commitment to equity remains urgent — and why education alone cannot overcome inequities built into how work is valued and paid. **This year, we put that research to work, turning evidence into tools and action across the country.**

## March 26

**Equal Pay Day** fell on March 26, 2026 and people came looking for the facts. AAUW made sure they were there. Our **The (Not So) Simple Truth** page was visited over 9,000 times. And people didn't just read; they took the tools and ran with them:

- **6,500+** downloads of *The (Not So) Simple Truth About the Gender Pay Gap*
- **258** downloads of the Equal Pay Day Calendar
- **98** downloads of the Branch Action Toolkit



*"Today I led a workshop for a nationally recognized organization, coaching women I genuinely admire, doing work that feels like it was always meant to find me. Watching these women step into the clarity of who they are and what they're building reminded me exactly why I do this work."*

**Dr. Jamelia Harris,** American Dissertation Fellow, 2020–21 and Level Up Program Consultant



*"Higher education is one of the strongest pillars of American democracy and economic mobility. Weakening it weakens the country's future. And for women who stand to gain the most economically from advanced education while still earning far less than men, the damage could last for generations. There is still time to choose a different path."*

— **Gloria L. Blackwell,** AAUW CEO in "The Real Target in America's War on Higher Education", Inside HigherEd

## A Solution: Education in Action

In FY26, we paired research on pay inequity with practical education like Level Up and advocacy, recognizing that individual action alone cannot close the gap.

AAUW's Level Up: Salary Negotiation Program empowered a cohort of 20 women with the confidence and skills to negotiate fair compensation and advance their careers. The nine-month program, funded by The Coca-Cola Foundation, combined AAUW's Work Smart training, coaching, and peer support, culminating in a ceremony celebrating participants' hard work.

That skill-building reached far beyond a single cohort. Through AAUW's Virtual Economic Empowerment Webinars — Work Smart, Start Smart, and Money Smart — **more than 1,800 women registered this year, bringing our total reach to over 190,000 women to date.**

AAUW carried this work to the next generation at NCCWSL 2026 ("Built for This Moment," May 27–30, 2026). Among the hundreds of students who attended, eight participated through AAUW-funded scholarships, joining Money Smart and Advocacy in Action sessions and hearing a keynote from Gloria L. Blackwell, CEO of AAUW. Thank you again to the donors who continue to support NCCWSL scholarships.

**Level Up: The Impact**

- 10 of 11 job seekers secured suitable positions
- 3 of 5 promotion seekers advanced
- 7 participants reported raises averaging 14%
- 100% of participants said they were very or extremely likely to recommend the Level Up Program



**AAUW members from Virginia, Maryland, and D.C.,** volunteer with AAUW's Lobby Corps to advocate on Capitol Hill joined by Meghan Kissell, AAUW Senior Director of Policy & Member Advocacy.




**Undergraduate scholarship recipients** with Gloria L. Blackwell, AAUW CEO at the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL).



**1,800+**

Start Smart, Work Smart, Money Smart registrants across 32 virtual and in-person trainings

*"I used the tactic from the value-statement workshop… successfully negotiating a two-level promotion with a substantial salary increase."*

**— Level Up participant**




**Kalina Majercak,** AAUW's Advocacy Manager, and policy intern **Fatima Roha** joined AAUW members at an event outside the U.S. Supreme Court.

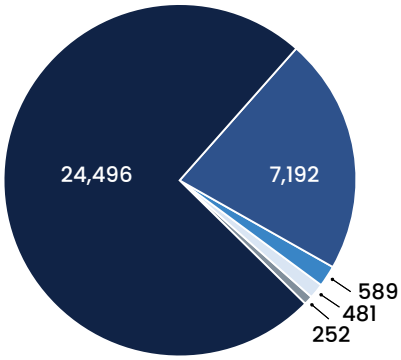
# We Moved as One

## Membership at a Glance

AAUW is a national network of branches and state affiliates working in local communities across the country. As one network, we go further when we move in the same direction. The Five-Star program has long helped make that possible. It gives branches a framework for success and keeps them aligned with the national organization and with one another. In FY26, more branches took part, aligning local work with the goals we hold in common. AAUW's public policy priorities did the same for our advocacy. They gave branches a clear focus for their local and state policy work, and they anchored Lobby Corps volunteers and advocates nationwide to the same agenda as the national office, so action at every level pointed toward the same goals. The AAUW National office also stepped up how often it shows up, joining more branch, state, and regional gatherings in-person and virtually so every part of the network feels more connected to the whole. One mission, moving together.

### AAUW Membership

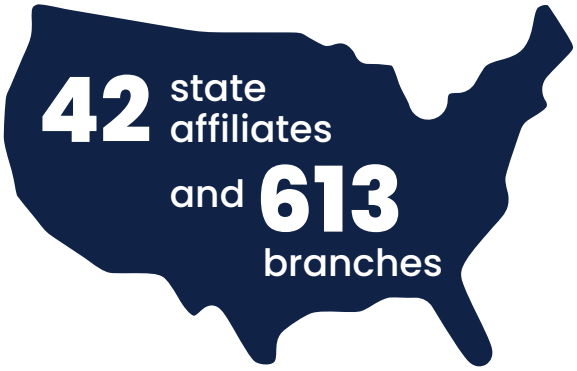
As of June 30, 2026




- **Branch Members: 24,496**
- **National Members: 7,192**
- **National Students: 589**
- **Branch Students: 481**
- **College/University Members: 252**

**Total 33,010**

## AAUW's Nationwide Network




**Top States by Members:**
California, Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois, Pennsylvania

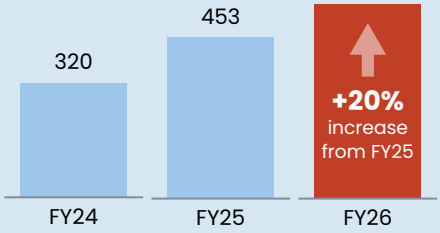
**Top States by Total Donations:**
California, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Virginia

**60+**
**in-person events**
attended by AAUW leadership and staff in FY26, turning national-to-branch connection into a real strategy for engagement.

## FY26 Branch and Affiliate Annual Report Highlights

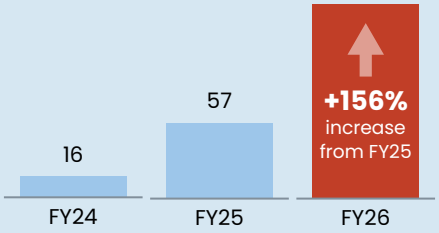
### Strong Engagement
Annual Report submissions increased

**545**
**Branch Submissions**




### Recognition Growth
Five-Star recognition increased

**146**
**Five-Star Branches**




The Five-Star criteria are about keeping branches mission-aligned and active in their communities. Categories include: Advancement, Public Policy & Advocacy, Governance & Sustainability, Programming, Communications & External Relations.

## One Network, One Picture

AAUW strengthened alignment across its nationwide network of branches, states, and affiliates by establishing a consistent way to understand our collective reach, impact, and progress. The Branch and Affiliate Annual Report gives the entire network one place to report results, helping us identify strengths, share effective practices, and advance our strategic priorities together. The Five-Star framework provides a guide for how branches can align their activities with AAUW's national priorities and with one another.



**Sara Pedraza,** International Doctoral Degree Fellow, 2025–26



**AAUW Lobby Corps volunteers** connect grassroots action to direct advocacy, visiting Capitol Hill twice a month to carry members' action alert messages to Congress.

## The Year in Collective Action

Across the country, AAUW advocates turned shared priorities into action — contacting decision-makers, submitting regulatory comments, and defending the policies and institutions that women's opportunity depends on.

## Boots on the Hill

Our **Lobby Corps** — the face of AAUW's advocacy for more than **50 years** — held **13 lobby days** and visited **467 congressional offices**, hand-delivering letters from **11 AAUW state affiliates** opposing the dismantling of the U.S. Department of Education.

**3,300**
people took action with AAUW for the first time

**6,295**
regulatory comments submitted in FY26

**14,879**
letters to Congress opposing the SAVE Act




**AAUW Lobby Corps volunteers**

> *"Being an AAUW member means standing alongside women who believe in education, opportunity, and lifting one another up. I am proud to be part of a community that turns those values into action."*
>
> — **Nelly Wadsworth,** AAUW North Shore Long Island (NY) Branch

## Stronger Together

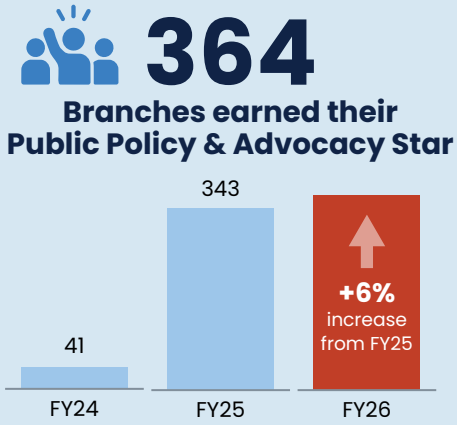
Women's full participation in civic life is essential to AAUW's mission to advance gender equity. We joined the League of Women Voters' **Unite & Rise 8.5** partnership, alongside the National Council of Jewish Women and YWCA USA, and published the **2026 Civic Engagement Guide** to equip members and supporters to mobilize their communities and bring more voices into our democracy.

## Where We Stood

In FY26, AAUW acted to protect:

- **Students' civil rights:** Defended Title IX and opposed dismantling the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights
- **Affordable higher education:** Defended Pell Grants and opposed new federal loan caps affecting graduate and professional students
- **Workplace equity:** Advocated for pay equity, paid leave, paid sick days, and protections against harassment and discrimination
- **Voting rights:** Opposed unnecessary documentary proof-of-citizenship requirements that could prevent eligible citizens from registering to vote

### Branches Earned Their Stars




364 branches earned their Public Policy & Advocacy Star in FY26, turning national priorities into local action.

### Lavona Grow Advocacy in Action Training

Lavona Grow, former AAUW McLean Area (VA) Branch member, spent nearly 40 years as an AAUW advocate — leading public policy for the Arlington Branch and being a familiar face on Capitol Hill with Lobby Corps. After she passed away in January 2026, her husband, Robert Denniston, made a $10,000 gift in her memory. The training series will help 20 branches and hundreds of members turn the issues they care about into action, just as Lavona did.




**AAUW Members** at the 1924 Convention

# We're Built to Last

Since our founding in 1881 by Marion Talbot and Ellen Swallow Richards, thoughtful leadership and responsible decision-making have built a strong, independent, and resilient organization. This enduring foundation gives us the freedom to pursue our mission with clarity, integrity, and purpose. As we look ahead, we will continue to honor that legacy through the same care and discipline.

### The Marion Talbot gift

Marion Talbot's great-niece and namesake donated her personal Paul Revere pattern Towle silverware set, engraved with her initials, along with a family heirloom silver platter, originally gifted to her parents for their wedding, to AAUW's National Archives this year. AAUW's archives are a collection of documents and objects that preserve the unique history and impact of our organization.





**Trinity Cookis,** American Dissertation Fellow, 2025–26, working at General Proximity after graduation

## How AAUW's Mission Is Funded

| | |
|---|---|
| • **Net Investment Income** | **$23,102,125** |
| • **Dues** | **$1,995,552** |
| • **Individual Giving** | **$1,872,773** |
| • **Planned Giving** | **$1,665,386** |
| • **Sublease Income** | **$1,115,944** |
| • **Branch Giving** | **$537,207** |
| • **Corporate & Affinity Partners** | **$178,718** |
| • **Other Income** | **$87,739** |
| **Total:** | **$30,555,445** |

Spreading our support across these streams means we're never dependent on any one source. We raise, earn, and manage this support carefully so as much as possible goes directly to the mission.




**Adriana Hernandez,** International Fellow, 2025–26, attending the Latino Policy Research Symposium

## Branches Make Us Stronger

Our branches bring AAUW to life in communities across the country. When a branch gives to National — to fellowships, to advocacy, to Greatest Needs — that support reaches well beyond any single community. It strengthens the shared mission that connects every member, in every state, to work larger than one branch could take on alone. Like many organizations built on local chapters, we are at our strongest when local effort and national purpose move in the same direction.

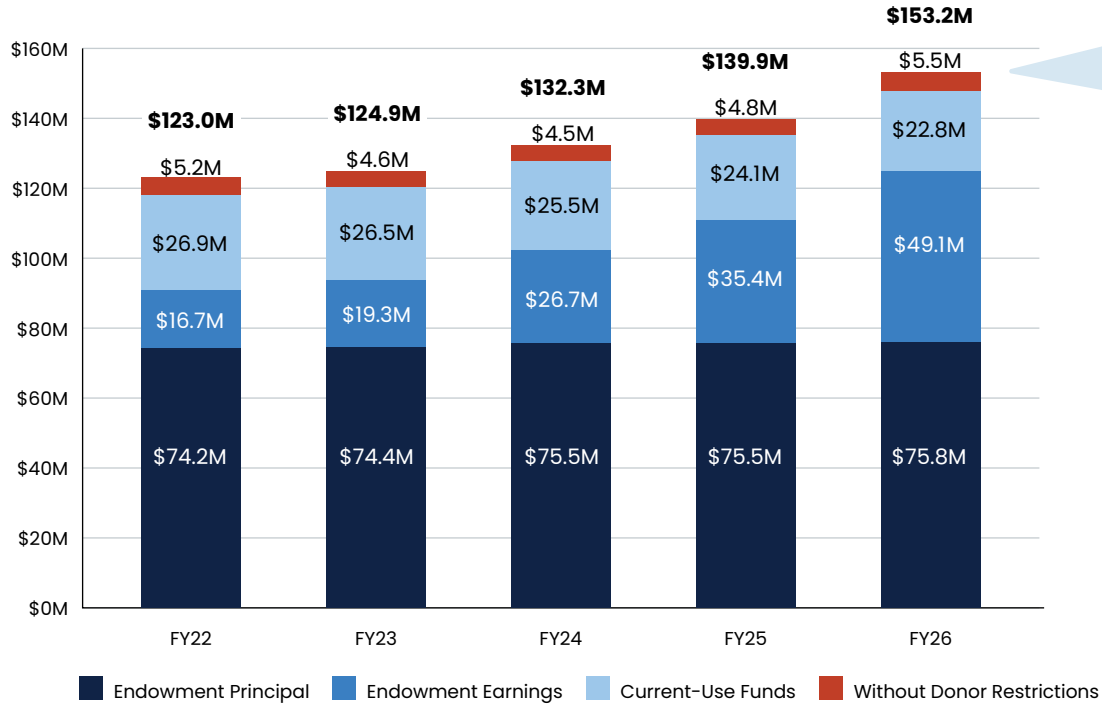
## Accountable at Every Level

Every gift comes with trust attached, and we take that responsibility seriously:

- **Unqualified (Clean) audit** — three years of financials, tax returns, and budgets posted at aauw.org
- **4-star Charity Navigator** rating — the highest awarded
- **Platinum Seal of Transparency** from Candid — top level
- **A balanced budget**, overseen by our Board of Directors, Finance, Investment, and Audit Committees

## AAUW Net Assets: FY22–FY26

### EXCLUDING THE ACTION FUND — U.S. DOLLARS IN MILLIONS




**$153.20M**
FY26 net assets

**$30.22M**
increase since FY22

**24.6% ↑**
change since FY22

Only **"Without Donor Restrictions"** ($5.5M in FY26) can be spent on any need. **Endowment principal** is kept permanently; **endowment earnings** are the unspent investment growth on it; **current-use funds** are restricted gifts available to spend currently. Both earnings and current-use funds must be used as donors directed (restricted).

Source: AAUW net-asset summary. Figures rounded. Endowment principal is held in perpetuity.

## A Healthy Endowment

In FY26, AAUW strengthened its foundation. AAUW manages $76 million in endowed funds in accordance with the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA). With this guidance, $49 million in accumulated unspent earnings has been added to preserve the purchasing power of these endowments — bringing total endowed funds under management to $125 million. These endowments generate approximately $6 million annually to support fellowships and grants. We grew our endowed and permanent funds, continued building a planned-giving program, and maintained a broad enough base of support that no single setback could keep us from meeting our commitments.



**Corinne Vietorisz,** American Dissertation Fellow, 2025–26, conducting soil sampling

## Why Greatest Needs Matters

Most of what donors give is designated for a specific purpose — about **96%** of our net assets are restricted to particular fellowships, grants, and programs. The remaining **4%** is unrestricted, and it is the most valuable support we receive. It allows AAUW to respond quickly when something urgent emerges — a new threat to Title IX, an opportunity to partner with like-minded organizations, a moment that cannot wait for the next budget cycle. Gifts to Greatest Needs, Defending Higher Education, and Public Policy Funds provide exactly this kind of flexibility. Rather than supporting a single program, they keep the whole organization steady and able to adapt — which is what this year required.

**96%**
**Restricted**
Fellowships, grants & programs



**4%**
**Unrestricted**
Flexible support for AAUW



**Amanda Gavin,** American Fellow 2025–26, conducting research with a colleague

# FY26 Financial Overview

July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026



**Tom Chappell,**
Vice President
of Finance

From a financial and programmatic perspective, FY26 was exceptionally productive for AAUW. We continue to maintain a strong balance sheet. Our investments stand at $159M, and our liabilities are sufficiently covered by our assets. Our investments returned $23M against a budget of $6.6M. Contributions were budgeted for $3.8M and came in at $4.3M. Additionally, the entire AAUW team remains vigilant over expenditures. Actual expenses came in $400K under the $17.7M budget. These were the main drivers that allowed AAUW to exceed the strategic goals set at the beginning of the year. It also allowed us to continue adding to unrestricted reserves. This is an ongoing multi-year process to replenish our unrestricted reserves.

The following pages highlight AAUW's main sources of support, how we use it, and how our finances continue to evolve and make us more resilient. Several things stand out: Total revenue reached $30.5 million in FY26, driven largely by strong investment returns. Nearly all growth is restricted to endowed funds that will continue to support fellowships, grants, and awards well into the future. We have been fortunate to build our endowments to $125M. However, our unrestricted funds stand at only $5.8M. This highlights the lopsided relationship between permanently restricted endowed funds and unrestricted funds. Fellowships, grants, and programs remain our largest area of spending. However, many other equally important programs, such as our policy and advocacy work, rely primarily on unrestricted funds.

Please consider directing your contribution to Greatest Needs. Our team on the front lines will put your gift where it is needed most to keep our mission moving forward.

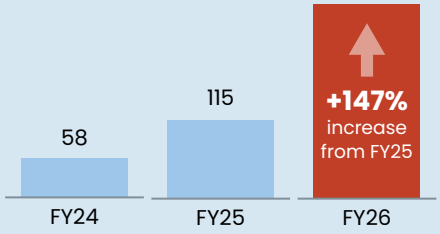
While FY26 was extraordinarily successful, AAUW, like many membership organizations, faces two pressures ahead: declining membership and rising costs. Revenue remains flat while inflation drives costs up, and our roster shrinks each year. Dues revenue no longer covers the full cost of supporting membership. We are sharing this openly because this challenge requires collective action.

Expanding giving circles, strengthening branch engagement, and growing unrestricted support will give us the flexibility to advance our mission without interruption. Our branches already do meaningful local work, from scholarships to community programs. The Five-Star program connects that work more closely to AAUW's mission by increasing participation, improving data collection, and generating insights that help us communicate more effectively and strengthen programs across AAUW. Nearly half of our branches have already shown their commitment by earning the Advancement Star. This continued commitment from our community will substantially increase our overall impact as a more unified organization.

## Advancement Star Achievements

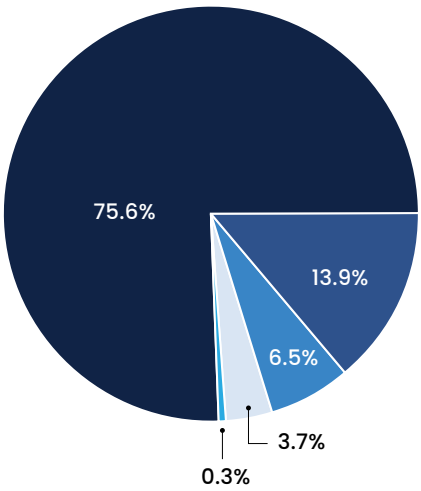
**284**

**Advancement Star Branches**



| BALANCE SHEET — As of June 30, 2026 | |
|---|---|
| **ASSETS** | |
| Cash | $3,356,736 |
| Pledges & other assets | $3,105,022 |
| Net value of property & equipment | $13,706,801 |
| Investments | $159,154,493 |
| **TOTAL ASSETS** | **$179,323,052** |
| **LIABILITIES** | |
| Accounts payable | $964,537 |
| Committed awards & grants payable | $5,996,901 |
| Liability for membership dues received in advance | $1,991,872 |
| Liability for leased office space | $16,380,439 |
| Other liabilities | $506,953 |
| **TOTAL LIABILITIES** | **$25,840,702** |
| **NET ASSETS** | |
| Net assets: Without donor restrictions | $5,807,152 |
| Net assets: With donor restrictions | $147,675,198 |
| **TOTAL NET ASSETS** | **$153,482,350** |
| **TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS** | **$179,323,052** |

| SUPPORT & REVENUE | Without Donor Restrictions | With Donor Restrictions | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Contributions & sponsorships | $2,842,223 | $1,411,861 | $4,254,084 |
| Net investment return | $1,126,202 | $21,975,923 | $23,102,125 |
| Membership dues | $1,995,552 | – | $1,995,552 |
| Subtenant revenue | $1,115,944 | – | $1,115,944 |
| Other revenue | $152,749 | ($65,010) | $87,739 |
| Net assets released from restrictions | $10,687,594 | ($10,687,594) | – |
| **TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUE** | **$17,920,265** | **$12,635,180** | **$30,555,445** |

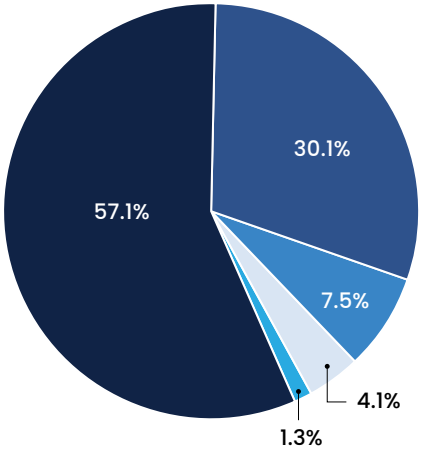



## TOTAL REVENUE $30,555,445
### (WITH AND WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS)

- Investments: $23,102,125
- Contributions & sponsorships: $4,254,084
- Membership dues: $1,995,552
- Subtenant revenue: $1,115,944
- Other: $87,739

| EXPENSES | |
|---|---|
| **PROGRAM SERVICES** | |
| Fellowships, grants & programs | $9,868,026 |
| Public policy & member advocacy | $702,877 |
| Legal Advocacy Fund | $225,313 |
| **TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES** | **$10,796,216** |
| **SUPPORTING SERVICES** | |
| Management and general | $5,199,388 |
| Advancement | $1,298,091 |
| **TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES** | **$6,497,479** |
| **TOTAL EXPENSES** | **$17,293,695** |
| **CHANGE IN NET ASSETS (Total revenue - Total expenses)** | **$13,261,747** |

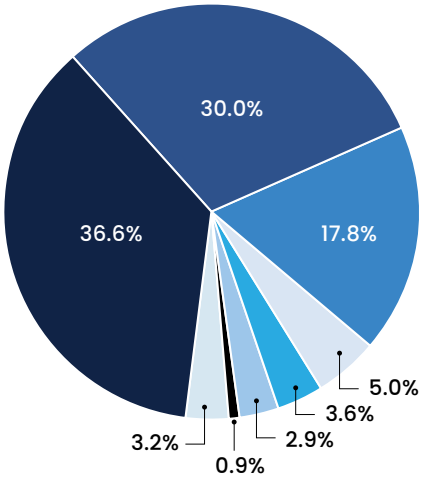
| NET ASSETS ROLL-FORWARD | Without Donor Restrictions | With Donor Restrictions | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Net assets at beginning of year | $5,180,585 | $135,040,018 | $140,220,603 |
| Change in net assets | $626,567 | $12,635,180 | $13,261,747 |
| **NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR** | **$5,807,152** | **$147,675,198** | **$153,482,350** |




## EXPENSES BY DEPARTMENT

**TOTAL $17,293,695**

- Fellowships, grants & programs: $9,868,026
- Management & general: $5,199,388
- Advancement & membership: $1,298,091
- Policy & member advocacy: $702,877
- Legal Advocacy Fund: $225,313



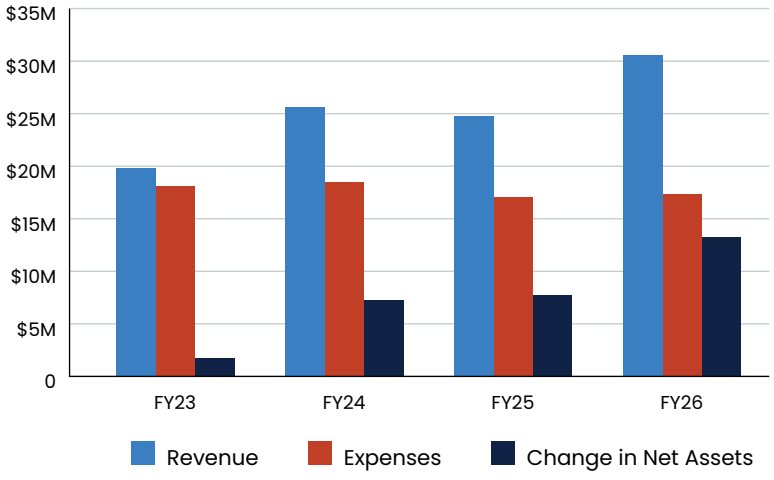

## EXPENSES BY CATEGORY

**TOTAL $17,293,695**

- Fellowships, grants & awards: $6,326,392
- Salary & benefits: $5,191,651
- Rent & office expenses: $3,072,134
- Professional fees: $871,720
- Information technology: $628,067
- Depreciation & amortization: $505,411
- Meeting & travel: $152,475
- Other: $545,845

## REVENUE, EXPENSES, AND CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

**By Fiscal Year**





**AAUW National Staff** outside Washington, DC office

# With Gratitude: The People Behind the Mission

AAUW's mission lives in the people who lead, steward, review, advocate, and serve. The pages that follow honor the volunteers, committee members, liaisons, reviewers, and staff whose time and talent made FY26's work possible. Alongside the donors recognized earlier in this report, they are the reason AAUW is built to last.

## FY26 Board of Directors

The volunteer leaders who set AAUW's direction and safeguard its future, guiding the organization through a pivotal year with steady judgment and deep commitment to the mission.

Kimberly Adams
Hope Bennett
Aaliyah El-Amin
Jenna Kirkpatrick Howard
Melissa LaDuke
Jeanie Latz
Edwina Martin
Shaila Rao Mistry
Dianne Owens
Sona Pancholy
Hope Ricciotti
Christine Schmitz
Auntaneshia Staveloz
Monique Taylor
Mayida Zaal

# FY26 National Committees

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dianne Owens, *Chair*
Melissa LaDuke, *Vice Chair*
Christine Schmitz, *Finance Chair*
Sona Pancholy, *Secretary*

### ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE

Susan Barley
Malinda Gaul
Carol Griffith
Carol Heisler
Rose Llanos
Edwina Martin
Betsy McDowell
Dianne Owens, *Chair*
Patricia Quick
Deborah Roney
Barbara Sando
Joan Schneider
Sharon Suber
Jan Van Gasse

### AUDIT COMMITTEE

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Jenna Kirkpatrick Howard, *Chair*
Sona Pancholy
Linda Pihlak
Peggy Wild

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Patricia DeWitt
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Diane Schrier, *Chair*
Maura Stephens Chu
Jan Van Gasse

*"Being an AAUW member means I am part of a community of strong, dynamic women working together to uplift one another and other women."*

**— Sophia Farber,** AAUW Del Mar-Leucadia Inc. (CA) Branch

## Legacy Circle Liaisons

Thank you to our dedicated volunteer liaisons who steward and celebrate Legacy Circle members across the country. To learn more about planned giving or connect with your liaison, email planned-giving@aauw.org.

| Liaison | States / Region Supported |
|---|---|
| Tobi Balma | Southern CA |
| Susan Barley | AR, CT, IN, KS, KY, MA, MI, MO, NH, NJ, NY, OH, OK, PA, TN |
| Lisa Cherry | IL |
| Pat Dalpiaz | UT, NV |
| Bonnie Diehl | WI |
| Charmen Goehring | Northern CA, ME |
| Claudia Gray | AK, HI, ID, MT, OR |
| Maxine Lampe | IA, MN, NE |
| Jacqueline Littleton | LA, NM, TX |
| Kay McMurry | WA |
| Kristin Moyer | MD, NC, SC, VA, DC, WV |
| Patricia Ross | AZ, FL, GA, CO |
| AAUW National | AL, DE, MS, ND, RI, SD, VT, WY |

*"One of the unexpected bonuses of serving as an AAUW Legacy Circle Liaison is building friendships with other members. I send birthday and other cards to about 75 members under my care, and sometimes they send cards to me in return, which gives me joy. I particularly like meeting at state and regional conferences and talking to members. They become much more than names on a page, but individuals with whom I share a love and commitment to AAUW and the work it will do, far into the future when we are stardust."*

— **Kristin Moyer,** Legacy Circle Liaison, AAUW Vienna Area (VA) Branch

## Fellowship & Grant Reviewers and Panelists

Behind every award is a volunteer who read, weighed, and championed an applicant's potential. In FY26, 108 reviewers evaluated 3,066 applications — hundreds of hours of expert labor that make AAUW's funding possible. In FY26, AAUW also seated its first Panelist Advisory Board, formalizing this expertise for the years ahead.

**AAUW's strength is our expert volunteers**

**Francine D'Amico**, professor emerita and a member of the Panelist Advisory Board, represents the deep volunteer expertise behind AAUW's fellowship and grant programs. Syracuse University recognized her for her AAUW board service, reflecting the value and reach of her contributions.

# Our Staff

Theteam thatturns commitment into action every day — supporting applicants and awardees, stewarding gifts, advancing policy, and keeping the organization strong, responsive, and ready for what comes next.

## The AAUW Team

Gloria L. Blackwell, Chief Executive Officer

Carsyn Baxter, Senior Projects Associate

Tamela Blalock, Senior Director of Operations & Administration

### FINANCE TEAM

Dominick Best, Cash Receipt Analyst

Tom Chappell, Vice President of Finance

Wallissa McDaniel, Staff Accountant

Huynh Nguyen, Senior Accounting Manager

Gabriela Taboada, Payroll & Accounts Receivable Manager

### FELLOWSHIPS & GRANTS TEAM

Heram Amiri, Senior Awards Associate

Ortencia Arellano, Director of Fellowships & Grants

Dana Barbakoff, Senior Associate, Impact Analytics & Award Systems

Annika Clausen, Program Manager, Awards

Kendrya Garris, Senior Program Manager, Community Engagement

Amelia Keeton, Community Support & Experience Associate

Gulnura Rakhyshova, Deputy Director, Awards Management

### ADVANCEMENT TEAM

Katrina Sun Breese, Senior Director of Institutional Advancement

Angela Cooper, Senior Manager, Connect

Nadia Daghistani, Senior Manager of Major Giving

Marisa Dumas, Senior Customer Care Specialist

Aleksandr Gaddy, Development Manager, Major and Planned Giving

Shannon Jeffries, Senior Manager, Institutional Advancement

Deborah McCall, Senior Program Manager, Advancement

Jessica Miller, AAUW Archivist

Tremayne Parquet, Deputy Director, Advancement

Mikaela Romero, Senior Advancement Associate

### POLICY TEAM

Rashmi Chimmalgi, Policy Associate

Meghan Kissell, Senior Director of Policy & Member Advocacy

Kalina Majercak, Advocacy Manager

### IT & FACILITIES TEAM

Michael Best, Facilities Manager

Sindhura Edara, Salesforce Administrator

Julian Sfecla, Director of Information Technology

Edward Tiller, Network Administrator

### COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Lorena Alvarado, Senior Communications Associate

Coby Jones, Senior Communications Manager

Mona Mirmortazavi, Digital Communications Manager




**AAUW Level Up**
Program Participants

# Join Us: Ways to Give & Get Involved

Focused forward means moving forward together. There are many ways to be part of AAUW's mission:

**Learn** — explore AAUW's research, programs, and resources — and use what you learn to inform and inspire action.

**Act** — take action, join Lobby Corps, or lead in your community.

**Share** — amplify AAUW's research, resources, and message, and invite others to be part of the work.

**Join** — become an AAUW member and join this incredible community fighting for women and girls.

**Give** — make a gift to Greatest Needs or a fund that speaks to you.



AAUW – We empower potential.



**Adwoa Baffoe-Bonnie,**
Selected Professions
Fellow, 2025–26




AAUW

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