



Equal Pay Day and *Behind the Gender Pay Gap* Outreach and Programming Ideas

We hope AAUW state theme teams, other state leaders, and branches will play a major role in distributing and raising awareness about the AAUW Educational Foundation's new research report, *Behind the Gender Pay Gap*. Some ideas about how to do this follow.

Community

- Pay inequity is a serious financial issue that affects working women and their families throughout every community, and in every area of employment. There are many ways a branch can get involved and gain community support for the issue by using the new research in their programming and outreach.
- Equal Pay Day will be celebrated on April 24, 2007. Hold an Equal Pay Day bake sale. Have men pay 100 percent of the cost and charge women only 77 percent of the price of the baked goods.
- Organize WAGE club meetings: Invite women to a series of discussions and strategy sessions to help each other take action to help close the wage gap in their workplaces.
- Hold a seminar on negotiation skills for women. Economists agree that individual differences in negotiating skills can lead to pay variation among workers with similar skill sets.
- Create a sample letter to send to elected officials about the need for statistics on gender pay inequalities and/or legislation to address the disparities.
- Ask legislators to sign a Fair Pay Pledge. The pledge may indicate that legislators will support pay equity legislation or they will ensure pay equity practices are followed in their own offices.

Reach out to employers

- The research shows that the gender pay gap still exists in every type of occupation, however very few employers are exempt from the laws that require equal pay and equal employment opportunity. You may find employers to be much more receptive to this plight than expected.
- Meet with employers to conduct a workplace audit, using the *Employer Pay Equity Self-Audit* by Business and Professional Women/USA, available on AAUW's website. This is an effective and simple guide for businesses to perform a pay equity self-audit with ten easy steps.
- Send letters to employers in your community with a summary of the research and statistics about the gender pay gap.


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Use the media

- AAUW branches should issue a press release for Equal Pay Day: Tuesday, April 24, 2007. Press release guidelines and sample language can be found in the *Pay Equity Resource Kit* available online in PDF format (http://www.aauw.org/issue_advocacy/actionpages/documents/payequityResourceKit.pdf). A localizable press release template about the new research will also soon be available for states and branches; it will be sent out on the state theme team listserv.
- Have a letter to the editor campaign on this issue. The letter will be most effective if it is printed on or around Equal Pay Day. In addition to getting the word out on pay equity, branches in smaller media outlets may find this to be a very effective way to get AAUW's name in the media. A sample letter to the editor will be distributed via the state theme team listserv, and will also be available on AAUW's website via our *Two Minute Activist*. AAUW's website is the quickest, easiest way to send a letter to your local paper (<http://capwiz.com/aauw>).
- Include information about the report in your state and branch newsletters and on your state web site. Set up a link directly to the online press kit, which will go live just prior to the April 24 release. You can also link directly to the latest state by state data, recently updated on AAUW's web site at <http://www.aauw.org/research/statedata/index.cfm>.
- Contact local radio talk shows to see if they would be willing to host a show on this topic. Call into local shows and raise the issue of pay equity and share the findings of the new report. Be sure to use state by state data for a local angle to the information. You can find that at <http://www.aauw.org/research/statedata/index.cfm>.

Use your AAUW connections

- Consider having a presentation of the research at your upcoming state convention or regional convention. The *AAUW Pay Equity Resource Kit* would be helpful in such a presentation. This kit also includes the updated AAUW position paper on pay equity.
- Invite branches to discuss the research and the impact of the gender pay gap at a branch meeting using AAUW's *Pay Equity Resource Kit* available online.
- Ask branches to have a movie party to watch *Legends of Wimbledon: Billie Jean King*, released in 2005 and now available on DVD.  can be a good way to start having the conversation about pay inequities that still exist to this day. For more information about this movie, visit your local video store, library, or <http://www.cduniverse.com/productinfo.asp?pid=6894759>.
- Invite various stakeholder groups to come together and discuss what ways would be appropriate to raise awareness of this issue in the community.

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- Raising awareness doesn't always need to be a formal event. A local community may respond well to having a series of house parties to talk about this issue in a less intimidating setting. Local groups also may want to talk to a local newspaper about running a series of articles on this issue. Community and college groups may be helpful in identifying people who would be willing to talk publicly about their own experiences.
- Make sure to reach out to diverse groups to make sure that the planning group for any community event reflects diversity in age, gender, and racial and ethnic background. This will ensure that any outreach plans will appeal to a broader audience. The research also shows that the impact of the gender pay gap is different for various communities and regions of the country. This is something to be aware of when reaching out to potential partners. There are State by State Wage Gap Data sheets available at the AAUW website (<http://www.aauw.org/research/statedata/index.cfm>).


Campuses

States and branches should see this new research as an opportunity to make or strengthen connections with the college and university communities in your state. The majority of college students throughout the nation are women, all of whom are expected to enter the workforce fairly soon. Therefore college campuses would be an excellent forum to educate on the issue. Below are some suggestions on how to reach out to these groups.

- Set a goal for a specific number of key colleges and universities in your state to which you'd like to distribute the research.
- Ask state theme team representatives and branches to set up meetings at those colleges or universities with the president, dean of students, or other appropriate college offices to make them aware of the research and its findings. The director of career planning and Freshman/parent orientation programs may also be good targets.
- Provide the school with a copy or copies of the report. They can be downloaded from the AAUW website, or ordered from AAUW.
- Use the meeting as an opportunity to tell them about AAUW, including your activities in your community. Remember to invite schools to become C/U members if they aren't already.
- Use the research talking points (to be distributed later via the state theme team listserv) to discuss the findings of the research. Ask them about what the school currently does to educate students on this issue and prepare them to address such inequities. NOTE: Prior to the meeting, do a search of the school's web site for any information they might have on their efforts on this issue. Such a search may generate good questions or ideas for future collaboration.

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-  the chapter heading discussion questions in the research report, to lead a stimulating discussion when meeting with school officials and students.
- Ask if there are other parties that would benefit from learning about the research and see if the school would like additional copies. *Behind the Gender Pay Gap* is available at the AAUW website in PDF format. If the school does work on this issue, see if they would put you in touch with the persons in charge of those activities and try to meet with them.
- Ask the branches to report back the results of their outreach. Was the school receptive? Is there an opportunity for future collaboration?
- Other stakeholder groups on campus to reach out to may include (but are not limited to):
 - Title IX coordinators
 - Student groups
 - Greek council and/or service fraternities
 - Academic advisors
 - Student counseling center
 - Women studies departments
 - Work study advisors
 - Campus ministry
 - Women's Center
 - Residence Life
- Student government & student organizations – If the school has a campus women's group this could be an opportunity to hold a joint meeting between the local branch and the campus group.
- Consider partnering with a campus department or organization to hold a forum on the gender pay gap and its impact. This is also an opportunity for a great cross-generational conversation. This is a great opportunity to make sure they are also familiar with AAUW's *Pay Equity Resource Kit* which provides an array of facts, analysis, and ideas for overcoming the problem.
- If there are several colleges and universities in the area this could be an opportunity to have a panel discussion for students of multiple campuses, or plan to have a series of outreach events that are held at various campuses (recognizing that students may not travel to another school for an event). Remember to reach out to community colleges and technical schools as well.
- Encourage young women to attend AAUW's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL), June 7-9, 2007. Each of this year's Campus Action Project teams will present the outcomes of their work, and there will be additional presentations about AAUW research and our work with other organizations that have a similar interest and concern about this issue.

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Next Generation – High Schools

- This is an important topic for high school girls to be aware of so they can consider such matters in college (as they choose a major) and the workforce (as they negotiate a salary). Encourage female students to participate in science and mathematics in high school. Taking trigonometry, precalculus, or calculus in high school has been found to influence the likelihood of majoring in math or science in college. **Connect girls to STEM programs through AAUW's new National Girls Collaborative Project ; you can read more about the program at <http://www.aauw.org/education/ngcp/index.cfm>.**
- Branches may want to reach out to high school principals, guidance counselors, teachers, and community centers so they understand the gender pay gap and discuss ways to improve the financial futures of young women, by helping them to develop the negotiation skills and confidence to tackle the problem early in life.
- This is a great opportunity to make sure they are also familiar with AAUW's *Pay Equity Resource Kit* which provides an array of facts, analysis, and ideas for overcoming the problem.

Questions?

If you have any questions or would like additional information that would assist your state raise awareness about the issue of pay equity and this important new research, please contact AAUW at 800/326-AAUW or theme@aauw.org.

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