

# BEYOND ASPIRATIONS:

ADVANCING EQUITY FOR WOMEN & GIRLS



# DEAR FRIENDS,

Since 1881, AAUW has been breaking down barriers for women in education, in the workplace, and in our communities — locally, regionally, nationally, and globally. Our founders refused to accept the status quo and demanded access for women at every level of our society. Today, AAUW's 170,000 valued members and supporters, staff, and stakeholders celebrate and reflect on the organization's rich past and meaningful impact to ensure our future relevance in advancing equity for all women and girls.

The vision laid out in the accompanying strategic plan for AAUW is more than fancy words. It's a call to action, with pragmatic solutions designed to demonstrate success and accountability at every level. The plan also includes an implementation guide and time line to ensure we are well poised to take on the challenges women and girls face now and in the future.

**Our mission is bold – to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.**

Our work at AAUW has always been fiercely nonpartisan but not values neutral. We lead with facts and data analysis, not conjecture. We arm our research results with policy recommendations and advocacy work as well as programs and training to transform cultural perceptions and practices throughout society.

**Our vision — equity for all — can and must be achieved.**

We are not satisfied to simply document and discuss the inequities women and girls face. AAUW aims to achieve equity through practical solutions in education, workplaces, and communities..

Yet, since AAUW was founded, and indeed since the progress the women's movement made in the late 19th and through the 20th century, a growing cadre of respected organizations dedicated to achieving equity



*Julia T. Brown, Esq.*



*Kimberly Churches*

have emerged around the US and the world. In fact, nearly 400 organizations are dedicated to gender equity in the United States alone. While it demonstrates the significant need that so many are in the fight with us, it is clear we must reflect on our purpose, mission, and impact to define why AAUW matters today and how we can matter even more tomorrow.

This past year, AAUW assembled a Strategic Planning Task Force — made up of AAUW members and external stakeholders — to focus our mission and maximize our impact. They identified our challenges and goals, our strengths and weaknesses, and how we must be distinct and differentiated to thrive in the 21st century in transformative ways.

We appreciate the engagement and input from our members, branch and state presidents, donors, past and current board members, and other stakeholders throughout this robust process of research, meetings, surveys, and reviews. We heard from thousands of members during conventions, through the online reviews of drafts, and through interviews, meetings, and other forums throughout the year.

The plan gives us our path forward — to be focused on key areas where we are uniquely positioned to make a lasting impact, while also being nimble and flexible — so we can chart our course and be dynamic to adapt and grow as new situations and issues arise in our social and economic landscape.



AAUW members turned out all over the country for the January 2017 women's marches.

With the adoption of this plan by the AAUW Board of Directors in June 2018, we are now poised, together, to achieve our goals to advance gender equity.

We can move our mission forward by galvanizing our grassroots power — our members ensure AAUW's strength — with representation in every congressional district, state, and territory in the country. We can — and will — lead the change we want to achieve.

For more than 137 years, AAUW has supported women all over the globe seeking to attain educational degrees. AAUW fellows and our alumnae will also

be engaged in the goals and objectives ahead. And, in order to realize our dreams, we know we'll need to engage and grow new audiences to ensure all are empowered to take action to achieve gender equity.

Thank you for all of your wise counsel, ideas, and analysis throughout the strategic planning process. We believe our 17 founders would look at AAUW today with pride and would be eager to continue the fight for equity. So, let's get started. Together, we can ensure women and girls thrive. **ONWARD!**

**Julia T. Brown, Esq.**  
Board Chair

**Kimberly Churches**  
Chief Executive Officer

# SPECIAL THANKS

Our sincere gratitude to the 170,000 valued AAUW members and stakeholders who participated in this year-long strategic planning process, adding their thoughtful input and ideas for AAUW's future. We wish to especially thank the following for their leadership:

## AAUW STRATEGIC PLAN TASK FORCE

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**Julia T. Brown, J.D.**  
AAUW Board Chair

**Peggy Ryan Williams, Ed.D.**  
Board Vice Chair

**Joanna Amberger**  
Board Director

**Gloria Blackwell**  
Senior Vice President,  
Fellowships & Programs

**Carolyn Garfein**  
Member

**Anne Hedgepeth**  
Director of Federal Policy

**Anthony J. Hill, Ph.D.**  
Member

**Jackie Littleton**  
Member

**Edwina Martin**  
Member

**Jan Molino**  
President & Chief Executive Officer,  
Aspire Ascend

**Rebecca Norlander**  
Member

**Claudia Richards**  
Senior Branch Relations Manager

**Paige Robnett**  
Former Manager of College/  
University Relationships, Former  
Campus Leader

**Leah Sakacs**  
Board Director

**Mary L. Zupanc, M.D.**  
Board Director

## AAUW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Julia T. Brown, J.D.**  
AAUW Board Chair

**Peggy Ryan Williams, Ed.D.**  
Board Vice Chair

**Joanna Amberger**  
Board Director

**Susan Barley**  
Board Director

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**Melody Jackson, Ph.D.**  
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**Melissa Johnsen**  
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**Karen Kirkwood**  
Board Director

**Dot McLane, Ph.D.**  
Board Director

**Eileen Menton**  
Board Director

**Susan Nenstiel**  
Board Director

**Leah Sakacs**  
Board Director

**Cheryl (Cherie) Sorokin, J.D.**  
Board Secretary

**Mardy Stevens**  
Board Director

**Mary L. Zupanc, M.D.**  
Board Director

## STRATEGIC PLAN LEADERSHIP

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**Kimberly Churches**  
Chief Executive Officer, AAUW

**Shannon Wolfe**  
Managing Director & Chief of Staff,  
AAUW

**Sharon A. McDade, Ed.D.**  
Greenwood/Asher & Associates,  
Principal & Senior Executive  
Leadership Consultant, and AAUW  
Consultant

# MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

## **MISSION**

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

## **VISION**

Equity for all.

## **VALUES:**

Nonpartisan.

Fact-based.

Integrity.

Inclusion and Intersectionality.

# STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS

Since our first research report in 1885, AAUW's work is always grounded in research based on facts and rigorous analysis. AAUW has garnered respect and earned a trusted reputation for the integrity of our data and analysis. Within the plan, a great deal of new research is suggested to help define our paths and ensure our proposed solutions and outcomes are clear and refined. Based on the plan's robust objectives, we will partner with research organizations, such as universities, think tanks, nonprofit organizations, and others, to deliver on the proposed research agenda. Many of the issues addressed by the plan are so large that collaboration with other research organizations is vital to fully investigate and document current status and future impact.

In drafting this plan, it is also important to note that these goals apply to all — the empowerment of women and girls requires us to segment research and data by race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geography, and other factors. Inclusion and intersectionality are not only key values for the organization, but also are critical to our ability to achieve our long-term vision and fulfill AAUW's mission.

In keeping with our mission to advance gender equity for all women and girls, the strategic plan is focused on four macro areas of work:



Three of these focal areas are mission-based, and one — Governance and Sustainability — is foundational in our ability to run the organization with best practices, innovation, and strengthened fiscal sustainability.

Keeping our mission forefront will ensure we have properly addressed the policy and advocacy work, the programs to develop and scale, and the operating model needed to ensure real impact.





2017–18 AAUW Career Development Grantee Cortney Cleveland is using her AAUW funding to start a digital production company.

In Education and Training, for example, we'll focus comprehensively on education from preschool through graduate school, but we will also ensure we reach all women and girls by paying closer attention to career and technical education and other certificate or apprenticeship programs that lead to lucrative positions and economic security for women. And, the core areas of focus are also interrelated: Education and Training leads directly into our Economic Security, leading right into Leadership, and all three require Governance and Sustainability.

### HOW WILL WE MEASURE STRATEGIC PLAN SUCCESS?

AAUW is defined by our ability to achieve impact. Our staff, members, partners, and stakeholders will be driven by quantifiable and qualitative metrics on each of the goals and objectives for the next three to five years. Annually, we will produce a report on our progress and next steps to demonstrate how we've advanced gender equity.

### PROCESS AND THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Thanks to the Strategic Planning Task Force, made up of AAUW member leaders and external stakeholders, we analyzed AAUW's mission and impact, questioned our purpose and why AAUW matters today and tomorrow, and conducted a robust SWOT analysis asking

- **Strengths:** What does AAUW do better than the competition?
- **Weaknesses:** What does AAUW need to improve upon?
- **Opportunities:** What external trends could lead to increased success and engagement?
- **Threats:** What are the advantages competitors have over AAUW?



Given the bold nature of the plan and the need to collaborate with policy makers and others, we will undertake an implementation process with work on each goal phased in over time in a dynamic way producing key performance indicators.

Following the analysis phase, the task force began imagining areas where AAUW could realize lasting impact for women and girls. Through a robust and inclusive process, surveys, meetings, and engagement with members, branch and state presidents, donors, past and current board members, and more, four strategic plan drafts between December 2017 and May 2018 were reviewed and analyzed internally and externally around our goals, objectives, and how we would assess our work for maximum impact and results.

### Inclusion at AAUW

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

### Education Is Foundational at AAUW

Since our founding, education has been the core focus at AAUW. Education improves lives and our understanding of the world and our ability to contribute to the greater good. It also helps support women as they develop skills and knowledge as a pathway to professional opportunities and economic security. This strategic plan takes an inclusive view of education — from preschool to postgraduate education, as well as traditional, vocational, lifelong learning, career development, and other forms of education — that help women thrive in today's society.



Top row, left to right: AAUW International Fellows Ana Montgomery-Neutze and Oyenike Balogun-Mwangi and college women at AAUW's leadership conference

Bottom left: 2017–18 AAUW International Fellow Anca Agachi at the United Nations





## EDUCATION & TRAINING

### Addressing the barriers and implicit biases that hinder advancement of women

**GOAL A:** Champion equal access to all levels and fields of education.

- 1 Address barriers to success for girls and women through improvement of learning environments.
- 2 Grow educational pathways for all women, especially those leading to high-earning careers.

**GOAL B:** Ensure education at every level is free from sex discrimination.

- 1 Protect and expand compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws across all U.S. states and territories.
- 2 Ensure Title IX coordinators are well trained and adequately resourced.



AAUW advocates for fair play on and off the court.



# ECONOMIC SECURITY

## Ensuring livelihoods for women

**GOAL A:** Achieve pay equity by 2030.

- 1 Champion pay equity federally and in all U.S. states and territories.
- 2 Lead the nation in providing salary negotiation programs for employees and employers.

Train 10 million women in salary negotiations by 2022.

**GOAL B:** Create inclusive career pathways for women, free of systemic barriers and biases, to attain economic security.

- 1 Develop a blueprint for women to access careers, especially in high-paying fields.
- 2 Support employers in advancing higher wage pathways for all women.
- 3 Protect and expand compliance with Title VII and other federal civil rights statutes.

**GOAL C:** Deepen women's retirement security and quality of life.

- 1 Address inequities regarding retirement for women at every socioeconomic level.
- 2 Help women in achieving their desired quality of life in preparation for possible retirement.



2017-18 AAUW Selected Professions Fellow Bianca Islam





# LEADERSHIP

## Closing the gender gap in leadership opportunities

**GOAL A:** Bolster the participation of girls and women in leadership roles throughout their lives.

- 1 Empower early and midcareer women to seek and succeed in leadership opportunities
- 2 Expand leadership opportunities for women over 55 years of age or retired.

**GOAL B:** Advance the number of women in leadership, particularly in education and nonprofit organizations.

- 1 Become a national resource on the impact of leadership development activities for the advancement of women into leadership roles.
- 2 Increase the inclusion and numbers of women serving on governing and advisory boards.



Clockwise from top: AAUW members from Indiana visit Rep. Larry Bucshon (R-IN); Rep. Brenda Lawrence (D-MI) speaks at the 2017 AAUW National Convention; AAUW members from Pennsylvania watch Gov. Tom Wolf (D-PA) sign an equal pay executive order.



# GOVERNANCE & SUSTAINABILITY

## Ensuring the strength, relevance, and viability of AAUW well into the future

**GOAL A:** Implement best practices in governance, inclusion, and organizational functioning.

- 1 Evaluate and competitively assess AAUW's governance model and ensure best practices in nonprofit board structure and service.
- 2 Embody the goals and spirit of inclusion, diversity, and intersectionality across all AAUW activities and participants.
- 3 Modernize AAUW's technology infrastructure and build strategic, integrated, comprehensive, and forward-looking communications.

**GOAL B:** Enhance financial sustainability by increasing and diversifying revenue.

- 1 Explore the feasibility of a comprehensive campaign underpinning strategic goals.
- 2 Complement existing membership model to engage new audiences, increase donor populations, and achieve greater impact through partnerships.



AAUW staff and former fellows gather to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the AAUW International Fellowship program.

# AAUW

## 1881–TODAY

**AAUW** was started in 1881 by 17 women college graduates who joined together to find greater opportunities to use their education and to open the door for other women to pursue higher education. The members represented a handful of women with college degrees at a time when their first efforts were devoted to things like countering then-perpetuated myths that a college education harms women’s health and results in infertility. In 2018, AAUW now stands at 170,000 members and supporters strong, with branches in every congressional district, state, and U.S. territory. AAUW has established a legacy over 137 years across a range of issues that have all advanced equity for women and girls. Our 2018 strategic plan focuses on moving forward, building on our work in three of our historical priority areas — education and training, economic security, and leadership.

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Since 1888, AAUW’s fellowships and grants program has awarded more than \$115 million to more than 13,000 women and nonprofit organizations in more than 140 countries — making it a leading source of funding exclusively for graduate women.
- Support for education has ranged from helping to raise funds to buy a gram of radium for Marie Curie’s research, to establishing the Coretta Scott King Fund following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., to promoting civil rights and the study of racial understanding and peace
- Since the 1880s, AAUW has been improving education for women. AAUW held colleges and universities accountable for admitting and advancing women at a time when few had the opportunity to pursue higher education. Our survey *Campus 1970: Where Do Women Stand?* helped lead to the creation of Title IX. Now that women graduates outnumber men, we tackle ongoing barriers, bias, and harassment women face on campus; the fact that women lack professional and leadership opportunities; and that women still incur two-thirds of the nation’s student debt and graduate to a gender pay gap.



Clockwise from top left: Marie Curie; Coretta Scott King (far right) celebrating the establishment of the Coretta Scott King Educational Fund; members of the Lobby Corps established in 1975.

## ECONOMIC SECURITY

- Starting 122 years ago, AAUW has published reports documenting the gender pay gap and has fought for fair pay and professional advancement opportunities for women.
- The organization was at the forefront of pushing for equal pay policies — including the landmark Women’s Equal Pay Act of 1945, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Family Medical Leave Act in 1993, the Lilly Ledbetter Equal Pay Act of 2009, and other policies and practices that support the ability of women to thrive in the workplace.



Lilly Ledbetter

AAUW is still leading the fight to pass legislation across the states and for the federal Paycheck Fairness Act to close remaining loopholes and the gender pay gap.

- In 1962, AAUW established the College Faculty Program to support women college graduates to retrain for positions as university faculty and administrators. AAUW continues to support programs for women at different phases of their careers, including those returning to the workforce in all fields and making career changes.
- In 2018, we launched an initiative to train 10 million women in salary negotiations by 2022, and to continue to advocate for fair pay laws and changes in employer practices to aim to achieve pay equity by 2030.

## LEADERSHIP

- In 1945, AAUW sent delegates to represent women’s interests at the UN Conference on International Organization in San Francisco resulting in the establishment of the United Nations. In 2008, AAUW received Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council to provide our well-respected expertise and guidance to advocate for UN policies that advance the economic, political and educational development of girls and women globally.
- During World War II, AAUW was the first women’s organization in the US to urge the government to



Mildred Mc Afee, Lt. Commander, WAVES; Oveta Culp Hobby, Director, Women’s Army Corps; and Dorothy Stratton, Lt. Commander, SPARS (left to right) in front of their wartime home, the AAUW headquarters at 1634 I St. NW.

repeal the Neutrality Act and come to the aid of the Allies, and the organization worked with the International Federation of University Women (IFUW) and British Federation of University Women (BFUW) to help support research opportunities for female scholars displaced by the Nazi-led occupation.

- AAUW was instrumental in the creation of the women’s units of the armed forces and advocated for the women who served to receive equal pay and rank.
- AAUW’s Legal Advocacy Fund has supported women in their legal battles against discrimination since 1981 — including most recently supporting plaintiff Aileen Rizo in a legal battle for fair pay, winning a Ninth Circuit court victory in April 2018.
- AAUW is committed to supporting the next generation of advocates to advance women — including through our annual National Conference for College Women Student Leaders.



AAUW members march in support of the Equal Rights Amendment, 1978



AAUW members with (left) Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and (right) Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA)

## SOME NOTABLE AAUW MEMBERS

First Ladies Eleanor Roosevelt, Claudia Alta “Lady Bird” Johnson, Lou Henry Hoover, and Grace Coolidge.

Nobel Prize Winner and Hull House founder Jane Addams.

Suffragists Carrie Chapman Catt and May Wright Sewall.

Cabinet Secretaries Frances Perkins (Labor), Juanita Kreps, Ph.D (Commerce, and AAUW Achievement Awardee), Patricia Roberts Harris, J.D. (Housing and Urban Development; Health and Human Services), and Attorney General Janet Reno, J.D.

Congresswomen Edith Green (D-OR, and AAUW Achievement Awardee), Patsy Mink (D-HI), and Constance Morella (R-MD).

First woman elected to the National Academy of Sciences and AAUW Achievement Awardee Florence Sabin, Ph.D.

President of the National Council of Negro Women, Alpha Kappa Alpha President, and Obstetrician Dorothy Boulding Ferebee, M.D.

Anthropologist and AAUW Achievement Awardee Margaret Mead, Ph.D.

## SOME NOTABLE AAUW FELLOWS AND GRANTEES

Professor, author, and former *MSNBC* host Melissa Harris-Perry, Ph.D.

Author, professor, humanitarian, and Oprah’s favorite guest Tererai Trent, Ph.D.

Challenger astronaut Judith Resnik, Ph.D.

Former President of Wellesley College and Duke University Nannerl O. Keohane, Ph.D.

First woman Finance Minister of Nigeria Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Ph.D.

Professor, author, and artist Nell Painter, Ph.D.

Author Susan Sontag.

Physician, feminist, author, and activist Nawal El Saadawi, M.D.

Environmentalist, author, and AAUW Achievement Awardee Rachel Carson.

Columnist and pioneering media psychologist Joyce Brothers, Ph.D.

First woman to hold a full presidency of a major university — at the University of Chicago — and AAUW Achievement Awardee Hanna Holborn Gray, Ph.D.

Former president of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund and AAUW Achievement Awardee Antonia Hernandez, J.D.



Tererai Trent, Ph.D.



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