

## RECRUITMENT THOUGHTS & TIMELY TIPS

**For over 130 years AAUW** has valued equity, education, advocacy, philanthropy, and research to bring about positive societal change so women and girls can achieve the American Dream! Even though women and girls have many more opportunities to gain an education today, there is still much work to be done in this complex society. *The work to achieve equity happens through individual and group effort every day.* We can never take our progress for granted. More women than ever before are becoming acutely aware of the many inequities that exist and are willing to speak out and get involved about issues that are near and dear to them. Many more women have college degrees than ever before thanks to the tireless efforts, in part, of AAUW members internationally. Both of these facts are wonderful opportunities for recruiting members of all ages to join in the fight against the *war on women* and help us continue our long and proud history of accomplishments and credibility as an organization.

**Our society is changing** drastically and we as individuals/groups must also develop unique ways to work smarter to enhance the changes, encourage involvement, and increase our accomplishments. People, no matter how busy, will find time to serve an organization they believe in. Public policy advocacy is critical to addressing our issue to create change. Thanks to the advocacy work of our AAUW members in the recent past, our quest to address three particular inequities, have become law in Iowa. In 2009, two Bills were signed into law by our Governor. SF 137, an act providing that wage discrimination is an unfair employment practice, was signed on Equal Pay Day. We were the second state to take such action since President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act into law in January, 2008...the first Bill he signed into law. HF243, an act providing for gender balance on local/ county boards/commissions, was signed on May 26. Another piece of legislation on domestic violence prevention was signed into law a little later. These are examples of major accomplishments and can be used as selling points to recruit new members.

**Recruitment is the process** of enlisting new members in response to a “stimulus” encouraging involvement, service, and growth. “Stimulus” refers to identifying/marketing our mission, accomplishments, benefits of belonging, and testimonials by members/individuals whose lives have been changed and/or who have benefited from leadership, community outreach, grants, and scholarships, etc. It is important to match the individual’s values, interests, passions, and skills to AAUW values, priorities, and what we have to offer. This creates a win-win result!

Recruitment is not just a membership vice-president/committee responsibility, it is everyone’s responsibility. It is important to develop a team membership recruitment plan and divide responsibility to carry out established goals...instead of “shooting from the hip.” The 2012-14 AAUW Iowa Board approved funds to assist branches with recruitment upon submission of a **Membership Recruitment Plan Grant Application** followed by committee review and selection. The 2014 Grant Application will be posted to the AAUW Iowa Website in the Fall of 2013.

**Who is eligible to join?** As we pursue recruitment, the following people are eligible:

-Women and men with an associate's or higher degree from an accredited institution of higher education.

-College students can join and take advantage of (a) a free e-student affiliate online membership if their institution is a college-university (CU) institutional member of AAUW or (b) a student affiliate membership (not free) even if their institution is not a CU member. They can join an AAUW student organization on campus or start an organization or neither.

-Accredited colleges and universities may join as an institutional member of AAUW.

-National members who are not state or branch level members are always eligible to join at those levels.

**Where do we find these people?** Look around in your community/area. Read the papers. Access the Internet to find "like organizations" in your area. People are employed or volunteer at: health care centers, day care centers, schools, colleges, hospitals, retirement communities, libraries or city/county/ state/federal government agencies. You can also find them within Chambers of Commerce, in business and industries, and within the following organizations: political, agricultural, environmental, arts, music, ethnic-related, sports, and issued-based groups.

**Who do you know** that would be a good candidate for membership in any of these organizations? Which of your members would naturally have contact with some of the above groups? If each member recruited just ONE member it would easily double membership. Summer and Fall are great times for recruitment but recruitment efforts can/should take place throughout the year. There are always opportunities to recruit at every meeting, outreach project, coalition event, fundraiser, and recognition event. . AAUW refers to this as "integrated programming."

#### TIMELY TIPS

1. Use the **Relationship Building Model** resource sheet guide when you arrange for conversations to get to know the potential member before you make "the ask" to join.
2. Use **The Process of Connecting our Generations** resource to become familiar with the characteristics of each generation, societal impact, strengths, and critical perceptions. This helps us to better understand, value, recruit, and work with all ages more effectively.
3. Have a supply of **AAUW Membership Brochure Packets** on hand for personal, mail or community distribution. Include *AAUW Iowa's NEW marketing insert* to use with the brochure packets outlining our Iowa priorities and accomplishments. A supply is being distributed to each branch and more are available by contacting Mary Ann Ahrens, Iowa Membership VP at [maahrens@mchsi.com](mailto:maahrens@mchsi.com) Community Chambers, Welcome Wagons, real estate offices, libraries college campuses, and other public places are great locations to place brochures. Don't forget to have a small supply of other AAUW informational brochures available that cover public policy, grants and fellowships, legal advocacy fund, and AAUW Funds opportunities, etc.

4. **Request AAUWs Traveling Membership Marketing Display** for use within your branch/ community. A display can also be purchased for your use. To schedule it for your use, contact Mary Ann Ahrens [maahrens@mchsi.com](mailto:maahrens@mchsi.com) Gain visibility by participating in community celebrations/parades, campus activities/events, county fairs, special events, bazaars, and even farmers markets. Potential members are everywhere.
5. **Create a Branch Website.** Post information that identifies your branch and AAUW information of value that stimulates interest to those who access your website. Have links to the national website: [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org) and state website: [www.aauwiowa.org](http://www.aauwiowa.org) Our national AAUW staff can assist you with developing a website.
6. **Develop mission-based programming** that appeals to a broad audience so members can gain information about the issues for use in addressing burning issues in the community. Planning and implementing outreach projects helps you gain visibility from your important work. Potential and former members may be drawn to join and current members may become more active. Social programming and activity can be creatively included for balance. AAUW s **2012-13 Every Member Survey Report** indicated that pay equity, women in STEM and sex discrimination in the workplace were the top three public policy objectives.
7. **Market AAUW in your community** by including a paragraph on membership in every article submitted to the newspapers, shoppers, and websites. Use AAUWs mission and diversity statements, include eligibility requirements, and provide a contact name, number or email address with the invitation to join. **Contact your local newspaper** and have them do a feature on AAUW. It could focus on state and/or local programming/outreach, accomplishments, a special anniversary for your group, etc.
8. **Develop a brief member orientation** and include bits and pieces in your meetings, branch newsletters, website, etc. AAUW is an evolving organization with new information to be shared every month. Include tidbits from AAUWs monthly emails to each branch...*Mission in Action* and *Membership Matters*. New members are trying to understand what we are all about and current members need regular updates to stay connected. Avoid a one-time shot gun approach.
9. **Have new members fill out a Branch Interest Form** to help you get acquainted with their backgrounds, skills and interests. Keep it on file and use the information for role assignments. One of the keys to retention is involvement in the right capacity with recognition to follow.
10. **Develop simple, flexible changing structures** to meet programming/branch needs. Involve as many members as possible to determine direction, programming and leadership. Rotate meeting times and locations to accommodate member needs. If members travel in the winter, schedule your programming from April through December. Be creative! AAUW s **2012-13 Every Member Survey Report** indicated that the top three *branch leadership responsibilities* were:

increasing visibility, a focus on mission-based programming, and recruiting new members. The top three branch leadership opportunities were: mission-based programming, community outreach and membership involvement.

11. **Be pleasant, patient, and persistent.** Ask guests to sign in at meetings, events, etc. and then follow up with a call, email or a note inviting them to participate in other events of interest and/ or join the branch. They may wish to participate in activities before they decide to join. Keep them on your mailing list and continue to extend invitations throughout the year.
12. **Contact other community organizations and ask to provide a program about AAUW.** The focus could include national, state or local initiatives that you are pursuing. It could stimulate interest or partnering on community outreach. Distribute AAUW brochures and contact information. Don't hide your light under a bushel!

The following **Membership/Leadership** Resources below will appear on the AAUW Iowa Website by mid-October, 2013 for your perusal and use under the **link** by the same name:

1. Recruitment Thoughts and Timely Tips (This was also attached and emailed to you with News Flash memo)
2. How to Spot Future Leaders
3. Revised Branch Fitness Assessment to strengthen the branch
4. How to Show Appreciation to Volunteers
5. How to Handle a Volunteer Who is not Doing the Job
6. How to Prepare for the Leadership Transition
7. How to Develop Effective Leaders
8. An Exit Survey to gain branch feedback from members who did not rejoin
9. Identify Characteristics of an Effective Team
10. Branch Member Form to gain information for assignment purposes
11. How to Grow a Membership Garden
12. The Process of Connecting our Generations : How to Identify different generational characteristics, strengths, societal impact, and critical perceptions to better understand, support, and work with diverse members more effectively.
13. The Relationship Building Model for structuring conversations with potential members
14. Recruiting Younger Members
15. Team Player Tips

For additional questions and concerns, please contact: Mary Ann Ahrens, AAUW Iowa Membership Vice President, 501 Grand Avenue, West Des Moines, IA 50265 [maahrens@mchsi.com](mailto:maahrens@mchsi.com) 515-664-8933 (h) and 319-240-5904 (cell) or membership committee members Diane Patton [diane.patton46@gmail.com](mailto:diane.patton46@gmail.com) of Ames or Kathy Farris [katfarris@aol.com](mailto:katfarris@aol.com) of Indianola.