



Membership Renewal Time!

Membership dues are renewed every year by June 30, 2021. As Branch members of a National program, we have the option to pay/renew our dues securely online. You can write off \$59.00 of the national dues as a deductible donation. Here are the instructions on how to renew.

1. Go to the AAUW website: <https://www.aauw.org>.
2. Click on MSD (Member Services Database) on top banner to be directed to the Login Page.
3. On Login Page:
 - a. EXISTING USERS- enter your AAUW Member ID and password.
 - b. FIRST TIME USERS- Click Create Account and set up a password.
 - c. You will need your AAUW member ID. If you forgot your member ID you can look it up by clicking on Forgot Member ID or by calling Liz Bathgate at 510-581-0461.
4. Click Enter Member Services Database to link your individual member profile.
5. Locate Membership Payment Program (MPP) near bottom on the left-hand menu.
6. Click on Renew my membership.
7. AAUW INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP /DUES PROCESS:
 - a. To pay online by Credit or Debit Card: Click the Personalized Membership Renewal Link. The system will add \$20 state and \$15 for your branch membership to your total payment.
 - b. To pay by check: send a check for \$94.00 made out to AAUW to Liz Bathgate 22112 Queen Street, Castro Valley CA 94546.
 - c. Your renewal will show up on the roster immediately.

Using the MSD to pay your dues ensures the HCV Branch will get credit for renewal. When you are at the MSD you can review your donations, print a member card and update relevant information.

President's Message

Hello Fellow Branch Members. - **April is AAUW Election Time**



Beginning April 7, 2021, the national membership of AAUW will have the opportunity to vote on the public policy priorities for 2022-2023, National Board members, and a bylaws change affecting the membership criteria for AAUW. The proposed change under Article IV - Membership and Dues - Basis for Membership - Individual Eligibility would read:

An individual who supports the AAUW mission and pays annual AAUW dues shall be eligible to be an individual member with all rights and responsibilities of AAUW membership.

The proposed bylaw change eliminates the educational criteria for membership. The AAUW bylaws require that the affirmative (yes) vote of two-thirds of the votes cast are required to amend the bylaws. The Public Policy Priorities can be amended with an affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast.

Changes to the Public Policy Priorities are effective for the 2022-2023 fiscal years (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023). Changes to the bylaws would be effective immediately. AAUW's national staff will be prepared to change membership language, the join function, and other related items as necessary immediately after the vote. There would be no changes for Life Membership or Student Associate membership due to the proposed bylaw change. For more information, please go here:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/openmembership-toolkit/>

Voting will take place **online between April 7th and May 17th** unless a member sends a request to AAUW for a paper ballot. Members without an email address on file with AAUW national will receive notification of the vote by mail.

I have included arguments in favor and in opposition of the proposed bylaw change, for your information, and consideration. It's important to hear both sides of an argument to make an informed decision. Please plan to VOTE!!

SAVE THE DATE for the California AAUW virtual annual meeting on April 17, 2021 from 9:30 to 12:30. Look for details in upcoming weekly email.

Serve as H-CV Branch leader - H-CV is as vibrant as its leadership. We have benefited from the capable leadership of many of you over the years, and now is your opportunity to come to the Board as an officer or support person. Your expertise, commitment to AAUW, and loyalty to the branch make you a natural. The expectations are clear, the time commitment is minimal, and the rewards are priceless. Please contact Linda Slater (slaterl@sbcglobal.net) or Liz Bathgate (lbbathgate@att.net) about serving as an H-CV leader. We will all be glad you did.

Argument in Favor of Removal of Education Criteria

In April and May 2021, AAUW members will vote on a slate of National AAUW officers and on proposed bylaw changes, recommended by the current AAUW Board of Directors and the AAUW Governance Committee that would eliminate the degree requirement for membership. The comment period is now closed. Voting begins April 7th. Below are some questions and rationale from members about open membership in AAUW. Thank you to Cherie Sorkin of the CA Online Branch for her compilation of the argument in favor of a YES vote.

1. AAUW has been this way for a long time. Why do we need to change now?

- AAUW has adapted itself to changing times before in order to continue to be relevant.
- Our continued relevance will be enhanced by eliminating barriers that limit who can participate in our mission of advancing equity for women and girls.
- Many corporate and foundation funders have clearly told us they are not willing or able, based on their own criteria, to fund organizations they believe have directly or indirectly discriminatory requirements or create barriers to participation in the work of the organization. Corporate and foundation funding is essential for national nonprofits these days. AAUW's membership dues support only a small percentage of our work.
- As part of the country's overall reckoning with systemic racism and inequality, much of which disproportionately affects women, it is time to recognize that our self-imposed barriers to participation are actually harmful, even if these barriers once may have been understood to serve as a well-intentioned incentive to specific achievement.

2.. Won't dropping the degree requirement end what is unique about our organization?

- The uniqueness of AAUW is its breadth of programming, research, policy and advocacy, fellowships & grants, and grassroots membership. Unfortunately, AAUW is also unique in its exclusionary membership requirement, which is particularly unfortunate for an organization advocating for equity.

- Having a degree does not make someone “like-minded” —We are like-minded in our support for advancing equity for women and girls.
- Having a degree does not make someone a better advocate for women or a better symbol of womanpower. Think Eleanor Roosevelt, Lilly Ledbetter, Malala, Greta Thunburg.

3. Don't we need to honor the legacy of our founding mothers by retaining the degree requirement?

- It has been 140 years since our founding back in an era when only a very few women were able to go to college or find meaningful employment after graduation. Today, women outpace men in earning degrees at all levels. Women also make up (pre-COVID) close to 1/2 of the total workforce in the U.S. But economic disparities and discrimination against women persist widely, despite our levels of education and participation in the workforce.
- AAUW can and should take pride in its past and present success in helping women attain higher education. The fully endowed Fellowships and Grants Fund will allow AAUW to be a leader in this area in perpetuity. Education is important and does make a difference. But it alone does not guarantee equal treatment or opportunities for women, something our founders cared about deeply. The battle to be fought is not just about education, but about equal treatment.

4. If the degree requirement is dropped, will branch membership increase?

- Membership levels in associations and other organizations are affected by many things. But certainly, our degree requirement is a barrier to joining for many women, and increasingly it is seen as elitist and discriminatory.
- A rush of younger members to join branches is unlikely due to the age of most of our current branch members. However, more women in older age ranges may be interested in joining once the barrier is removed. Fifty plus years ago, many women, particularly non-White women, did not have access to higher education. We all undoubtedly have friends in this category--women who are “just as smart,” just as interested in equality for women” not to mention “just as much fun” who can't be members because of the current degree requirement.
- Many of us have been embarrassed by encouraging friends to join, only to find out they are not eligible because they do not have a degree.
- Our degree requirement has shut out women with diverse backgrounds and perspectives – who may inject new energy into the mission. Younger women, in particular, view the fact that we have a barrier to entry that disproportionately affects women of color and women of lower economic status as contrary to our mission.

5. Since college education is more accessible now, why do we need to worry about dropping the requirement?

- Getting a degree was a badge of honor for many of us, building our confidence and honing our intellectual skills, and also helping to prepare us for work outside the home. For some it was also a badge of honor that meant we could join AAUW, an organization that helped keep us intellectually stimulated while we were still at home raising children. But degrees are not the “badge of honor” they once were, and skyrocketing educational costs, childcare, elder care, transportation, working multiple jobs and language barriers are significant issues for women today that make it hard for women to get a degree. Also remember that as it stands today, many women have gotten their degree only to be burdened by two-thirds of the national college debt. Cost is a barrier many of us did not have “back then.”
- Today, there are more careers open to women- firefighters, police, pilots, entrepreneurs, artists, politicians, manufacturers, retail managers, etc. that do not require a degree. Education can come in many forms, including career technical education, on-the-job training. Women without degrees can certainly be just as passionate about advancing equity for women and girls as women with degrees.

6. Won't we have to change our name if we drop the degree requirement?

- First of all, we have had a variety of names during our 180-year history. Today AAUW is well-respected and high profile, particularly in its advocacy and research. We would not want to lose this position of recognition. Many other organizations use only initials and did not formally change their names when one of the original words in the name became out of favor or inappropriate. Think NAACP or YWCA. Changing our name is not the issue to focus on. Opening our membership to a broader group that will work in support of the mission is the issue.
- Also, the full name has not been applicable for a while. “American” – we have worked internationally for over 100 years. “Association” – member dues now only comprise 15-20% of revenues. “University” – in 2005, membership was extended to people with associate degrees. “W” – in 1987, membership was open to men.

Voting Begins April 7. For more information on this and other issues, candidates for National office and information on voting, click [HERE](#)

Argument in Opposition of Removal of Education Criteria

Below are comments and rationale from branch members about not opening the education criteria for AAUW. Thank you to Remy Parmar of the Fremont Branch for her compilation of the argument in favor of a NO vote.

Removing the AAUW Education Requirement is Not the 'Right Thing' to do

American Association of University Women Fulfills a Niche

AAUW began in 1881 when a small group of college graduates came together for the purpose of women's career advancement and to specifically encourage more women to pursue a higher education. Marion Talbot is one of these original founders, who became the Dean of the College of Women at the University of Chicago and a leading figure in higher education.

<https://www.aauw.org/about/history/>

Other women's groups exist that do not have an education requirement, and these do not fulfill this niche.

Women are proud of their higher education

AAUW's main mission fosters education in women. This historically positive mission and message should not be subverted by anyone to imply that AAUW is elitist and/or exclusive. In every way, women who hold degrees are empowered. This empowerment should not be demeaned by messaging that implies women with degrees as trying to be elitist over women who do not hold degrees. Even if the messaging stays the same and only the bylaws are changed, this will be confusing to members and against their principles.

Recently, our first lady Dr. Jill Biden was attacked and told to remove the 'Dr.' from her name because it was elitist. Dr. Biden said this: "And one of the things I'm most proud of is my doctorate," "I mean I worked so hard for it." Joe Biden also said, "She had two master's degrees and she kept going to school all the time while teaching at night." See:

<https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/News/dr-jill-biden-responds-op-ed-called-drop/story?id=74797472>

Likewise, many of AAUW's members can relate to various hardships they have endured in earning their degrees and take pride in their degrees and are specifically members in AAUW for the education requirement and messaging.

Corporations should not dictate AAUW's Mission

One of the key arguments AAUW National is making to remove the education requirement focuses on not being able to get more corporate donors who see the education requirement as elitist and not inclusive. But, corporations should not dictate what AAUW's principles should be. AAUW (a nonprofit) should find ways to reduce overhead costs, seek out and work with corporations who do support AAUW's education mission (that has been supported by membership for decades since 1881) and convince corporations not to blindly follow 'cancel culture' or a blanket 'political correctness' in an 'all or nothing' manner.

Loss of Dues Paying Members Across the Board

Eliminating the education requirement may actually result in a large loss of current dues paying members, who have loyally renewed membership for decades. The average age of AAUW members is 60+. Loss of members will not only decrease dues earned by AAUW National, since the significant portion of dues go directly to National, but also gut the vitality of local and state branches because active members will no longer volunteer their energy and resources to high quality programming that serves local communities, including community colleges.

Procedural problems with a vote to remove the education requirement

Given the age demographic of AAUW's membership (and this pandemic), an overwhelming number of members may not read emails from AAUW because they do not keep up with emails or don't use technology on a regular basis. AAUW has not provided any counter arguments for members to read or factual data. These members may not realize they must vote 'No' to keep the education requirement and this vote may pass (with a low 5% member vote) without their knowledge. Once the education requirement is removed, it cannot be put back. Having paid dues (for decades and continuing) local members deserve the right to be fairly informed.

There is no need to remove the education requirement

AAUW's bylaws already allows members with AA degrees and already allows college student members who don't have degrees yet. Bylaws should be re-written to allow local branches to decide on a case-by-case basis if honorary membership should be given to a person based on her/his background if/when such a person comes forward. There is no data showing that a

significant number of members have been turned away due to the education requirement. Again, once the education requirement is removed, it cannot be put back in.

AAUW also has specific programming for women who may not have a degree, such as the equity network and work smart. An increase in such programming, as well as programming related to childcare and other issues that prevent women from getting educations should be ramped up so all women can have access to education.

Education leads to higher salaries

It is clearly understood (and has been researched) that on average, for the majority of the population, the higher the education, the higher the salary. This is why AAUW's education requirement is important to keep. There may be some women who are successful without degrees, but the overwhelming statistics reflect the opposite. See:

<https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2020/data-on-display/education-pays.htm>

The Factual data on minority women earning degrees does not align with removing the education requirement

AAUW should strive to encourage more women to earn higher educational degrees. The facts show more minority women are actually getting degrees and by keeping the education requirement in AAUW, the message reinforces what research shows – that pursuing higher education is valuable and leads to more opportunities. See:

<https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=72>

<https://www.thoughtco.com/black-women-most-educated-group-us-4048763>

A better focus of resources and energy for AAUW, that is in line with its core mission, would be to increase scholarships and fellowships given to minority women as well as continue to create effective programming that helps minority women earn an equal wage.

The Factual data on women earning Stem degrees does not align with removing the education requirement

AAUW's own research demonstrates that women are not earning enough Stem degrees, which means they are not entering Stem fields in equal numbers to men. Thus, women are being left out of high earning Stem jobs. There is more work to do in this regard and removing the education requirement sends a confusing, misaligned message to women and girls. See:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/research/the-stem-gap/>

Upcoming events



Drama Reading

When: APRIL 8, 2021

Time: 1 – 3 PM

Where: Liz Bathgate's home

We will be reading NIGHT WATCH by Lucille Fletcher. It is a suspense thriller about a woman, who one night during a raging thunderstorm, frantically tells her husband that from the living room window she has seen a murder being committed. All our regular readers are vaccinated!! YEA!! Therefore, we will begin reading again in person. Questions? Contact Liz Bathgate at lbbathgate@att.net.



Book Group

When: Monday, April 19, 2021

Time: 1:00 (Note new time)- Zoom Link: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85631855772?pwd=REFadTJnZDIIZ3EzK0xWMTUzQ1ZnQT09>

Meeting ID: 856 3185 5772 / Passcode: 926770 / Dial in by Phone +1 669 900 6833

(Enter Meeting ID and Password)

The branch book group continues to thrive thanks to Linda Slater, Genie Lester, Margaret Hankle and Linda Myers. The March 15th meeting provided a lively group discussion of Helen Phillips' *The Need*, facilitated by Linda Myers.

The group decided on two book reads for April and May. The April meeting will be on Monday, April 19. featuring Ann Patchett's *The Dutch House*. Linda Myers will facilitate the discussion. Linda Slater will facilitate the May discussion of *The Dressmaker of Khair Khan* by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon on Monday, May 17th. Both meetings will be on Zoom and will begin at 1 p.m. Linda Slater will send out Zoom details.

Further plans for the group will be in coming issues of *The Shareline*. All branch members are welcome to join in. If you have questions, contact Barbara Jones at bb_jones@pacbell.net.

Evening Book Group



When: Thursday, April 1, 2021

Time: 6:30 PM - Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86026989222?pwd=ZHI2ZzdYdWgxNXFRTHdLTGVxUmtLUT09>

Meeting ID: 860 2698 9222 / Passcode: 418082

Dial by Telephone to +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose) Enter Meeting ID & Passcode

Please welcome our newest interest group. The Evening Book Group. We will be meeting the first Thursday of each month. Our first meeting is Thursday, April 1, 2021 at 6:30 PM on Zoom.

Our first book, *The Vanishing Half*, by Brit Bennett is the story of twin sisters trying to find their way in a world of prejudice, secrecy, and loneliness. The book will be facilitated by Linda Slater. Our May and June books will be chosen at our April meeting. Grab a glass of your favorite beverage and join us.

Further plans for the group will be in coming issues of *The Shareline*. All branch members are welcome to join in. If you have questions, contact Linda Slater at slaterl@sbcglobal.net.

Public Policy

The Future for Roe v Wade and Choice by Claire Noonan, California Public Policy committee

The times they are changing – a new president and vice-president who support pro-choice, but a sixth very conservative justice is added to the Supreme Court.

Abortion rights activists stress state-by-state vigilance to be aware of how reproductive choice is now used as a political tool, says Ilyse Hogue, recently retired president of NARAL. New anti-choice bills are mainly introduced by the white male religious minority, except in Montana with six abortion-limiting bills introduced this year by conservative female legislators and one male.

For instance, extreme 2021 legislation in Tennessee will allow fathers to veto an abortion. A Texas bill will require a fetus to have a lawyer. Arizona's new bills propose to criminalize a woman who gets an abortion and the doctor who performs it.

During a pandemic telemedicine is valuable to prescribe pills for medication abortions. In July 2020 the federal courts temporarily suspended the doctor's visit rule for the first pill, mifepristone, but in January 2021 SCOTUS reinstated the rule. Patients again must visit a doctor for the first pill and get a prescription to obtain the second, misoprostol.

These restrictions have a particularly significant impact on low-income communities, which often include women of color, which are stressed economically by the year-long and counting pandemic. Clinics especially in the South, like [West Alabama Women's Center](#), are constantly searching for money sources to provide reproductive services as well as current needs for newborn assistance. The center focuses on providing financial assistance to the under-served, even when services are 'temporarily' deemed "non-essential". Despite efforts to provide full-spectrum reproductive health care access, dwindling numbers of clinics from the Sun Belt across the Deep South curb the availability of services. In the Navajo Nation, Covid infection is so high that patients need a doctor's note to leave the tribal area for a clinic appointment.

Consequently, vigilance means watching the power of the courts, encouraging reversal of the Hyde Amendment, and backing codification of the Roe v Wade decision. As you know, each woman in California can choose, but support for organizations that oversee the reproductive health rights of women in America are worth the effort.

Member News



If you have news about a member who needs to be congratulated on a special occasion or accomplishment, who needs to be encouraged during illness or difficult time, or to be reminded we are here for him/her, please contact your corresponding secretary Barbara Jones at 538.0516 or by email at bb_jones@pacbell.net.

This is especially important during these pandemic times when we are isolated from our branch friends and not enjoying our usual meetings. Let's show our friends know we care.

