

GET WITH THE PROGRAM

June 2005 Volume I, Issue 9

AAUW-PA BRANCH SURVEY RESULTS

Last fall I sent out branch surveys to the presidents of all the PA branches asking them for information about their branch such as when they meet, what officers they have, etc. Of the current 54 branches in Pennsylvania, 24 (44%) responded. The following is a summary of what I learned from these 24 branches.

General Branch Information (Officers, Meetings, Dues, etc.): The smallest branch was 12 members (Pottstown) and the largest 180 members (Allentown). Most branches have a President, several have co-Presidents or Management teams and a few

have other officers that act as Presidents. One branch (Lansdale) has an Executive Vice President. Most branches have a Program Vice President, some have Program Committees without a designated PVP. All branches have a MVP, Finance Officer and Recording Secretary except one (Lancaster) which only has a Finance Officer that does all jobs. Many of the branches have EF, LAF, Diversity and Public Policy Chairs, some have Visibility, Publicity, Communications, and/or International Relations Officers.

Most branches meet monthly from September through May for a program presentation but

several meet less frequently. A few branches have board meetings September through May or June, but many meet less often or as needed. Nine branches (37.5%) have a strategic plan and 7 (29%) have a website. Branch dues ranged from \$1 to \$23 with the average being about \$12.

Branch Programs: Only one branch was not familiar with the Leader on Loan Program. Eight (33%) branches have used LOL in the past two years, although none in 2004-2005. All but three branches wanted to see Program Ideas on the state website and the topics

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Important Dates to Remember

June 2-4, 2005	National Conference for College Women Student Leaders, Washington, D.C.
June 24-27, 2005	National Convention, Washington D.C.
July 16, 2005	AAUW-PA Branch Leadership Meeting, Lewisburg, PA

Program Idea—The Equal Rights Amendment

The 14th Amendment to the Constitution protects the privileges of U.S. citizens, provides for due process of law, and equal protection under the laws. After the 1868 enactment of the 14th Amendment, it was 52 years of struggle before women won the right to vote in 1920. However, women were still treated, under the law, as second-class citizens. Alice Paul and the National Women's Party proposed in 1923 *The Equal rights Amendment (ERA)*, which by 1943 was worded as follows:

Section 1. *Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.*

Section 2. *The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.*

Section 3. *This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.*

The "Alice Paul" ERA was passed by Congress in 1972, and sent to the states for ratification. In spite of a 3-year extension to the original 7-year ratification time limit, the ERA was only ratified by 35 states, three short of the required 38.

Since the 1982 expiration of the ratification time limit, the ERA has been reintroduced in every session of both houses of Congress. Each time, thus far, the resolutions have been stalled without action.

There is precedent for amendments being passed after an exceptionally long ratification period and the ability of Congress to extend ratification time periods. Thus, it can be argued that any session of Congress could extend or eliminate the currently expired ratification time limit on the ERA such that just three more states ratifications would then add the ERA to the Constitution. The 35 existing state ratifications should stand because states that have once ratified an amendment do not have the power to rescind that ratification (Article V of the Constitution).

There are close to 200 women's organizations with a collective membership of over ten million currently working to achieve the ratification of the ERA. One of these organizations, the ERA Campaign Network is a network of people all around the United States supporting and/or working to get the ERA amendment added to the U.S. Constitution. The ERA Campaign Network has undertaken a "3-state strategy" in which they hope to achieve ratification in just three of the 15 re-

maining unratified states (Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, and Virginia).

The National Coordinator of the ERA Campaign Network, Jennifer MacLeod and the Outreach Coordinator, Dorie Rothman, as well as the Pennsylvania State Coordinator, Lilyan Cralle, all live in New Jersey. The Lansdale branch had Dr. Rothman speak at a branch meeting last year and it was tremendously enlightening. The website for the ERA Campaign Network is, www.ERACampaign.net, where you can find the background information I have given above, contact information, what's new information, and the newsletter "*The ERA Campaigner*".

If your branch is interested in presenting a program on this important topic, I would suggest you start with the ERA Campaign Network. If they cannot personally come and speak to you, they can probably point you in the direction of speakers in your area that would be knowledgeable or have other suggestions.

Association News—Membership Dialogue Final Report

The dialogue survey on the suitability of the membership requirements and categories implemented after the 2003 AAUW National Convention is complete and the final report is available online at Association's website. Nationwide 551 branches (~40%) participated and an additional 1,113 branch members voted as individuals. There were 3 main groups: branches/states who

voted as one unit, branches who specified an exact breakdown of their members votes, and individual votes. Overall, the majority in all 3 groups felt that adding a "membership category for other degrees" (Associates, 3 year RN, etc.) was the first choice. In second place was "no change". Coming in a distant third and fourth were adding a "category for community partner" and having "no educational degree requirement".

A continuing Membership Dialogue Forum is being held during the 2005 National Convention on Saturday June 25th and bylaws proposals for this topic are being presented for vote on Monday June 27th. If you are attending convention and feel passionate about this topic, be sure to check the program for the exact time and place for these events.

AAUW-PA Branch Survey Results—Continued

most branches wanted ideas for were Leadership, Recruiting Younger Members, and Diversity. Several branches offer some AAUW Community Programs—Sister-to-Sister (8), Woman-to-Woman (1), Transitions (2), Tech Check (3), Adelante Book Club (6). Nine (38%) have collaborated with other AAUW branches on programs and nineteen (79%) have collaborated with other community groups on programs.

The purpose of this survey was to learn something about the many branches in Pennsylvania. This information is important to the state board when trying to determine how to best serve the branches. It is important to have an understanding of how many members are in the branches, who is doing well, who is struggling, something about the way the branch runs in terms of officers and programs, and where they need help. As a board our function is to serve the branches in the state and to do that

we need to be familiar with what you do well and where you need help. The unfortunate trend in AAUW is declining membership. We like you recognize this problem and are brainstorming to try and determine how best to help the situation. That is why our current president, Karen Rowe, is forming a Marketing Committee in an effort to increase the visibility and “get out the word” about AAUW because we believe if women know about this organization, they will want to belong.

It is unfortunate that I did not receive a better response than 44% of the branches, it is difficult to get the whole picture when you get information from less than half of your branches. However, I am grateful for those of you who did respond, I certainly learned a lot about the various branches and I will pass this information on to the rest of the board to use in their planning and decision making.

Thanks to **District I**—Clarion, Lock Haven, **District II**—Allentown, Anthracite, Bethlehem, Hazleton, Pocono Area, **District III**—Beaver Valley, Fox Chapel Area, Murrysville Area, **District IV**—Bedford County, Carlisle, Franklin County, Gettysburg, Huntington, Lancaster, Lebanon Valley, Reading and **District V**—Eastern Delaware County, Lansdale, Makefield Area, Pottstown Area, Philadelphia, Inc., and West Chester-Chester County.

Summer Break For Get With the Program

I am taking the summer off from preparing the Get With the Program newsletter. I will be back in September with new issues. Several of the PVPs will be changing in the fall so I will say good bye to the outgoing ones. I hope you enjoyed your term as PVP and you found this newsletter helpful. Good luck in your future AAUW endeavors.

AAUW-PA News

AAUW-PA Branch

Leadership Meeting

This meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2005 at the Best Western in Lewisburg (Country Cupboard). Information was sent to branch presidents in the FYI.



**AAUW Pennsylvania Newsletter
for Branch Program VPs**

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The American Association of University Women promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.

State Website aauwpa.org

Association Website aauw.org

Get With the Program

**Adelante Book of the
Month Club**

The Adelante Book Club selection for June, Gay/Lesbian Pride month, is *Aimee & Jaguar: A Love Story, Berlin 1943* by Erica Fischer (1998).

The selection for July is *Speak Truth to Power: Human Rights Defenders Who Are Changing Our World* by Kerry Kennedy Cuomo (2000).

The selection for August is *My Forbidden Face: Growing Up Under the Taliban—A Young Woman's Story* by Latifa (pseudonym) (2002).

Public Policy Priority

The featured priority is:

“Supporting initiatives for education reform that encourages gender fairness and diversity, including enforcing Title IX.”



**Enjoy Summer
Reading Whatever
you Choose**