



Pennsylvania

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AAUW Election April 7 — May 17, 2021

AAUW members play an important role in shaping the future for women and girls by choosing the organization’s leaders and policy priorities. This spring AAUW members will be asked to vote on amendments to the Public Policy Priorities and bylaws, in addition to electing members to the national Board of Directors.

Learn about the election and stay current at:
<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/>

Every member with an email address on file with AAUW will receive an email with a link to vote that is unique to them/tied to your membership number. Members without email, will receive a USPS letter with instructions for obtaining a paper ballot. This section will be updated, as we learn more.

Voting Key Dates

NEWSLETTER

Volume 88, Number 1

 **The Keystoner**

March 2021

Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research

2021–2023 AAUW Pennsylvania Officer Candidates

MEMBERSHIP VICE PRESIDENT

RANDI BLAUZIS (BAYTON)

Randi is currently the Membership Officer for her branch, previously having served as Diversity and Inclusion officer for the same, as president 2017–18, as the outgoing secretary and treasurer, and as vice president. She has been the Membership Officer for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, in 2017, she was awarded the Best Award in 2018. She is currently serving as the Membership Officer for the Bayton Branch, and the National Advocacy Committee. She is currently serving as the Membership Officer for the Bayton Branch, and the National Advocacy Committee. She is currently serving as the Membership Officer for the Bayton Branch, and the National Advocacy Committee.

April 7 Voting opens – online voting is encouraged

- April 16 Last day to request a paper ballot
- April 30 Postmark deadline for mailing paper ballots; ballots must be postmarked by 11:59 pm ET to be counted
- May 17 Online voting ends at 5:00 pm EST

Let's Discuss Open Membership

AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee proposed bylaw amendments to eliminate the degree requirement for membership. **Find the proposed changes and rationale [here](#).**

The **AAUW Pennsylvania Board** discussed the proposed bylaw changes and agreed to unanimously support AAUW open membership. **Our statement of support is [here](#) and our rationale is further down the page.** The remainder of this page is dedicated to information and resources for you to review, learn about the proposed change, and engage in a statewide discussion.

Learn and Engage in Discussion

AAUW PENNSYLVANIA TOWN HALL
Tuesday, March 30 at 7:00 pm via Zoom

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwrDQCpqDksG9HEkNRahlgnpQXRyK1h3TB>

Join the discussion about the proposed bylaw change to remove the education requirement for AAUW membership. Dot McLane, AAUW Past President, and former AAUW national board member will introduce the change and reasons it is being proposed. Then, attendees will break out into smaller groups for a facilitated small-group discussion.

APRIL SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Recognizing of course that not everyone will be able to attend the March 30th Town Hall, or you may want to have additional conversations after the Town Hall, attend one of the following small group discussions to be facilitated by Jordan Glover, AAUW Pennsylvania Diversity & Inclusion

Chair.

Tuesday, April 13th 7:30 PM – 8:30 PM ([registration link](#))

Friday, April 16th 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM ([registration link](#))

Monday, April 19th 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM ([registration link](#))

Wednesday, April 21st 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM ([registration link](#))

SHARE YOUR STORIES

What is your experience with the education requirement? Why do you support the elimination? Why does eliminating the degree requirement concern you? **Share your stories [here](#).** Use this form to submit personal stories or antidotes you might want to share with other AAUW members regarding the open membership vote this spring. These could be moments for you that decided how you feel about the membership requirement, reasons you support change or reasons you support leaving things as is.

Are you a Facebook user? **[Join the AAUW Pennsylvania Discussion Group](#)** to share opinions, insights, stories with other members from around Pennsylvania. This is a space for dialogue about the proposed open membership AAUW bylaw change. Share, listen, learn with other AAUW members in Pennsylvania.

Resources

AAUW Tool Kit

By eliminating the education requirement, AAUW can become a more diverse and inclusive organization, better aligned with the needs of

Tool Kit resources	
AAUW Branch and State Newsletter Content	Brief Talking Points to Eliminate the Membership Requirement
AAUW Open Membership PowerPoint	Statement from the AAUW Branch and State Action Working Group
UPSTATE Group and Town Hall Discussion Facilitation Guide	AAUW's Commitment to Inclusion & Equity
Full Talking Points to Eliminate the Membership Requirement	

women today. **[The Open Membership Toolkit](#) is designed to help branch and state officials lead substantive, productive conversations about this important vote.**

AAUW Webinar — Policies vs. Practice: The Continued Fight for Equity

This webinar, presented by Kim Churches, AAUW CEO on September 9, 2020 outlines AAUW's mission. Fast forward to

29:30 for Kim's overview

of why eliminating the degree requirement for membership is critical to the future of AAUW.



AAUW Board Town Hall — September 28

Board Chair Julia Brown and Board Vice Chair Melinda Gaul discuss the recent notification of prospective dues increase and open membership proposed bylaw change, as well as, share information about our racial equity and justice work, and what to expect on the AAUW voting ballot this year.

AAUW Webinar — January 19, 2021

In the first virtual town hall of 2021, members had the opportunity to hear from AAUW's nationally elected National Board chair and members of the Racial and Social Justice Working Group and be a part of breakout groups where we discussed the recent clash at the United States Capitol, implications for our ongoing racial equity work and the vote to open membership this spring.

What AAUW Branches in Pennsylvania are saying About Open Membership

As of March 8, 2021, we are aware of five branches in Pennsylvania that have committed their support of eliminating the degree requirement for AAUW membership. We will update as we learn of additional branch support. **Click here for the summary statements from:**

Bethlehem

Carlisle

North Hills Pittsburgh

State College

AAUW Pennsylvania Rationale for supporting Open Membership

Why AAUW Pennsylvania Board supports eliminating the degree requirement for membership.

- Board members aren't recent converts. Individually, we supported the change in every previous attempt. Since 2009, this is just the second time the AAUW Board of Directors put the proposal on the ballot. When on the ballot between 2009 and 2018, the change was member suggested, which is one of our rights of membership.
- This change will turn AAUW into "every other women's organization" or eliminate what makes us unique. From the beginning, AAUW is focused on improving the lives of all women and girls. Our research, federal advocacy, programming over the years are in service to that mission. The AAUW mission sets this organization apart. The mission is not changing.
- We know some members joined because being a woman and having a degree was special. Removing the degree requirement doesn't take away any accomplishments in the past or make them less significant. This change is about the future. Our degree requirement has changed over time. In the beginning, only those with a degree from a specific list of schools could join AAUW. In 1949, the members voted to open membership to women with a degree from any accredited 4-year college or university. In 1985, we voted to allow men. In 2005, those with a 2 year or equivalent degree could join. Women under 50 have been telling AAUW for years that they see the degree requirement as exclusive and they do not want to be part of an organization that holds on to this. There are very few organizations that have lasted over 100 years. The main reason why AAUW continues to be vibrant is that we have adapted and changed over the past 140+ years. This time is no different.
- Removing the degree requirement doesn't signal the elimination (or reduction, for that matter) of AAUW's commitment to the education of women and girls. Supporting and improving access to education is a core element of AAUW's mission.
 - AAUW will continue to work at the federal level on important issues such as Title IX, access to education, student debt,

STEM.

- AAUW Pennsylvania works at the state level on education issues impacting women and girls. Issues include K-12 school funding, charter school reform, access to education, student debt.
- Our education requirement is viewed as discriminatory by corporations and foundations looking to fund gender equity work. Therefore AAUW is losing donations and is being told that our work is exactly what the corporation/foundation supports, yet our membership requirement is inconsistent.
 - The education foundation of AAUW, which generously awards \$3.9 million in fellowships and grants each year, is fully endowed and will continue into perpetuity.
 - Everything else (research, advocacy, Work Smart to name just a few), is the work of AAUW's affiliate organization—the membership organization to which you belong. Only about 15% of that budget is funded by member dues. The remainder must come from corporations and foundations. It is becoming increasingly difficult to compete with other gender-equity mission organizations for these funds because AAUW is seen as “exclusive” at a time when everyone is working to become more inclusive.
 - Simply put, the AAUW mission will be jeopardized by lack of funds and puts the membership organization at risk.

