

## Promoting the Value and Interests of Older Women in the Workforce

Sue Cochran, Treasurer, Special Projects Fund

AAUW California is part of the California Coalition for Older Working Women (CCFOWW), a coalition of local, regional, and state leaders who share a vision for positive change for California's older working women. Coalition members represent state and local government, workforce development, and women's organizations in California, with AAUW California actively represented by state leaders Kathleen Cha and Sue Cochran.

The coalition was first convened in 2003 by the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau and the Women's Foundation of California to serve as a statewide Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee. The initial purpose of the advisory committee was to identify the needs of older working women and to develop recommendations for serving them. Upon the completion of the task force's initial assignment and funding, the committee took the initiative to establish the California Coalition for Older Working Women (CCFOWW). The coalition has met continuously since its inception with AAUW actively participating. The work of the coalition focuses on the employment needs of older women as well as the value they can bring to the workplace at a time of increasing shortages of skilled workers. The vision and goals of this coalition are an outstanding match with AAUW's national and state programmatic vision of "Education as the Gateway to Women Economic Security."

### What We Know About California's Workforce And Older Working Women

- ▼ By the year 2020, one out of every four employees will be over the age of 55 – and mostly women;
- ▼ The maximum life span is now greater than 85 years and may be closer to 120 years;
- ▼ 80% of baby boomers expect to be working after retirement up from 15% in 2001;
- ▼ There are no quick and easy replacements for the impending baby boomer retirements that will significantly impact California's skilled workforce.

CCFOWW believes that addressing the issues involving older working women is timely for both the workers and the employers. Many are convinced that older working women are a critical part of the solution to projected worker shortages that will occur because of an aging workforce and retirement of baby boomers. Through this coalition California is in a position to take the lead in addressing the many issues facing older working women.

CCFOWW hopes to shine a spotlight where the greatest attention is needed right now. The driving vision is to help create a public system and workplace that is responsive

to the growing number of older women workers and their unique needs. With support from employers and public policy makers, the coalition believes that we can turn a rapidly approaching crisis into real life success stories about California's older working women and the businesses that employ them. If branches or individual members want to be involved in helping implement this vision locally and statewide or you wish more information generally, e-mail Sue Cochran or Kathleen Cha who continue to work on the issues with the CCFOWW and serve on executive planning committees, at [office@aauw-ca.org](mailto:office@aauw-ca.org).

**MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS:** AARP, AAUW California, American Society on Aging, California Commission on the Status of Women, California Department on Aging, California Women's Law Center, Congress of California Seniors, EDD Senior Worker Advocate Office, Family Service Agency of San Mateo County, FamilyCare, Inc., Global Foresight, National Economic Development and Law Center, Older Women's League, On Lok Senior Health Services, One Small Step, San Francisco Foundation, Self Help for the Elderly, Stanford University Institute for Research on Women and Gender, The California Endowment, The National Council on Aging, The Women's Foundation of California, UCSF Institute for Health and Aging, US Department of Labor Women's Bureau, Women at Work, and Work Source California.

**Visit [aauw-ca.org](http://aauw-ca.org)  
and read more:**

**Gulf Coast AAUW Members  
Are Recovering From  
Hurricane Katrina**

**American Leaders  
in Aging**

**Tools You Can Use**

**EDSOURCE Update**

**Sports Day and  
Title IX Update**

## Our International Sisters

Did you know that as a member of AAUW, you are also a member of the International Federation of University Women? Our relationship to the international organization has been very much on the front burner over the past months, as budgetary constraints have called into question our ability to meet our dues to IFUW. Nevertheless, the delegates to the 2005 Convention in Washington endorsed our continued participation in and support of our international obligations.

IFUW represents 150,000 women graduates in 77 countries. It works largely through the triennial conference, which serves to set goals for the Federation, educate participants on women's issues, and provide opportunities for networking among members of the national federations and associations (NFAs) which make up IFUW. The next triennial conference is scheduled for 2007 in Manchester, England. Although the number of members on AAUW's voting delegation is limited, you need not be a voting member to attend, to present a paper to the interdisciplinary seminars, to conduct a workshop on a topic related to the theme of the conference, or to participate in the meetings and social activities. IFUW's current Action Programme is *Women: Agents of Change*.

IFUW is in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, and works closely with UNESCO, UNICEF, and UNIFEM to achieve its goals. Through its programs of advocacy, development of new national organizations, and support for women in developing countries, IFUW plays an important role in improving the lives of women throughout the world. A major focus of IFUW from its beginning in the aftermath of World War I has been on improved international understanding and world peace.

Since its birth, IFUW has relied heavily on the support of AAUW, both in terms of leadership and financially. We make up the lion's share of the 150,000 members, yet too many of our members are only dimly aware of the impact we have on the world through IFUW. If you would like to know more about what IFUW is doing, please go to its web site, [www.ifuw.org](http://www.ifuw.org).

### Here is a little history of our association with other women graduates in the wider world:

IFUW was formed in the aftermath of World War I by Virginia Gildersleeve, Dean of Barnard College in New York, and Caroline Spurgeon, the first woman professor in an English University (Bedford College, London), who met while the latter was on a visit to the United States in 1918. In the summer of 1919, the British Federation invited their American colleagues and a group of university women forming in Canada to work together to create IFUW. A year later the first Conference was held at Bedford College in London – Caroline Spurgeon's college. Representatives of 16 countries were present.

While the first IFUW Conference was held in 1920, it was the Third Conference in Oslo in 1924 when IFUW really "took off." The four Nordic countries came together to run

the conference jointly. It was at this Conference that the Fellowships Fund was launched with a donation of money which had earlier been raised in Norway for a research fellowship for a woman, but had not been used due to the intervention of World War I. This was matched by other donations.

The IFUW badge with the lamp was also created for that Third Conference. The antique lamp represents the light of learning; it is surrounded by an interlinked chain symbolizing the bonds of friendship which the Federation exists to create and strengthen.

IFUW sponsors two voluntary funds: The Hegg Hoffett Fund provides relief assistance for women graduates displaced by war, other conflicts, and natural disasters. The Bina Roy Partners in Development Programme supports projects in developing and transitional countries.

A number of NFAs have formed regional groups to work more closely together: Europe, Asia, the Pacific, Latin America, Central America, Africa, and South Asia. The European group focuses particularly on common interests within the European community. In the South Pacific group, Australia and New Zealand have been active in sponsoring new Associations in the South Pacific island nations, who have proved to be some of our most enthusiastic members.

*Linda Hiebert Sekiguchi, Association International Affairs Chair  
with assistance from IAC member Bonnie Lincoln  
and AAUW U.N. Representative Carolyn Donovan*

## Latest Association Board Actions Regarding IFUW Dues Payment

- ▼ Adopted a statement that "AAUW is financially unable to pay, and therefore will not pay, IFUW dues for calendar years 2005–2007 from current AAUW funding sources."

(*Note:* Financial impact of AAUW's current IFUW dues obligation is estimated at between \$945,000 and \$1,005,000 (U.S. dollars) for the three year period 2005 through 2007. Estimate \$350,000 (U.S. dollars) per year. AAUW's NFA status dues are calculated from the IFUW dues rate schedule and AAUW membership numbers. Estimates are required since IFUW dues are payable in Swiss francs and exchange rates fluctuate. Currently, AAUW is in arrears and owes IFUW dues for both 2005 and 2006.)

- ▼ Approved the Board IFUW working group's proposal for taking voluntary, non-tax-deductible contributions until June 30, 2007 toward satisfying AAUW's obligation for IFUW calendar years 2005–2007 dues. Details of the contribution opportunity and internal plan for its implementation will be developed by the Board IFUW working group. (Additional details will be forthcoming.)

## Membership: Set Your Sights on Success

Whether you're the sole officer responsible for "everything" in a small branch, the Membership Vice President of a branch with hundreds of members, or a member committed to growing AAUW, you face an ever-expanding universe of membership challenges. Your challenges include: growing members in today's tight environment; showing the "value of belonging" to current members; staying ahead of the latest trends and best practices; managing ever-increasing time and budget constraints; and making sure everyone stays focused on the mission of AAUW – the number one reason people join. *Since membership is everyone's business, not just the MVP's, here are highlights of key membership recruitment and retention resources to help set your sight on success!*

### New Membership Web Pages: At Your Service!

Already receiving rave reviews, three new membership web pages have recently been added to [www.aauw-ca.org](http://www.aauw-ca.org) (in the Member Center, under "Branches and States"):

- ▼ **Membership Officer Resources:** Everything anyone needs to know if they are responsible for membership in their state or branch – whether for the Membership Vice President, or for any member interested in helping their state or branch recruit new members. Great tool kits and membership starter kit available online.
  - ▼ **Notes from the Chair:** AAUW's Membership Committee Chair, Ann Gustafson, provides insight, information and incentives for every member in their quest to learn more about the benefits of membership in AAUW.
  - ▼ **Sharing Success: Ideas for Membership Growth:** Learn from examples of activities, programs, web sites or other actions various states and branches used to help them recruit new members and keep current ones.
  - ▼ **Membership Forms:** You'll also find many of the forms you need (adding new members, record changes, order labels/lists, Officer Forms, awards, campaigns, etc) online, available 24/7 at [http://www.aauw.org/member\\_center/forms/index.cfm](http://www.aauw.org/member_center/forms/index.cfm).
- Key contacts at Association: 1-800-326-AAUW (2289); or email: [Helpline@aauw.org](mailto:Helpline@aauw.org) and/or [Records@aauw.org](mailto:Records@aauw.org); and contacts in California are [office@aauw-ca.org](mailto:office@aauw-ca.org) and [membershipvp@aauw-ca.org](mailto:membershipvp@aauw-ca.org).

Don't forget another valuable resource that is right there in the front lines...**you** – our present members. There are an untold number of members who, when asked why they joined AAUW, say it was because someone asked them. So we as members have a valuable role in recruiting and retaining branch members. Let others know about AAUW and **ask** them to join you. Together we can truly *set our sight on success.*

## TECH TREK 2006 Volunteer Form

**WANTED:** Volunteers willing to work for the satisfaction of helping Tech Trek Campers have an experience of a lifetime.

I am available to help at the following Tech Trek camp(s) in 2006:

- Mills College (June 6–13)
- UC-San Diego (July 16–22)
- Stanford University (July 23–29)
- CSU-Fresno (July 23–29)
- Whittier College (August 6–12)
- UC-Santa Barbara (August 6–12)

### GREATEST NEED:

#### Counselors (Dorm Moms) and Nurses

These women live one week at the campus of their choice, supervise 10-12 girls when students are not in class, help them adjust to being away from home, chaperone field trips, assist with evening activities in the dorms. Campus life involves lots of walking and related physical activity, but no cooking. Living expenses are paid by Tech Trek.

I can serve as a:

- Counselor
- Nurse

### OTHER VOLUNTEER JOBS

- ▼ Greatest Need: Grant writer
- ▼ Other tasks: Database manager, camper packet preparation, printing & laminating nametags, camp registration (Sunday), or "as needed"

I can help with (indicate task) \_\_\_\_\_

Additional job descriptions are available from Volunteer Coordinator Marygrace Colby at [Mgcolby1@aol.com](mailto:Mgcolby1@aol.com).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

AAUW Branch: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form to: AAUW-CA/Tech Trek, PO Box 160067, Sacramento, CA 95816-0067, or E-mail: [Marygrace Colby at Mgcolby1@aol.com](mailto:Marygrace Colby at Mgcolby1@aol.com)

**Deadline: April 15, 2006**

## AAUW Educational Foundation Commissions Poll on Pay Gap: What did the poll reveal?

Women working full time earn about 75 percent of what men working full time earn. Even after considering job tenure, years in the labor market, occupation, education, and other factors usually associated with pay, about 20 percent of the gap remains unexplained.

Do Americans know about this disparity? Why do they think there is a pay gap? In March 2005, the AAUW Educational Foundation commissioned a nationally representative poll conducted by Lake, Snell, Perry, Mermin and Associates to learn about common perceptions of the pay gap.

### Highlights from the research

Americans are well aware that a pay gap exists between male and female full-time workers, according to AAUW's research. Eighty-one (81) percent of women and 69 percent of men agree that there is a difference between the wages of male and female full-time workers. Only 12 percent of women believe there is no gender gap, compared with 24 percent of the men surveyed.

Women are more likely to believe there is a pay gap, and they estimate a bigger gap, on average, than do men. Men and women ages 45 and older are more likely than younger adults to strongly agree that there is a pay gap.

Democratic and Republican women agree that a pay gap exists and believe that a key reason for it is that employers don't promote young women because employers believe women will leave if they have children.

Over half (56 percent) of Americans include employers' unwillingness to promote young women because they may leave when they have children as either the first (29 percent) or second (27 percent) most important reason for the pay gap. About 41 percent say it is because women prioritize family over work and are less committed to their careers. An identical

number (41 percent) say it is because employers discriminate against women in their hiring and promotion practices. About a fifth of Americans (28 percent) chose gender differences in negotiation and assertiveness as a leading factor. Only 12 percent of adults think there is a wage gap because men are more likely to have the education and skills needed for higher paying jobs.

Women's skills and educational attainment are not considered an important factor in the gender pay gap by either men or women—work/family balance issues, employers' perceptions of women's family commitments, and discrimination by employers are considered more important reasons

### SAVE THE DATE – SHARE THE INFORMATION

A new AAUW learning experience for all  
AAUW CA members!

A Bi-Regional Conference  
With AAUW members from seven states  
(Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and California)

**When?**  
August 4 – 6, 2006

**Where?**  
Lewis and Clark College  
Portland, Oregon

**Presented By:**  
Alice Bartelt, *Mountain Pacific Regional Director*  
and  
Alicia Hetman, *California Regional Director*

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