



# Membership Recruitment and Engagement



- Thank you for the opportunity to share our story of how our branch recently recruited a large number of new members at our annual Membership meeting.
- Before we get started, I'll mention a few housekeeping reminders:
  - First, in the next days you will be able to download this presentation and a recording of it from the CA website.
  - And if you have questions, please use the Chat function at the bottom of your screen to ask them. We'll be holding the questions until the end of the presentation in order to respond to them.



## Redlands Branch Speakers

**Amy Bisek**  
Membership VP



**Pam Ford**  
C/U Partnerships Co-Chair



**Marilyn Shankar**  
Co-President

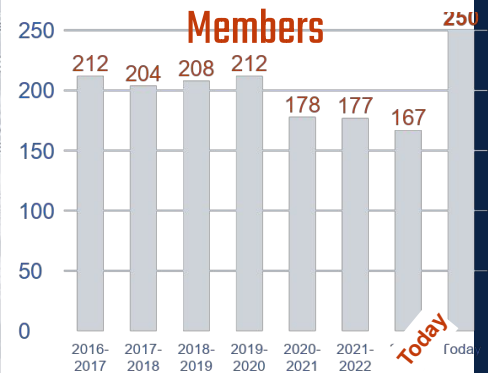
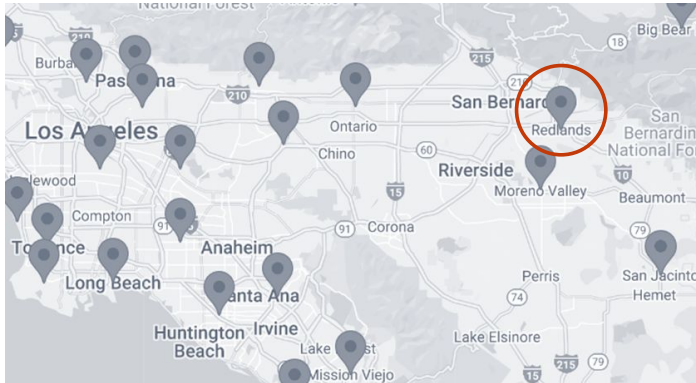


**Joyce Katkov**  
Hospitality Co-VP



Tonight, you'll be hearing from myself, Amy Bisek, Membership VP, and Pam Ford, one of the Co-Chairs of our College and University Partnership Committee. Joining us for the later Q&A session are Marilyn Shankar, one of our branch's Co-Presidents, and Joyce Katkov, who is one of our Hospitality Committee Co-VPs.

# AAUW Redlands Branch: Context



For context I'll share that our Redlands branch is now 250 members strong in a community of over 72,000 people.

We were established in 1947 and last year celebrated our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

As you can see, we too suffered from the ill-effects of Covid.

But this year we are reaping the benefits of consistent, ongoing efforts to build the AAUW brand in our community, recruit new members and retain our existing membership.



## Redlands Branch: Context

- AAUW Mission Initiatives
  - AAUW Fund / Legal Advocacy
  - Public Policy
  - Gov Trek
  - Speech Trek
  - Tech Trek
  - Three C/U Partnerships
  - Nancy Yowell Memorial Scholarships
  - High School Scholarships
  - STEM Conference: Redlands, 600+ 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
  - STEM Conference: PASS, 200+ 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- Community Initiatives
  - Library's Adult Literacy and CHAT (Conversation Helps Adults Transition) programs
  - Back to School backpacks
  - YMCA Legal Aid Fundraiser: Home Tour and Bake Sale
- Interest Groups
  - Bridge
  - Book Club
  - Bunco
  - Dining Groups
  - Great Decisions Foreign Policy Discussions
  - Hiking our Hills and Mountains
  - I Am, Therefore I Think
  - Sew What!



We do this through a keen focus on Mission Initiatives. In addition to supporting both National and California mission initiatives, we operate a robust offering of scholarships for local college and high school women, as well as two STEM Conferences that encourage over 800 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls to pursue careers in higher-paying STEM fields. (CLICK)

Community brand awareness is increased by our Branch's involvement in community activism. (CLICK)

And we generate member loyalty through a variety of social interest groups that are just plain fun.



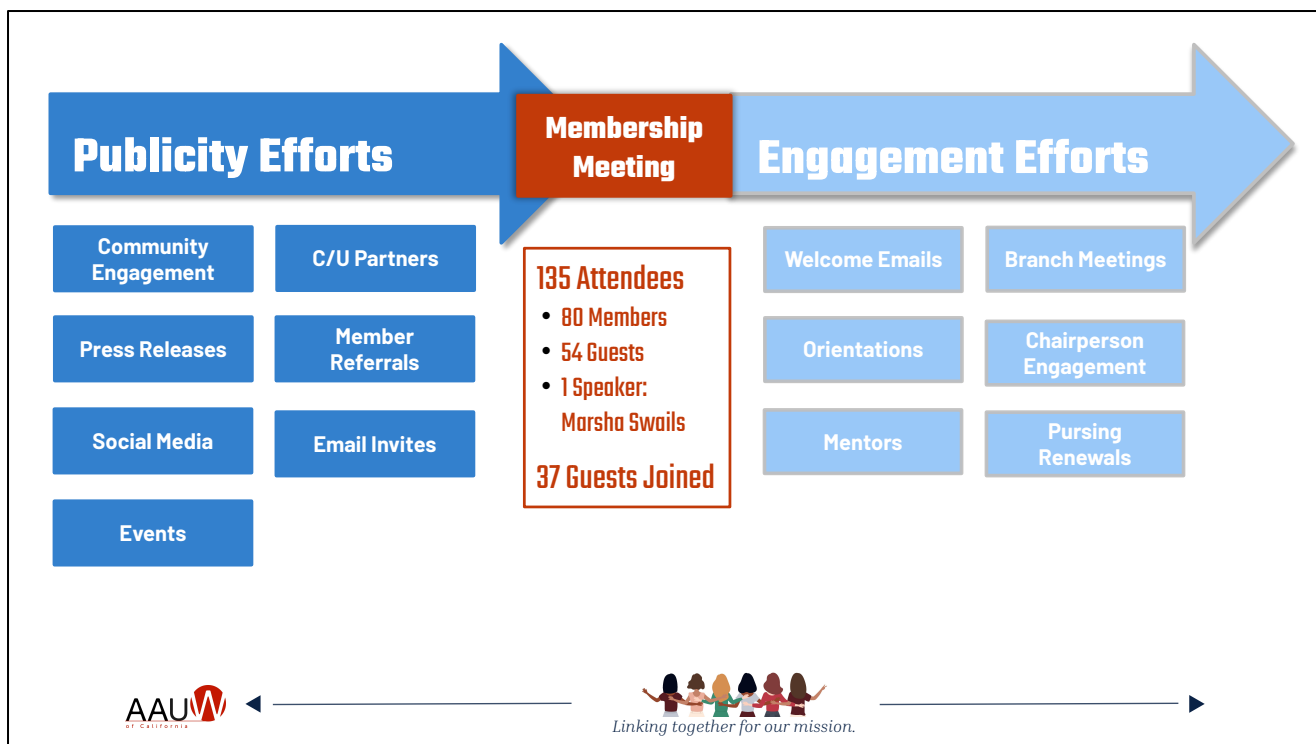
## How Did Redlands Branch Get This Strong?



**Baby Steps ... Baby Steps**



- So how did our branch get this strong? There is no one, silver bullet answer. (CLICK)
- It's just by putting one foot in front of the other, day after day.



- And how do we do this? (CLICK)
- By making concentrated efforts to build the local AAUW brand... (CLICK)
- As a catalyst to spur interest in membership meeting attendance.... (CLICK)
- Followed by a multi-touch engagement plan,,, (CLICK)
- That drives results. We're pleased to announce that this past October our efforts resulted in gaining 37 new members at our annual Membership meeting. Let's take a look more closely at each of the building blocks that contributed to this outcome.



## Publicity Efforts

### Community Engagement



SERVE REDLANDS  
Redlands Service Club Council



- Our branch recently joined (CLICK) the Redlands Chamber of Commerce, which spurred us to form a branch Community Engagement Committee. Committee members attend Chamber meetings to promote AAUW and our fundraising events in the community.
- They also attend monthly Redlands Service Club Council meetings to help coordinate our community's event schedule and promote our fundraisers.
- They participate in the Redlands Community Foundation's leadership classes, to learn skills useful to Service Clubs.
- And we're out in the community doing things we love, like baking for our local YMCA's Holiday Bake Sale and ushering at our summer music festival. And when we do these activities, we're do them under the AAUW brand.

## Media Outreach

### Press Releases and Social Media



- We frequently tap into two local papers that pick up our Press Releases. (CLICK) This too improves AAUW's visibility in the community.
- Our Press Releases inform the community about a variety of topics: such as announcing our branch meeting speakers, creating publicity around our fundraisers, announcing our scholarship achievers, and of course, publicizing our annual membership meeting.
- Multiple Membership Meeting guests said they attended because they saw our newspaper articles.

### Event Booths

- Juneteenth
- VIBE Fest: Health & Wellness
- Dia De Los Muertos
- Earth Day
- Come Meet the Author



- We often sponsor a booth at a variety of community gatherings. The booths are organized by different branch committees and interest groups, like our DEI Committee and Book Club. Visibility at these events also helps us build a more diverse membership.

### College and University Partnerships: Crafton

- Leverage Honors Institute
- Honors day booth
- Club Rush booth

### Future Needs

- Tools for campus advocates
- Student tools: i.e., Start Smart, live engagement
- Mission-focused student recruitment tools



- PAM DOES THIS SLIDE (OR MORE?)
- This past summer our branch made strong inroads with our three College and University partners. For example, by leveraging AAUW within the Honors Institute at Crafton Hills College, we have been invited to have a booth at two of their recent student events. From these events, we've gained three new student members. Plus, we are now actively following up with over twenty-five students interested in hearing more about AAUW.
- It's important that we, as leadership for AAUW, consider how we can continue to bring value to our student members. (PAM – WHAT SAY HERE???)

## Member Referrals

- Make it easy
  - Elevator speech
  - Long & short invites to forward
- If interest groups allow guests, ask them to join
- Reward members
  - Reallocate
  - Shape the Future
  - free memberships

**AAUW**  
ADVANCING WOMEN

*You're Invited to Join*


**New Member Information Meeting**  
**Saturday, Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> 2022, 8:45 a.m.**  
Casa Loma Room - University of Redlands  
1173 E Brockton Ave., Redlands, CA 92374

The American Association of University Women is the nation's leading voice promoting equity and leadership for women and girls. AAUW Membership will connect you to a powerful network of more than 170,000 people across the country who are passionate about women's rights and building a better future.

**Registration Deadline: Wednesday Sep. 28, 2022**  
To attend: call 800-362-4955 or email [membership@aauw-redlands.ca.us](mailto:membership@aauw-redlands.ca.us)

Join at this meeting and your first-year annual dues will be reduced to \$34.50. You may be a graduate without a degree, a graduate with a degree (in MA, a bachelor's degree, or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution. AAUW Membership does not require a college degree.

Questions can be directed to [membership@aauw-redlands.ca.us](mailto:membership@aauw-redlands.ca.us)




**New Member Information Meeting**

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is a national organization devoted to promoting gender equality and providing education for women and girls through advocacy, research, and leadership development.


The AAUW Redlands branch will hold its first information meeting at the University of Redlands on **Monday, September 17, 2013 at 7:00pm**. This meeting highlights why AAUW makes a positive difference in our community, with the intent of recruiting new members to join the AAUW.

At this one-a-year gathering, the Redlands branch will discuss the current state of gender equality, the current events concerning women, two annual TEM (Transgender Equality Month) events, and the current state of the world. There will also be special scholarships for high school girls, and scholarships for college women who have had their education interrupted. The Redlands branch also brings Star of Women awards to the meeting.



**What:** AAUW Membership Meeting/Brunch  
**When:** Saturday, Oct. 26, 2012 at 8:45 a.m.  
**Where:** Casa Loma Room, University of Redlands, 1171 E. 68th St., Redlands, CA 92373  
**Topic:** AAUW's 100th Anniversary  
**Speaker:** Dr. Joanne M. Zupac, MD, about her visit, "What's Next? The Medical, Political, and Social Challenges Ahead."  
**Dr. Zupac is a member of the AAUW National Board and Chief Clinician of the University of California's Center for Women and Health, University of California's Women's Health Institute, and the University of California's Women's Health Institute.**

**Registration:** Advance fee: Sept. 20, 2012  
 \$100.00; On-site fee: Sept. 27, 2012  
 \$150.00. AAUW will provide a complimentary meal and general entry and education for our community's women.



**Annual  
Membership  
Meeting**

## Membership Meeting

### Saturday, October 7, 8:45 a.m.

### Who Will You Invite as Guests?

Now is the time to consider which friends and colleagues you will invite to our October Membership Meeting at the University of Redlands. The RSVP deadline is September 26. Details about how to invite guests will be in next month's newsletter. Last year, we almost filled the Casa Loma room to capacity. Get your RSVP in early so your guests won't miss out.

At this October Membership Meeting we'll showcase what AAUW is all about. Your guests will be awed by our community activities, the many interesting groups they can participate in, and the great personal connections they can make if they join.

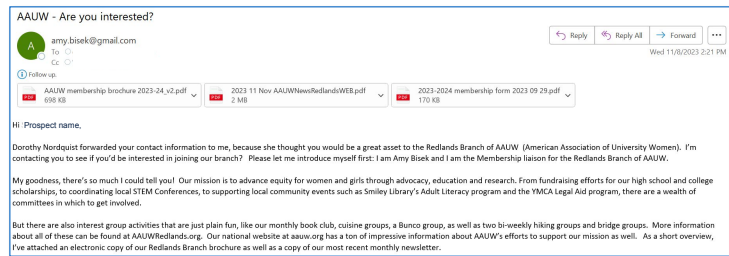
And if it's time to rejuvenate your own participation, this is a great meeting at which to sign up for some committees. YOU will make a real and substantial difference to women and girls in the Inland Empire only if you get involved. Do it. You'll be amazed at how powerful you can be.

*-Amy Black, Membership Vice President*

- In truth, the Publicity Efforts we've showcased here really just grease the recruitment wheels. It's a known fact that our greatest recruitment resource is our own membership. To help them help us, we give them tools to make the invitation process easy. We provide "short" invites they can send out to their friends who may already know a bit about AAUW. And we provide "long" invites they can give or send to people they barely know. And we remind them, remind them, and remind them to recruit people they've met in their Pilates class, or at church, or through their brother-in-law's best friend's dentist. Then, at the end of the year, we reward the members who have invited the most guests to branch meetings with the free Shape the Future memberships.

### Email Invites

- Warm and welcoming
- Tailor to each recipient
- Stress mission and interject fun/friendships
- Invite to branch meeting
- Reassure of flexibility
- Attach brochure, newsletter, eventually application
- Follow up monthly-ish with call to action



*"Thank you so much for following up. I appreciate very much you reaching out to invite me to the membership event. The program sounds terrific and a great way to get to know the chapter activities."*

- Potential new member

- Of course, a core building block of member recruitment is to create meaningful relationships with potential members, one at a time.
- For the people who reach out to us, I most often reach back by email. I tailor my emails to each person, stressing our mission initiatives, but promote how much fun we have in the process. And I usually tell my own story of how, while I as working, I joined AAUW strictly for the book club. But now that I've retired, the AAUW mission has become one of my core pursuits. And, in the process, I've made great friends.
- All recruitment emails close with a call to action: join us at a branch meeting or an upcoming fundraiser. Come kick our tires.
- And my advice? Don't get discouraged. It often takes a few months worth of emails before someone takes the leap and comes to a branch meeting. But once they're there, they're often hooked.



## Branch Membership Meeting

### Annual Membership Meeting: Oct

- Saturday morning for easy access
- Committee/interest group info tables
- Assign members to host guests
- "Airport" identification signs
- Guest welcome packets
  - Name badge, branch brochure, application form
- Free brunch for guests
- Assigned seating so hosts/guests together
- Shape the Future discount
- Table to take applications and payment
  - Interests and bios

**37 Guests  
Joined**

**68.5%**

Community  
Publicity

**Guest Origin**

20%

80%

Member  
Invitations



- Of course, our Membership Meeting was a whirlwind of activity.
- We took special pains to ensure our guests felt welcome, by assigning a member to host each guest.
- We had tables surrounding the room at which guests could talk to the Chairs of our various committees and interest groups to find out what we're all about.
- And we had multiple people on hand to take completed applications along with their checks or credit card payments.
- Almost 70% of our guests joined that day.

## So Now What Happens?

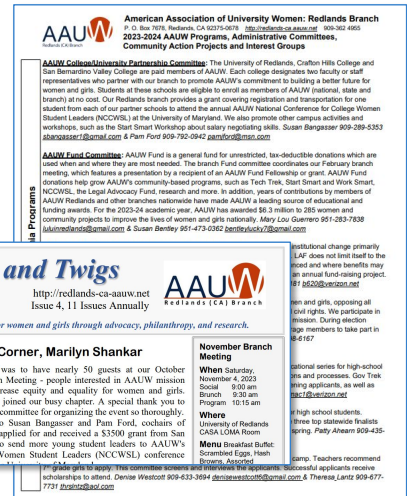


- Of course, it's important to retain our new members after all of the effort expended to recruit them.
- Our branch drives engagement through intentional actions designed to build member loyalty
- According to a Society for Human Resource Management survey: 76% of US workers who have close friends at work say it makes them more likely to remain with their employer.
- Harvard Business Review quotes Gallup data that shows that having a best friend at work is strongly linked to increased retention.
- Similarly, for our AAUW volunteer efforts: We recruit members with our mission. And we retain members by building friendships.

## Engagement Efforts

## Welcome Emails – Get to Know Us

- Membership VP
  - Warm and folksy
  - Next steps in your membership
  - Committee/interest group list
  - Password to online member directory
  - Heads up for Microsoft Teams emails
  - Also send hardcopy Member Yearbook
- Newsletter sample
  - Add address to your contacts
  - How to RSVP for meetings



Linking together for our mission.

- Once someone has joined our branch, they receive an initial welcome email from me.
- They soon receive a second email from our newsletter editor, from the email address our newsletters are sent, to request that they add that email address to their contacts list.
- Plus, we provide them with all of our members' contact information so that our flow of communications can become two way.

## New Member Orientations

- Two+ waves annually
- Meet board members and tenured hosts
- Overview of mission activities
- Review of our communication touchpoints
- Interview for interests, bandwidth and skills
- Ask if they want a mentor



### New Member Orientation

Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

Casual, low-key new member orientation.  
Have your questions answered.  
Meet members, have fun,  
get to know us better.

RSVP Requested by Wednesday, Nov 8, to  
amy.bisek@gmail.com  
or 952-261-9908.

Redlands United Church of Christ  
Covenant Hall  
168 Bellevue, Redlands



- Every new member is invited to an orientation session.
- If they haven't made it to a previous session, they're asked to attend again.
- Our orientations are more casual and intimate than our Branch meetings, where new members can feel comfortable asking as many questions as they'd like.
- And we ask for specifics about how they would like to participate, how much time they have to contribute, and the skills they can bring to the branch (such as their level of comfort with technology or excel, or are comfortable in leadership roles or maybe they'd like to provide background support).
- In addition, we take headshot photos that we use in our online member directory.
- Our goal is to identify how we can quickly link new members to our branch and empower them to feel valued.

### Hospitality/Mentors

- Volunteers with similar interests
- Answer questions, accompany to initial activities
- Invite for coffee or lunch
- Future: Follow up w/disengaged members before they drop

**17%**  
of New Members  
asked for a Mentor



- Throughout the year our Hospitality team is building a pool of members who act as new member mentors.
- Some new members just want a phone call or two at the start to touch base and have questions answered.
- Others like to have their mentors accompany them to a branch meeting or few, to help them meet people and better understand the meeting content and context.
- Either way, we try to help them feel comfortable and become involved.

## Branch Meetings

- Reinforce mission activities
- New member name badge ribbons
- Mentors sit with new members
- Encourage participation – give purpose



- At branch meetings we have an unwritten rule: watch out for new members and help them feel welcome in our branch.
- We expect every member to help in this effort.
- To help, our new members' name badges have a ribbon that says "New Member" on it.



## Chairperson Engagement

- Welcome to Committees and Interest Groups
- Guide and welcome new members
- Members at Large inquire about participation



- And of course, we inform the various Chairs of our administrative committees, mission activities and interest groups of the new members who are interested in their specific cause. Whether it's the Chair of our STEM Initiatives or Chair of our Bunco group, we ask them to ensure that our new members become engaged and involved as quickly as possible.
- In the future, we plan to have our Board's three Members at Large help assess if our new members are indeed becoming active in our branch. If we don't see them participating, it's our goal to follow up and encourage their involvement.

## Pursuing Renewals

- Ongoing activity – Member volunteer reaches out monthly
- Easy instruction sheet
- Communicate back why non-renewals
- Track reasons to see trends

**AAUW**  
Redlands (CA) Branch

**Membership Matters: 2023/24 Renewal Options**

Your 2023/24 membership dues are \$123, which includes \$72 National, \$20 CA State and \$31 Redlands Branch\*. There are four ways to renew your dues. Choose the easiest option for you!

**Option 1: Renew at a Branch Meeting**  
Renew in person by cash or check without a fee. If paying by credit card, there is a \$4.00 processing fee.

**Option 2: Renew by Check in the Mail**  
There is no fee to renew your membership by check in the mail.  
Make your \$123 check payable to AAUW Redlands, then send it to:  
AAUW Redlands, c/o Ellen Cope, P.O. Box 7078, Redlands, 92375-0078.

**Option 3: Renew on the AAUW Redlands Branch Website with a Credit Card.**  
There is a \$4.00 credit card processing fee to renew on the Redlands branch website.  
To pay on our Redlands website: Visit [redlands-ca.aauw.net](http://redlands-ca.aauw.net).  
Click on the Membership tab, then click on Membership Renewal.

**Option 4: Renew on the National AAUW Website with a Credit Card**  
There is no fee to renew on the National AAUW website.  
To pay on the National website: Visit [AAUW.org](http://AAUW.org) and click on Login. If you have visited the Community Hub before and have already created a password, you can log into your Personal Snapshot. If you have not set up your password yet, click **Forgot Your Password** located below the blue login button at the bottom of the page. Enter your email address, then click **Reset Your Password** to receive a login email from [login@aaupw.org](mailto:login@aaupw.org). If you don't receive it in 5-10 minutes, email [ajones@aaupw.org](mailto:ajones@aaupw.org). **PLEASE DO NOT CREATE A NEW ACCOUNT**, even if you have never set up a National account before. National has already done that for you. After you receive the login email, enter your email address and "Create and Confirm your Password" to access your Personal Snapshot.

Once you are in your Personal Snapshot, have your credit card handy and click **RENEW** at the bottom of the screen to renew your national, branch and state memberships. Dual members should self-renew ALL memberships at once. College/University representatives whose national membership is covered by the school should email [connect@aaupw.org](mailto:connect@aaupw.org) to request a special code before renewing.

All Redlands branch members who joined prior to February 2022 have a renewal deadline of June 30, 2024.  
Members who joined March 2022 or later have a renewal deadline that is 12 months after the month they joined.

If you have questions, please direct them to:  
Ellen Cope, (909) 214-4665, [ellencope@aauw.org](mailto:ellencope@aauw.org) or Kay Dobbertin, (909) 917-8039, [kaydobbertin@aauw.org](mailto:kaydobbertin@aauw.org)

\$100 of your 2023/24 membership dues are tax deductible.  
\* If you are a student, please contact Ellen or Kay to assist you with renewing your discounted membership.

- And to ensure continued renewals, now that National has changed the renewal process and timing, we have a member assigned to engage with other members that have upcoming renewal dates. We don't want to let any membership renewals to fall through the cracks.



## How Does This All Get Done?

How Do You  
Eat an Elephant?  
One Bite  
at a Time



- So how do we accomplish all of this?
- Yes, our branch is large and we have many hands to help do the work.
- But smaller branches should consider that: even doing 75% of something is better than doing nothing.
- So don't let yourself get overwhelmed. (CLICK) Just put one step in front of the other.

## Create a Strategy

### Gather for a Brainstorming Session

- Where can we get the biggest bang for our efforts
  - Gov Trek – strong link to mission, minimal heavy lifting, good publicity, no cost
  - Tech Trek – strong link to mission, pre-defined processes, great opportunity for publicity
- What are our current resources
  - Who are your Excel users, members who can ask for sponsorships, organizers, etc.
- Who will own which efforts
  - How can we engage all members; spread out the workload
- Celebrate successes – no matter how seemingly small



- We suggest that you start by making a plan.
  - What are your priorities?
    - It's better to do a handful of things well, than spread yourselves too thinly and never get things done.
  - I've found that it's most effective to ask specific people to own certain tasks. If you keep waiting for volunteers, you'll likely be waiting a long time.
  - And of course, everyone likes to be recognized for their efforts. Remember to celebrate accomplishments not only at your branch meetings, but in your newsletter, and with a personal note of thanks from leadership.



## Final Advice

- Trust your gut
- Don't let it overwhelm you
- Be persistent
- Solicit help
- Do something, anything
- Don't sweat the small stuff
- And always ask to "close the sale"

Amy Bisek, Membership VP

[Amy.bisek@gmail.com](mailto:Amy.bisek@gmail.com)

952-261-9908

**"There is no limit to  
what we, as women,  
can accomplish."**

**Michelle Obama**



*Linking together for our mission.*

- In conclusion, I'd like to say again, in my opinion, there is really no one silver bullet for recruiting and retaining members.
- It's done one step at a time. One bite at a time. One outreach at a time. One connection at a time. Really, one effort at a time. (CLICK)
- On behalf of our AAUW Redlands branch, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to present our story. Feel free to contact me if you'd like to talk about any of these ideas further, or see samples of the materials and resources we mentioned during this presentation.
- Thank you again, now we'll take Questions. (CLICK to final slide)



# Questions And Answers



*Linking together for our mission.*

It's time to find that Chat function on the bottom of your screen. Click on it to submit a question to our panelists and speakers.