



Report to the Board

March 31, 2006

Notes since Spring 2005

I am honored to have had 2005 convention place their confidence in me as president-elect, and since last spring I have been working to prepare for assuming the role of president. This summarizes some of what I've done.

Streamlining Tech Issues

I have served AAUW NC as webmaster and technology chair for several years. As I assume the role of president, it will be important to streamline that work. Even if someone new steps forward with the skills and interest to support these efforts, streamlining will make their job easier.

North Carolina

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1. Migrating the AAUW NC web site to a "content management system" where "articles" can be posted without any special software. The initial trial of this was done during the AAUW 2005 Convention when several members posted their impressions. The underlying software (WordPress) has been significantly improved since the spring 2005 version, and, as a proof of concept, I have migrated the AAUW Asheville website to this platform – see <http://asheville.aauwnc.org>. I've also started using the new software at www.aauw-nc.org/wp for announcements that need to be posted to the web, to keep from overloading the e-mail list with "too many" messages.
2. Unfortunately, there does not seem to be a solution on the horizon for the branch/state officer directory. The system that the Association demonstrated in June is still not operational, and it's pretty clear it won't be fully functional by summer. I expect we'll continue for one more year with the system we've used since 2003.

New AAUW NC Structure

Starting with the changes to the bylaws that were approved last spring, a number of issues have been moved forward.

1. The executive committee approved a new board structure that would organize the work into six broad areas: Advocacy, Communications, Events, Fundraising, Membership Development, and Administration along with a Diversity Task Force and the possibility of other ad hoc cross-functional committees.
2. The 2006-2007 budget was developed using the new groupings.
3. Volunteers for the 2006-2007 appointed officers and the committees will be recruited using the new groupings.

ReConnection Status

Goal I. Set a common goal for the state

This was agreed to at the Summer 2005 board meeting: “Actively Encouraging Women and Girls to be Lifelong Learners.” The Summer 2006 board meeting will revisit this to consider whether this needs to be changed or refocused.

Goal II. Change the practices of the board

This will be revisited in the discussion on Sunday morning April 2 where new expectations for board members will be proposed. This will also involve rewriting some of the policies as we adapt to the structure of the new bylaws.

Goal III. Improve content at state meetings

Great progress has been made here. Continuing success will be the responsibility of the Events group.

Goal IV. More face-to-face contact with AAUW NC board members and branch members.

There has been some use of the speakers’ bureau, but we still have some work to ensure that all board members view communicating with branch members as a priority. [See Goal II.]

Goal V. Discover/publicize strengths of the branches

We implemented the mini-grant program to supplement the 100 club to identify what significant projects are carried out in the branches and which members are behind these. A new survey to “map” the characteristics of the branches was used as part of the branch recognition program. Continued work is needed here.

Goal VI. Change the AAUW NC structure

Done! With the bylaws changes of 2005, I believe we can declare this goal accomplished in providing us more flexibility and accountability.

Strategic Plan Status

Goals

Expand/Build Coalitions – I’ve continued to serve on the board of NC Women United and have participated in a “membership organization subgroup.” The coalition work will be part of the Advocacy Group in the new structure, hopefully with support from Events.

Improve visibility – one of the primary action steps for the next few months is to recruit someone for the communications team to handle media relations. There is a wealth of resources provided by the Association that we are not getting to the NC public.

Diverse Intergenerational Membership/Outreach. The new membership vp will be asked to track/report on this.

Increase flexibility/streamline structure. The plan for this in place. We will see how it works in practice.

Strategies

Strengthen State/Branch Relationships. See ReConnection info above.

Get a statewide focus. See ReConnection info above.

Utilize technology sensitively. See notes on streamlining tech issues. In addition our new toll-free voice mail/fax line is based on this directive.

Maintain fundraising momentum. This will be the charge of the new fundraising group.

AAUW Connections

- Conversations with Ruth Sweetser and members of the AAUW staff on technology issues, May, 2005.
- Attended AAUW Convention, June 2005.
- Serving on AAUW Technology Usability Advisory Group, July 2005 present.
- Subscribed to “theme team” e-mail list.
- Participated in teleconferences on communications and membership (fall 2005).

Branch Visits

Brevard, May 2005, for their 50th anniversary celebration. Delivered greetings from the state.

Winston-Salem, May 2005, for their spring dinner. No official role (I am a dual member there), but did enjoy meeting several members.

High Country, January 2006, initial branch meeting. Presentation on “Introduction to an AAUW Branch”