

Dear Member of AAUW AZ

Are you ready to cast your vote for AAUW's future? Learn about the candidates for the AAUW Board of Directors, and read the five proposed changes to the AAUW Bylaws and twelve proposed changes to the Public Policy Program. It's your AAUW, so make your voice count.

Our 2015 National Election will begin with online voting on 4/15 and end on 6/19/2015. Paper ballots can be requested from April 1 through May 8 and must be mailed by May 26. As Branch Presidents and Membership VP's, I hope you will encourage your members to become educated voters by reading the Voter Guide, which can be found on our [aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org) website. Type in National Election Voter Guide into the search box or click this link: <http://www.aauw.org/files/2015/01/2015-AAUW-National-Election-Voter-Guide-nsa.pdf>.

**One of the first proposed changes to the bylaws would eliminate the degree requirement for Membership in AAUW.** The Rationale for this proposed change, the current Bylaw, and the proposed Amended Bylaw, can be found in the National Election Voter Guide.

RATIONALE:

An AAUW member proposed this change.

Whereas the purpose of AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research, restricting membership is inherently inequitable and furthermore limits AAUW's influence in the community. Over the long history of AAUW, our organization's mission and membership requirements have steadily evolved with our successes and with the times. As a part of that evolution, it is imperative that our organization recognize the power of welcoming anyone who supports our mission, as do most other

mission-based nonprofits. The reasons for doing so are both ethical and practical:

1. An organization is strongest when its members actively support its mission. Since AAUW opened membership to men in 1987, our membership demographics have not significantly changed (our membership is still overwhelmingly female). However, it meant that the men who joined were dedicated to AAUW's work. AAUW stands to benefit by offering that same openness to any person who supports AAUW's mission and wants to join us.
2. Requiring a college degree for membership mistakenly implies that only those with degrees could possibly value or advocate for education for girls and women.
3. AAUW's stated objective to break down barriers for women is weakened by maintaining our own barrier to AAUW membership.
4. Membership recruitment and processing would be greatly simplified, with no more awkward questions of prospective members about whether they are "qualified" for membership; but we would continue to be free to support and celebrate our members' educational accomplishments and aspirations.
5. Nothing in this change would affect college/university partner members, student affiliates and their reduced fees, or the many programs that AAUW supports on campuses across the country.

AAUW AZ Branch Leaders: You may want to create a discussion forum for your branch membership, talk about it at your next general meeting, encourage your Interest Group leaders to bring it the attention of their group members. You may also want to post the link to the Voter Guide on your websites.

**PLEASE ENCOURAGE YOUR MEMBERS TO VOTE!**

Sincerely,  
Sharon Groves  
AAUW AZ Membership VP