



ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018-19 FY

Background: A survey of ALL members of the AAUW Capital (NV) Branch was conducted in June 2018 to provide information for the Branch Board of Directors to assist in developing a Strategic Plan for the upcoming fiscal year. Surveys were conducted online with print surveys sent via USPS to members without email addresses. 73 total surveys were distributed (69 via email and 4 via USPS). 45 responses were received (62% response rate). The information was shared at the June “joint” board meeting. Member opinions about the branch activities of the previous year AND member interest regarding prospective speaker topics were received as well as their willingness to volunteer. The feedback facilitated the development of a strategic plan which reflected volunteer interests.

Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives: Our branch goals and objectives are in alignment with the AAUW’s Strategic Plan. Our overall mission and vision are consistent with AAUW’s. Our branch goal was “to celebrate our 75 year history by facilitating and promoting the purpose, programs, policies and mission of AAUW.”

Five main objectives were developed: 1) Membership – to recruit, engage and retain members; 2) Programs – to provide a variety of programs which highlight AAUW’s mission and public policy, while meeting the interests of our membership; 3) Public Policy – to bring awareness of AAUW’s Public Policy; 4) Philanthropy (fundraising) – to provide support for local scholarships, the AAUW Educational Opportunities Fund (fellowships and grants) and other local community projects such as AAUW Work Smart; and 5) Community Collaboration – to collaborate with community groups such as League of Women Voters, Sierra Nevada Forms, Western Nevada College, Soroptimist, Nevada Women’s Lobby, Nevada Women’s Commission, Nevada’s Coalition for Women’s Equity and others to pursue common goals and principles focused on support of women and girls.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Membership: Our traditional Fall Membership Event was held at the Governor’s Mansion in Carson City, Nevada. The annual event “kicks off” our year and provides an opportunity for members to reconnect, introduce prospective members to our organization, share plans for implementing our strategic plans, and allow members to volunteer and to sign up for a variety of interest groups. One of our membership goals is to increase membership involvement and engagement. In addition to our monthly membership program meetings, the Capital Branch has five interest groups which meet most months plus an informal luncheon, open to all members and especially encouraging participation by those who are new to the branch. During ‘fy 2018-19, 52 members of the total branch membership of 76 (68%) participated in those activities, with the majority participating in more than one interest group. This participation percentage does not include other roles that members are involved with, such as branch fundraising activities and policy related work, raising the overall branch member involvement level a bit higher.

Programs: Our program co-chairs presented a variety of outstanding speakers and topics for our monthly educational meetings. Using the data from the membership survey, subject matter experts were identified and invited to our monthly meetings for presentations on the priority issues. Thought-provoking, informational, and consistent with our public policy priorities, the speakers and topics engaged our membership. Topics included: “Hate Crimes Prevention including anti-bullying and sexual harassment programs,” “Career and Technical Assistance Programs at Carson High,” “Medicare & Social Security rights & options,” “Silent Signals” (body

language presentation), “A Tour of Nevada’s Supreme Court and Behind the Scenes with Supreme Court Justice Lidia Stiglich,” “WNC Career & Technical Education Tour,” and “Focus on Nevada Legislative Issues.” For the first time in many years, snow impacted our meeting schedule, forcing us to cancel January and February membership meetings. However, the tours focused on educational opportunities for women and were well attended by our membership.

Public Policy: The 80th Biennial Legislative Session was held February 4 - June 4 2019. Legislative Issues were highlighted by our Public Policy Chair in our branch newsletter, Capital News! Information about national issues was also shared. Members were encouraged to become Two Minute Activists. Each membership meeting provided members with specific actions they could take on key legislative issues. They were encouraged to attend legislative hearings AND to contact their state and national legislators. Additionally, our branch collaborated with the Nevada Commission for Women which convened a statewide discussion with other advocacy groups to facilitate collaboration when lobbying on specific issues.

Community Collaboration: The Capital Branch collaborates with the Nevada Commission for Women as well as other women’s organizations on legislative issues. We actively collaborate with other organizations which promote equity for women and girls. Our branch has taken a leadership role in promoting AAUW WorkSmart programs. We have a good relationship with WNC (an AAUW C/U partner). Our meeting with the WNC President resulted in one of the WNC students to successfully acquiring an AAUW Nevada scholarship to NCWWSL.

Local Philanthropy/Fundraising: The AAUW Capital (NV) Branch sponsored two very successful fundraisers in 2018-19FY. Our annual fall sale of “fresh Georgia pecans” and our annual February “Feast of Chocolate” exceeded expectations, providing the branch with funds to sponsor 2 local high school graduating girls and a WNC student with scholarships. Our branch is a long-time supporter of AAUW National programs – we have typically provided funds for the Educational Opportunities Fund (for projects and grants). However, with the passing of long-time AAUW member and philanthropist, Linda Hiebert-Sekiguchi, the branch established a \$10,000 Honorary Fund focused on the Education & Training Fund of AAUW. We hope to have this completed by June 30, 2021.

Communication: AAUW Capital News (our branch newsletter) is emailed out to every member, approximately one week before the meeting date. Copies are mailed to those members without email. Our branch website is maintained by our newsletter editor. The website is accessible to anyone wishing to find out more about the branch. There is a Members Only section which contains our membership directory. This section can ONLY be accessed with a passcode.

Additional communication with our members is handled by our Corresponding Secretary. She sends out thank you notes to our speakers as well as sponsors of our Feast of Chocolate. She also acknowledges members who may be recovering from an illness or surgery – or have experienced a death in the family.

Overall – The AAUW Capital (NV) Branch has grown substantially over the past few years – not only in the number of members but also the active participation of our members. The attendance at our general membership meetings has continued to grow –indicating the selection of speakers and topics meet their needs as indicated in the responses to the member survey. Our members have continued to support our fundraising activities which in turn support local and national AAUW awards and local community projects. Our branch Board of Directors is actively engaged. Our membership is committed to the mission of AAUW and to our local purpose to promote equity, lifelong education and positive societal changes.