



Leadership Development Fall 2012 Branch Survey Summary

In the fall, 2012 the AAUW CA Board of Directors Leadership Development Team sent a survey to AAUW CA Branches to receive feedback on the branches' leadership development efforts and needs. Surveys were sent to the Past Presidents at the 140 branches. With the help of the AAUW CA Branch Liaisons, 109 surveys were returned completed, a 78% return rate. Following is a summary of the information received. This information will be used to create a leadership development strategy to assist the Branches as they serve their members and the AAUW mission.

The completed surveys were inspirational to read. We are doing a lot right and our strength is our enthusiasm, dedication and willingness to work hard!

BOARD POSITION SKILLS:

Question #1 What are the five board positions you need training for?

What are the five board positions you need training for?						
<i>Position</i>	Membership	Fiscal	President	AAUW Funds	Program	Public Policy
<i># listed it</i>	63	50	49	44	33	25
<i>% of total Branches requesting this</i>	58%	46%	45%	40%	30%	23%

Question #2 What delivery method/s would work the best for your Branch?

What delivery method/s would work the best for your Branch?						
<i>Method</i>	Train in Person	Website	Webinar	E-Mail	Written	
<i># listed it</i>	78	42	28	21	16	
<i>% of total Branches requesting this</i>	72%	39%	26%	19%	15%	

Question #3 How does your Branch mentor future leaders? What works and what doesn't work?

There were a wide variety of responses to this question but the most common responses to what worked were:

- Welcome and embrace new ideas
- Formal mentoring team: focus on mentoring, don't just "let it happen"
- Active Past Presidents who act as mentors and advisors
- Have a new member mentor – someone with a lot of enthusiasm; support her
- Involve new members in small tasks, on committees
- Utilize complete job descriptions and experience notebooks; electronic notebooks whenever possible
- Excellent bylaws and policies and procedures
- Be sure nominating committee has job descriptions
- Start by sharing a position; have co-officers; work by committee: share the work
- Out-going officer trains and stays in touch with new officer: start at out-going/incoming officer meeting/pot-luck and continue with one-on-one meetings
- Board training day in addition to one-on-one training by out-going officer
- President-Elect to shadow President for a year

Question #4 What is your leadership model? How many Board members do you have? Do you govern by committee or other?

The large majority of branches use the traditional model of elected and appointed board members, ranging from 5 to 25 in numbers, which meet on a regular basis, utilizing Roberts Rules. Usually the work is then done by committee. However, more and more branches are choosing alternative methods:

- By Committee: Amador: East San Gabriel Valley, Paradise, San Fernando Valley, Simi Valley, Woodland
- CA Online: board meetings by teleconference
- Humboldt: Board often communicates by email due to large distances
- Los Gatos/Saratoga: Chairwoman of the month; moving back to President/Board
- Pacifica: returned to President/Board after several years in a convener/committee model
- Placentia-Yorba Linda: meetings by phone with Executive Committee ensuring necessary paperwork is completed; business conducted at branch meetings and by branch members

It is important to detail the work of the Palo Verdes Peninsula Branch precipitated by the situation in 2010 when no one was willing to step forward to be president or to assume

other board positions. Rather than giving up, the Branch set-up a Strategic Committee who was charged to propose possible solutions. An extensive member survey was conducted with over 70% responding. The survey revealed the members valued the Branch for the connections and friendships it provided. Rejecting the possibilities of disbanding or merging with another Branch, a group of 20 members formed a Leadership Council and embarked on a two-year journey during which nothing was sacred and every activity was examined. New bylaws and policies and procedures were written. After this radical examination and revival, the Branch has emerged stronger and is moving forward with many best practices.

Question #5 Are your Branch and Board meetings effective? What is working and what is not working?

There were a wide variety of responses to this question but the most common responses to what worked at the Board meetings were:

- Agenda and minutes of previous meeting sent out and reviewed by board members ahead of time; corrections and additions to minutes and agenda shared through email
- Monthly treasurer's reports
- Attendees give written reports to the secretary
- Utilize parliamentary
- Have a fiscal year budget approved by the board and adhered to
- Limit time to 1 – 1 ½ hours; manage the time; start and end on time
- Attitude of mutual support
- Discussion: welcome and embrace new ideas
- Discussions: try to prevent off topic, redundancy and one person dominating; not everyone needs to speak on every subject
- Use committees to plan projects and programs not at board meetings
- Give feedback on Branch projects; be open to constructive feedback
- Use consensus for decisions
- Board meeting occurs before the Branch meeting
- Meetings are scheduled at same time on same day of month each year for consistency
- Yearly planning meeting in the summer
- Seek out opportunities for the board members to get to know each other and bond
- Utilize master calendar and newsletter to keep board and branch members informed
- Utilize email communication outside of board meetings for discussion when appropriate
- Follow-through on responsibilities

What is not working at board meetings, of course, can be summed up by saying not doing the behaviors on the list above, but a few other responses stand out:

- Members want to be heard: too often the emphasis is on being heard
- Board members have served many years so new ideas are at a minimum
- Only focused on one project or aspect rather than on the Branch as a whole
- Meetings are used to plan programs rather than committee reports
- No goal setting and strategic planning

PEOPLE SKILLS: Question #1 and #2

**What does being a leader mean to you? Do you have leaders in your Branch?
What are their positive behaviors?**

The respondents created a very clear picture of an AAUW leader. Our leaders are women who:

- Are mission-oriented
 - ✓ Passionate for the AAUW mission
 - ✓ See the big picture but keep track of the details
 - ✓ Inspirational – proud to be a member of AAUW
- Are creative
 - ✓ Look for new ways to do things
 - ✓ Willing to take a risk
 - ✓ Ask and then listen to the members
- Are inclusive
 - ✓ Value all ideas and opinions
 - ✓ Facilitate communication
 - ✓ Delegate
 - ✓ Support and cooperate with others
 - ✓ Reach out to others
 - ✓ Friendly and accessible
 - ✓ Guide rather than direct
 - ✓ Seek out new members
 - ✓ Give others the tools they need to do their job
 - ✓ Listen rather than talk
- Are a role model
 - ✓ Positive attitude
 - ✓ Visible and accessible
 - ✓ Helpful, volunteer

- ✓ Hard working, reliable and follow through
- People oriented
 - ✓ Kind
 - ✓ Forgiving
 - ✓ Remember we are all volunteers
 - ✓ Grateful
 - ✓ Trusting
 - ✓ Prepared
 - ✓ Positive and upbeat

REACHING OUT INTO THE COMMUNITY

QUESTIONS #1 and #2 How aware is the community of the work of your Branch? How do you get your name out into the community?

Although the answers ran from “very aware” to “not aware at all”, a common thread was that the community is not as aware of AAUW as ideal or even as possible.

Many good ideas were shared.

- Publicity of AAUW programs like Tech Trek, Start Smart, Local Scholarship, Equal Pay, Speech Trek, Public Policy
- Partnering with other local groups like League of Women’s Voters, Office of Women’s Policy, Friends of the Library, Chamber of Commerce, Soroptimists, history-oriented groups, Rotary, Women’s Network, and colleges and universities
- Speaker’s series which invite community members to speak
- Fundraisers like home and garden tours, walk and runs, chocolate tasting, spaghetti feed, gift wrapping at the holidays, international cookbook, bunco, fashion shows, luncheons and teas, and park cars
- Write letters to the editor in local newspapers
- Doing fun community activities like parades, local festivals, farmer’s markets, snow fest, community birthday party and Friday art-walks
- Invite public to attend mission-based programs
- Remembering to talk about AAUW one-to-one
- Add the AAUW logo and name to the other organizations on the welcome sign to the town
- Display at a local bank

QUESTION #3 AND #4 Do you have a web site? How would you rate it? Do you use Facebook? Is it working and how?

The following Branches rated their web site highly.

- Auburn
- Camarillo
- Clayton
- Davis
- Healdsburg
- La Palma-Cerritos
- Lodi
- Los Altos-Mountain View
- Mariposa
- Newport-Mesa-Irvine
- Paradise
- Poway-Penasquitos
- Riverside
- San Luis Obispo
- Santa Clarita
- Victor Valley
- Cabrillo-Diego
- Carlsbad-Oceanside-Vista
- Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek
- Fallbrook
- Humboldt
- Laguna Beach
- Lompoc
- Marin
- Morgan Hill
- North Peninsula
- Petaluma
- Redding
- Sacramento
- San Ramon
- Tehachapi Mountain
- Whittier

Many of the Branches above said their web sites have generated new members!

The following Branches indicated they have a Facebook page:

- CA Online
- Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek
- Marysville-Yuba City
- Santa-Ana-Orange
- Humboldt
- San Jose
- Petaluma
- Santa Maria
- Martinez
- Sonoma
- Santa Rosa
- Camarillo
- Healdsburg
- San Ramon
- Lodi
- Sacramento
- Mariposa
- Morro Bay
- Morgan Hill
- Temecula
- Pleasant Hill
- Lompoc

Question #6 Is everything your Branch does focused on the AAUW mission? Please give examples.

The variety of programs was widespread but AAUW mission-based programs were mentioned over and over:

Tech Trek	Local Scholarships	Miss Representation	AAUW Funds
STEM Programs	Women’s History	Equal Pay	Public Policy
Women’s Suffrage	Connecting with College/University partners		Human Trafficking
Gender Equity	International Students and Programming		Speech Trek
Title IX Harassment	Financially Fit for Life/Start Smart		Bullying and
Building Future Leaders and Leadership Skills Education: Local, State and National			Focus on
Teen Pregnancy and Parenting	Women in Business	Women in Politics	
Supporting Local Groups like Women’s Shelter	Title IX		

Although mission-based programming on the whole was emphasized, the surveys reinforced the importance of the connection of women as social beings as exhibited by the interest groups of each branch. The interest groups were also seen as recruitment tools and ways to get women involved with the potential of future branch leaders.

Branches mentioned utilizing Program-In-a-Box from the AAUW web site.

Starting in the fall, 2012, AAUW CA instigated a new program recognition: each month the AAUW CA Board of Directors Program Committee chooses an incredible mission-based branch program which appears on AAUW CA home page to inspire others.

BEST PRACTICES: Finally, many best practices were shared as the Branches are certainly doing things right and doing the right things. The outstanding ones have been shared with the appropriate AAUW CA Board Director. In addition, this information will be referred to as training materials are developed.

Prepared by Virginia Beck, AAUW CA Board Director, Leadership Development Team Chair