



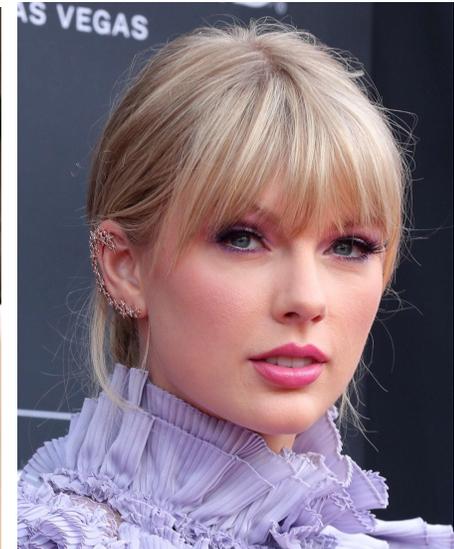
# In Support of Open Membership

Moderated by: Donna Jean Simon,  
AAUW - IL, Inc. President  
Member of the Wheaton/Glen Ellyn branch



**In Support of Open Membership**

# What Do These Women Have in Common?



# Requirements in 1924, when AAUW-IL was formed, were:

- Have an approved degree
- From a small list of approved colleges
- In specific areas of study
- Be recommended by a current member
- Have a home visit to assure you were worthy of membership
- Be voted on by members



# Changes over the years. . .

- 1938 – nondiscrimination clause added to Bylaws
- 1941 – women from all accredited colleges could be admitted
- 1961 – reduced requirement for advanced degrees
- 1963 – allowed degrees in nursing, education and home economics
- 1970s – created Mission Statement and use of word “equity”
- 1987 – allowed men to join
- 2005 – permitted membership with an associate degree
- 2024 – allow everyone who supports our mission to join?

# What Do We Stand For?

## AAUW Purpose, Vision, and Values

**Purpose:** To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

**Vision:** Equity for all

**Values:** Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Integrity.  
Inclusion and Intersectionality.



# Why Are We Here?

- AAUW members will vote to remove the degree requirement for membership
- AAUW's National Board, Governance Committee and Inclusion and Equity Committee support this change
- AAUW-IL supports open membership



# Proposed Membership Bylaw

## 2. Member Qualification

**A. Individual Members.** Any individual who supports AAUW's purpose of advancing equity for women and girls shall be eligible to receive admission to AAUW membership subject to completion of such informational procedures as the Board shall establish; such membership shall be granted upon payment of AAUW dues. The provisions set forth in this section are the sole requirement for eligibility and admissibility to AAUW membership.



# We Know That History and the Battle For Equity Has Evolved Over Time



## In the Past:

- The vast majority of jobs available to us were limited: teacher, secretary, nurse
- Men far outnumbered women in higher education
- Even fewer women in the trades, C-suite, military ...

# We Know That History and the Battle For Equity Has Evolved Over Time



## Now:

- Women represent the majority on many college campuses and in many professional degree programs
- We are in leadership positions across industries
- Yet...discrimination against women continues.. equal rights are not the law



# AAUW Leaders' Quotes

AAUW member Vivi Hlavsa says, “The YMCA doesn’t limit its members to the young, males, or Christians. Opening our membership doesn’t mean we have to take the U out of AAUW.”

“We need every woman and man who supports our mission – empowering women and girls – to join us in the ongoing challenge of achieving gender equity.” Kathy Scott and Julie Custer, AAUW Idaho

“My AAUW membership is important to me not because of the letters after my name, but because I firmly believe AAUW’s advocacy, education, research, and philanthropy is moving the needle on equity for women and girls. I gratefully welcome anyone else who shares that passion and is willing to work with us on that mission. ” Sandy Kirkpatrick, AAUW Committee

# Benefits: Young Allies

- Young women want equity, workplace rights, and safety
- Many are working professionally, but without a degree
- AAUW would benefit from their activism, enthusiasm and new ideas



# Benefits: Community Activists

- Women's March activists: bring new members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives
- Moms, gun safety advocates
- Public school and library defenders
- Social justice activists



# Benefits: Legal Trendsetters

- Lilly Ledbetter - Equal Pay plaintiff, activist, winner
- Pride community: activists whose rights are denied & under threat of reversal
- Defenders of women's healthcare rights and abortion providers
- Domestic abuse survivors



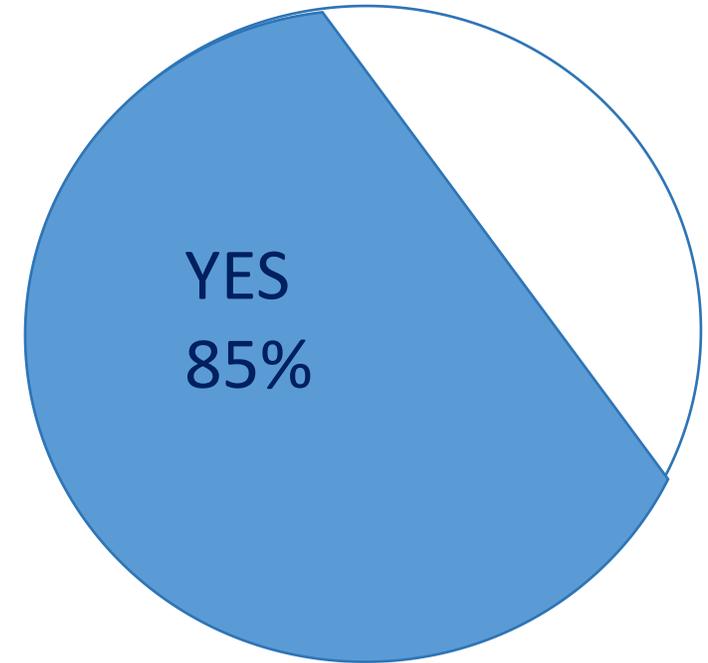


# Next Steps: AAUW-IL Goals

Goal is a **majority** of members vote on the membership bylaw change

Must have over **2/3 of voting members** support the change (>66.7%)

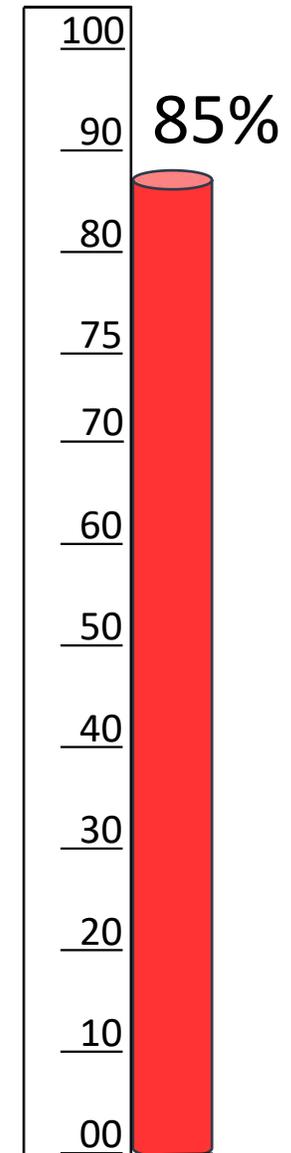
**A landslide (85%)** sends a positive message that **all are welcome** and needed in AAUW



# Number of AAUW-IL Members

- Number of branch members 1400
- Number of national members 300
- Total possible voters 1700
- Goal: >50% voting 851
- Goal: 85% positive votes

***PLEASE VOTE!***



# Here is How it Will Work

- Voting starts April 3 – Voting ends May 15 at 11 am
- Branch leaders confirm that members receive national AAUW emails
- AAUW <[vote@simplyvoting.com](mailto:vote@simplyvoting.com)> sends a unique email to each member with a link to vote. **Check your spam folder**
- To get help casting your vote, save the email and contact your branch leaders
- Paper ballots are mailed with instructions to those without email

# Organize Your AAUW Voting Campaign

Board discussion & support

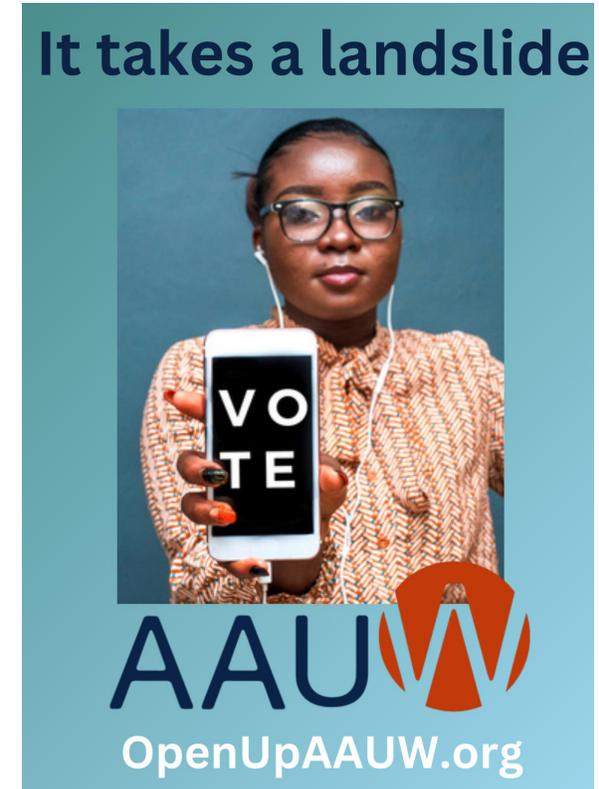
Promote voting to members (4 times)

Show how easy it is to vote (demo at a meeting?)

Post or text to AAUW friends “I’ve voted! Have you?”

Use telephone tree

Track progress



[OpenUpAAUW.org](https://OpenUpAAUW.org)

*Let's all work together  
for gender equity*

*Vote this spring to  
eliminate the degree  
requirement.*

