

AAUW'S LONG HISTORY OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Did you know that AAUW has been working for equity and equal rights for **100 years**? After all, AAUW was founded for the express purpose of fighting for women's equal access to education, especially higher education. Take a look at some actions from our amazing past:

- 1921 lobbied for independent citizenship for married women (!)
- 1922 lobbied for access to contraceptives for married women
- 1922 advocated to allow women in the diplomatic service
- 1935 lobbied to legalize the dispensing of contraceptive information by physicians
- c.1942 created a refugee aid fund for Jewish women refugees from Germany and other Nazi-held countries; helped Jewish women professors who had been fired find positions in the U.S.
- 1949 amended the national bylaws to clearly state all college women graduates were entitled to membership regardless of race or religion—16 years before the Civil Rights Act. (AAUW never prevented anyone from joining, but it became clear some branches were refusing membership to women of color. The bylaws were amended to make it clear branches could not do that.)
- 1962 established the African Educators Program that for almost 20 years gave African women educators, primarily high school teachers, professional development opportunities in the U.S. to address the shortage of teachers in Africa. Branches in the U.S. hosted these women.
- 1964 and 1965 lobbied for passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act.
- 1969 created the Coretta Scott King Fund to support opportunities for black women to study African-American history and culture.
- 1969 began lobbying for a woman to be appointed to the Supreme Court (that only took 12 years—AAUW is persistent)
- 1972 instrumental in the passage of Title IX, co-authored by Patsy Mink of Hawaii, an AAUW member
- 1987 admitted men to membership (first proposed in 1979)
- 1983 after 7 years of lobbying and support, the Family & Medical Leave passed
- 1988 appointed a Diversity Chair to the national Board with a committee of diverse members.
- 1989 adopted AAUW's Diversity Statement: "AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability." All national, state, and branch publications must include this statement. (Later wording added gender identity, geographical location, and socioeconomic status and changed "creed" to "religious beliefs.")
- 1991 initiated the AAUW Initiative for Educational Equity with *Shortchanging Girls/Shortchanging America*, which was followed throughout the 90's and into this century by researched publications on bullying in schools, gender equity in STEM, discrimination in higher ed tenure, and 2015's *Bias and Barriers: Women in Leadership*.
- The more recent years have seen continuous work on equal pay and benefits for all women, fighting discrimination of women in higher ed and the workplace, and women's success in STEM fields. Today 2/3 of fellows and grant recipients are diverse, as is 52% of the national staff.

--Caroline Pickens