

Membership Retention  
AAUW of Virginia Conference  
April, 16, 2016

We want to retain all of our members if possible. These are the people who we know have an alignment with AAUW mission and values and fit in with branch activities and culture. Here are some ideas about membership retention.

**"Unique Value Proposition" - What uniquely brings the member to AAUW, and will resonate to make them want to stay**

- Hold special interest group like book group etc.
- Have a special project - maybe the fund-raiser in a branch with great fund-raisers
- Attend Federal Lobby Day and our annual State Lobby Day
- Participate in the local community – voter registration, etc.
- Partner with other organizations to cross-pollinate members
- Participate in 2-minute activist
- Plan Day trips to mission aligned locations
- Target programs that are mission based and of interest for those with children in elementary, middle or high school
  - PTA and other child-related activities
  - STEM
  - Gender issues
  - Workshops that include boys

**"The Personal Connection"**

- Assign a Buddy for all members for their first 1 to 3 years
- Contact each new member and offer a ride to the next few events
- Invite women to branch activities
- Have greeters at each meeting
- Provide a picture of new members on your website or in your newsletter
- Send Welcome letters from the president and membership chair
- Develop your branch culture with a membership campaign with a tag line - "Each one bring one" and challenge each person to bring a friend
- Recognize the person that brings in the most new members getting the next years dues paid
  - See ideas from diversity and inclusion  
<http://www.aauw.org/resource/conversations-about-diversity-and-inclusion/> – (social Identity Wheel, Story of my Name, Identity Walk, Mainstream and Margin, Creating Inclusive Spaces)
- Conduct membership surveys to understand what members want from your branch

## **"Leadership Engagement"**

- Ask new members to participate in a small leadership activity right away – one that fits their skills and personality such as:
  - introducing a speaker
  - bringing food and drink
  - serving as the person who writes personal notes to others (sunshine duty)
- Be clear and comprehensive about job responsibilities.
- Have co-chairs for leadership positions which may be done by having only one of the co-chairs roll off the position annually (hence you will always have an experienced co-chair in each position)
- Make program leads responsible for the job for only one month or have a program committee.
- Ask new members to participate in a small leadership activity right away – one that fits

## **"Fun, Fun, Fun - Social Interaction"**

- Hold Happy hours or coffee monthly at different restaurants in your area -- change it up so the location is convenient to each of your members at some time
- Celebrate the 19th - any type activity will do -- why the 19th, for the 19th amendment
- Hold monthly birthday celebrations
- Have holiday celebrations
- Plan a pool party
- Go to Lunch and dinner for meetings
- Hold an Open House (just to get re-acquainted) in September
- Have a book or movie group
- Have a gourmet group – ethnic at home or restaurant
- Hold a potluck

## **Other**

- Improve branch communication – create a web page and facebook – keep them current!
- Use the ½ price dues from Jan – March 15 for new member national dues as an incentive
- Take advantage of payment for the next year after March 15 for new member national dues
- Strategically use of “free memberships” ie: new members you want to engage, new board members to encourage people to take leadership positions, moms of high school scholarship winners
- Change the location of your meetings so that the location is different, and possibly easier to get to by a different sub-set of your members.
- Take advantage of websites like
  - [Volunteerspot.com](http://Volunteerspot.com)
  - [Signupgenius.com](http://Signupgenius.com)

**Ice Breaker**

Have an ice-breaker for each meeting so that existing and new members get to know each other better creating deeper relationships. Ice breakers can be found on many websites including AAUW.org. at [http://www.aauw.org/files/2016/02/Designing-Effective-Meetings\\_Leader-Essentials\\_Online-packet-nsa.pdf](http://www.aauw.org/files/2016/02/Designing-Effective-Meetings_Leader-Essentials_Online-packet-nsa.pdf)

**Diversity Activities**

Take advantage of the diversity activities that are described on AAUW.org at <http://www.aauw.org/resource/diversity-and-inclusion-tool-kit/>.