

## **MENTORING: THE KEY TO RETENTION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

**PURPOSE:** To retain and increase membership

**GOALS:** To train newer members for leadership positions  
To engage new members

**Obstacles to obtaining these goals:**

- Camaraderie among long time members which leads to exclusion of new members joining old member groups at branch meetings.
- Failure to provide orientation for new members.
  1. The history of AAUW and how the organization operates at each level, branch, state, and national.
  2. How branch programming is organized around meetings, interest groups, and projects, thereby showing the new member what membership has to offer her. (The value of belonging to AAUW)
- Failure to help new members to become involved in branch activity.
  1. New member left on her own to get to meetings, to find her way around when she gets there.
  2. Opportunity not provided (or encouraged) for interaction with members, to serve on a committee, to join an interest group, or to work at an event/project. Where is the Welcome Mat?
- Failure to provide training for leadership, or to mentor/nurture newer member when she accepts a leadership role.
  1. Passing on records and orientation materials (Tool Kits, leadership modules) without helping new leader to assimilate material and to ask questions.
  2. New member left feeling overwhelmed with trying to learn her new job without assistance from an experienced member.

**Steps For Overcoming These Obstacles**

- Use a partnering approach by pairing each new member with an experienced member who has a working knowledge of the branch. This person serves as a mentor to the new member.
  1. Meets with the new member to help her learn about AAUW's history and it's organizational levels
  2. Brings new member to any orientation or new member events, as well as to branch meetings.
  3. Assumes responsibility for introducing new member to all her friend's.
  4. Offer social function such as a luncheon for all new members and their mentors..

- **Continue the mentoring process by building a support system while encouraging involvement as the new member participates in general meetings.**
  1. **Encourage new member to join a committee or interest group.**
  2. **Introduce her to some members of the committee or interest group.**
  3. **Arrange for a member of committee or interest group to provide transportation the first few times the new member attends.**
  4. **Help new members develop an interest group, based on their collective interest, with a veteran member assigned to help them with leadership of the group.**
  
- **Identify potential leadership from among new members.**
  1. **Invite new members to help with a fund raiser or event.**
  2. **Provide opportunity for new members, along with their mentor and new friends, to learn the procedures while working along side experienced members. The idea is to have fun.**
  3. **Offer new members more responsibility within the committee, with group leaders also serving as mentors.**
  4. **Listen to new members ideas.**
  
- **After training, offer a leadership position.**
  1. **Have member formerly holding the position provide support and training to the newer member while she learns her responsibilities in her new leadership role**
  2. **Provide for ongoing mentoring coming from the original mentor, the past committee chair or past board member as well as current board members. Let her know there is a continuing support system in place, ready to help whenever needed.**
  
- **As she becomes a branch leader herself, she, in turn, becomes a mentor to a new member.**