



POLICIES

2022-2024

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SAINT CLOUD AREA (MN) BRANCH
P.O. Box 7694 St. Cloud, MN 56301
Website: stcloud-mn.aauw.net

MISSION:

AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

POLICIES VERSUS BYLAWS

Policies are easier to modify, update, or change than bylaws. Some organizations use *Standing Rules* to define procedures, business operations, etc. which are similar to policies. Clearly written policies help the branch to function more efficiently, standardize operations, and protect the integrity of its board of directors and members.

Policies shall be written, reviewed, and amended by the branch executive committee with final approval by the board. Thereafter, the policies shall be presented to the full membership. Their feedback shall always be encouraged.

Bylaws are rules of governance that are not easily amended and are meant to remain in place. AAUW requires affiliates to update the bylaws if changes are made at the national level. The first seven articles of the affiliate bylaws must be copied verbatim from AAUW guidelines.

If significant changes are made to branch bylaws, they must adhere to an approval process which includes the board and the full membership.

COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES

- (1) All members in good standing shall receive all branch communications via email. Members who don't have email shall receive branch communications through the postal service from the branch president.
- (2) All members shall receive relevant communications regarding branch business, events, and special interest groups including but not limited to: The News Bulletin, Meet- A-Member, flyers, brochures, invitations, etc.
- (3) Communications of high interest to branch members from other organizations, some of which our members belong to, shall be emailed to the full membership with approval of the president.
- (4) The branch website shall contain information from the current fiscal year and be updated on a monthly basis.

BRANCH BOARD MEETINGS

- (1) The president will call for monthly board meetings. All voting and nonvoting board members, guests, and general members are welcome to attend.

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The date and time shall be determined by the president.

(2) Motions brought forth at the board meetings must be submitted in writing signed by the maker or relevant committee chair. The original shall be submitted to the secretary for inclusion in the permanent record. A form has been drafted for this purpose and is available on the website.

(3) Unanimous Consent can be used in lieu of motions for approval of the minutes, financial reports, and adjournment.

(4) Annual Business Meetings - AAUW requires one annual business meeting which shall be held in either March or April.

(5) The minutes and financial report shall be emailed one week prior to the board meeting for board approval or corrections. If the secretary is unavailable to take notes, the president or another board member shall act as a backup.

(6) The deadline for submitting any branch news to the editor via email shall be the first day of each month.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

(1) Expenses

Each member shall be responsible for filling out an expense form if they wish to be reimbursed for branch expenses. Reimbursement for expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of duties shall be

acceptable. All receipts and forms must be turned in to the finance officer for record keeping. Expense items exceeding \$100 which have not been utilized for previously allocated funds (such as spending grant money for event marketing) must have prior Board approval. The exception to this policy is the following ongoing expenses: Printing the Handbook/Directory, Liability insurance, Financial Software, and Speaker Gifts.

(2) Invoices

For ordinary business expenses shall be paid by the finance officer and a record of all expenses shall be maintained. An annual Financial Review of all income and expenses shall be done in committee. The reserve amount in the branch checking account shall be \$7,500.

(3) Debit Card

The VP Finance shall use the debit card to pay National and State dues, to pay facility charges (meeting rooms, catering), and other operational fees.

(4) Signatories

Three signatures are required on the branch checking accounts, and Certificates of Deposit. The branch president, finance officer, and recording secretary shall be the signatories.

(5) Conflict of Interest Statement

No member of the Saint Cloud Area (MN) Branch or nonmember shall be entitled to compensation for services rendered to the branch. A member may

enter into a contract to perform a financial transaction if it is in the best interest of the organization and approved by the branch executive committee. Good faith and full disclosures shall be required regarding the handling of all branch finances. A conflict-of-interest statement must be signed annually by Board members.

(6) Payment of Dues Deadlines

AAUW, Branch, and State dues shall be paid by fiscal year-end, June 30. Membership renewals begin on April 1. All dues collected between April 1 and June 30 shall be accounted for in escrow (trust) accounts within QuickBooks Online until fiscal year-end. These accounts will not be reflected in the monthly reports and the funds will not be available for use until the next fiscal year.

(7) Financial Statements

There shall be a separate accounting for income and expenses derived from dues and fundraising. Dues shall be used for branch operations and fundraising income shall be used for community service projects that conform with AAUW's mission and fundraising regulations. All expenditures shall comply with the branch's strategic plan and budget. Financial reports shall be submitted to the Board monthly, and the budget status for the branch will be submitted quarterly.

(8) Executive Committee

Shall be formed at the call of the president with members' consent. Composition may be a quorum of board members. The recording secretary shall attend to take notes. The Executive Committee may also

consist of the president, vice president of finance, and the recording secretary who shall draft the annual budget, based on past expenses, revenues and futures detailed in the strategic plan.

(9) Vice President of Finance

According to legal counsel, the branch doesn't need to do an annual audit. A new financial software program was purchased for improved accounting reconciliation. Contributions for branch-sanctioned initiatives shall be reviewed for compliance with the budget and to ascertain alignment with AAUW policies and our mission. On an annual basis, the Branch will conduct an internal Financial Review of all financial transactions and documentation for the previous fiscal year.

(10) Reconciliation of Charges and Events

The vice president of finance will reconcile facility charges for monthly programs, comparing reservations made and expected charges with the actual invoices. Further, reconciliation for community service events such as the Annual Fundraiser, Savvy Teens, NCCWSL, etc. shall be documented, showing income and expenses and budgeted vs actual monies. This provides a solid basis for the next year's budget process.

(4) A new financial software program was purchased for improved accounting reconciliation. Contributions for branch sanctioned initiatives shall be reviewed for compliance with the budget and to ascertain alignment with AAUW policies.

(5) The Three-year Strategic Plan - Shall be developed by the executive committee and approved

by the board of directors and shall adhere to the branch budget.

(6) The vice-president of finance shall maintain IRS 501(c) (3) status and the responsibility for annual filing. AAUW shall be informed annually of all incoming elected officers. Retention of financial statements and minutes shall adhere to IRS and AAUW guidelines.

FUNDRAISING - DONORS

- (1) A donor cannot claim a tax deduction for any contribution of cash, check, or other monetary gift unless the donor maintains a record of the contribution in the form of either a bank record (a cancelled check) or a written communication from the charity (a receipt or letter) showing the name of the charity, the date of the contribution and the amount of the contribution.
- (2) Written Acknowledgment Requirement -
A donor cannot claim a tax deduction for any single contribution unless the donor obtains a contemporaneous, written acknowledgment of the contribution from the recipient organization. An organization that does not acknowledge a contribution incurs no penalty; but, without a written acknowledgment, the donor cannot claim the tax deduction. Although it's a donor's responsibility to obtain a written acknowledgment, an organization can assist a donor by providing a timely, written statement containing:

- a. The name of the organization, EIN number

- b. the amount of the cash contribution
 - c. a description (but not the value) of non-cash contribution (in-kind)
 - d. a statement that no goods or services were provided by the organization in return for the contributions
 - e. a description and good faith estimate of the value of goods or services, if any, that an organization provided in return for the contribution.
- (3) Every donor shall receive a formal acknowledgment for contributions of \$100 and up.
- (4) In-kind contributions and non-monetary donations, such as raffle prize items, are not tax deductible, according to IRS regulations.

GENERAL FUNDRAISING

- (1) In compliance with AAUW, funds raised by the branch shall not be donated to other organizations. If donors had wanted their donations to go to another group, they would donate directly to them (IRS & AAUW policy).
- (2) In fulfillment of the mission, the branch supports the following annual community service projects: Tech Savvy, NCCWSL, the Area High School Art

Exhibition, Savvy Teens, Seminars for Career Success, and scholarships for female students pursuing a paraprofessional or two-year degree. (The last two proposed programs shall be developed and submitted for board approval after the due diligence is complete).

- (3) AAUW Funds - Individual branch members are encouraged to contribute to AAUW *Greatest Needs Funds* and should go to aauw.org for information. *The Named Gift for Fellowships* shall be awarded from individual member donations or from a designated AAUW fundraiser for that purpose.
- (4) There shall be one fundraiser per year and all allocations shall be determined by the budget and adhere to the strategic plan.

MEMBERSHIP

- (1) Active and nonactive members are highly valued and encouraged to join the branch.
- (2) Volunteers are asked to choose areas of involvement that fit their interests and schedules.
- (3) There shall be an informal appreciation and recognition ceremony for members with milestone years of membership annually at the May program.
- (4) Annual orientation for newer members shall be held in June.

- (5) A membership campaign shall be ongoing providing encouragement and incentives for recruiting new members.

PROGRAMS

(1) Programs are held on the 2nd Tuesday evening of the month during the program season (Sept-May).

(2) The required annual business meeting is held in spring. This meeting includes election of officers, board member reports, and branch business.

(3) The branch president shall preside over all programs to the extent it's possible. In her absence, the program vice president shall lead the program and make any announcements.

(4) The program vice president(s) shall work with the communications director to write up the annual program brochure (due in May) and assist in promoting the programs.

(5) The program vice president(s) shall work with the social chair(s) to coordinate the event with the facility regarding technology and setup. She will offer the speaker a \$100 stipend. She will communicate with the Finance Chair one week before the program regarding the stipend (either acceptance or refusal) so that a check can be prepared for the event if needed. She will greet the speaker, present the stipend (if accepted), direct to a place, introduce the speaker(s), present a gift, and close the program.

(6) Program reservations shall be emailed or called in to the acting social chair, one week before the program date. If a member wants to attend the program and reserves after the deadline or doesn't want to eat, the payment is still required but no meal will be provided. If a program has an equal number of late or unreserved arrivals vs. reserved members who did not

attend, the social chairs may offer a meal at the program cost. The president will email a reminder to members two weeks before the program.

(7) The facility charges the branch for all reservations unless a cancellation is received by 7 days before the program. The facility and food cost per the contracts include space, technology, service, meal, coffee, tax, and gratuity.

(8) Members who reserve a meal but do not attend the program are still responsible for paying the program fee, since the Branch is charged per reservation. The Finance VP will follow for payment from members who do not appear at the program.

ARCHIVES AND DOCUMENT RETENTION

(1) Essential and relevant materials will be processed for inclusion in historical archives stored at St. Cloud State University by a volunteer branch committee.

(2) Document retention pertaining to financial documents and reports required by the Internal Revenue Service and AAUW shall be determined in committee.

Records can be sent electronically to archives@stcloudstate.edu. They should be dated and categorized. For example, AAUW, 2020-2022, Meet A Member. Hard copies need to be in file folders with date (year), category and contents listed on the cover.

Current archival records include the following subheading: Financial Records, Legal Documents, Bylaws, Awards, Minutes, Artifacts, Membership, Directories, Newsletters and Activities.

Professor Tom Steman is the University Archivist and can be located through the SCSU website:

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<http://www.stcloudstate.edu/library/archives>. He is on a 9-month contract beginning late August and ending early May. During June and July, the Archives is closed but accessible via the website. When open, all AAUW members have access to the information.

The St. Cloud AAUW Branch Archives Chair possess a complete hard copy list of all the St. Cloud AAUW historical information currently located at SCSU.

Archives is located at the SCSU Miller Center, Room 314C and is open Monday-Friday from 8 am until 4:30 pm. Any AAUW member interested in looking for information in person MUST contact Dr. Steman and schedule an appointment time.

WEBSITE

The website of the St. Cloud Branch of AAUW aims to broaden the communication reach of the local branch and provide timely, relevant, and easily accessible information for members and prospective members.

The website is <https://stcloud-mn.aauw.net/>.

It shall communicate literally and visually the mission and goals of the local branch, specifically, and the national organization, generally, through its sections, pages, posts, and links.

Inform/educate/communicate

The site shall inform and educate by introducing prospective members and members to local projects, events and activities that achieve the organization's goals and mission.

The website shall provide timely information to members and prospective members regarding upcoming programs, interest groups, projects, and social events. These may include
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fundraising events, Branch programs, book club schedules, the annual fundraiser, Savvy Teens, Tech Savvy, National Conference of College Women Student Leaders, and member socials, and community engagements.

The website shall be an arm of the communication plan and efforts of the branch to engage with a wider audience through social media.

Access

Sections and pages on the site shall be accessible appropriately to members, the general public and prospective members through the use of password protections.

The website shall provide access to current forms and applications for membership, scholarships, and programs

Rules/process

The site shall aim to link each topic to a responsible member contact person.

The site shall remain timely with updates at a minimum of twice per month, particularly to stay in step with timely social media.

The website should time stamp materials -- through an appropriate method -- as they are added to the site to assure viewers that materials are current.

The site shall be reviewed for relevance at least annually.

Members Only Section

The section shall contain, at a minimum, one (1) year of past news bulletin issues, multiple meet-a-member articles, a link to current branch bylaws, a link to the current branch policy

handbook, the previous year's program lineup, and board members' contact information.

Financial reports shall not be posted in the section or on the website.

The section shall include a link to the national Member Services Database, a database of membership records in which individuals can update their contact information, make a contribution and track membership and giving for tax purposes.

OFFICERS

The duties of the elected officers; the president, vice presidents of finance, membership, and programs are broadly set forth in the bylaws.

The president shall ensure that current job descriptions and training materials shall be available to all board members and/or relevant volunteers. Digital and/or hard copies shall be maintained.

All board members shall prepare a report to be presented at the annual general business meeting.

The president shall make sure all members receive branch communications in a timely manner.

The president shall be responsible for updating the branch membership digital database (email list) and the Handbook Directory (HD).

Board members shall be responsible for updating pertinent training binders based on their experiences and expertise.

The program vice president(s) shall follow the training protocol for organizing program speakers and promptly email biographies to the president and/or to the communications director.

The recording secretary shall email the board of director's meeting minutes to the president for editing, within one week. After acceptable editing is approved by the recording secretary, the minutes shall be emailed to the entire board members promptly.

THE SAINT CLOUD AREA (MN) BRANCH STRATEGIC PLAN

- (1) The strategic plan shall be based on our purpose; the AAUW mission - To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.
- (2) The AAUW model includes Mission, Vision, Priorities, Goals, and an Action Plan.
- (3) The strategic plan shall be effective for a three-year period. This time frame allows an incoming president and officers the convenience of working within its structure.
- (4) The strategic plan defines the objectives of the branch within AAUW guidelines. It informs financial ability to perform community service and scholarship initiatives.

- (5) A budget related to income and expenses within the scope of branch feasibility shall be drafted and defined for board approval.
- (6) The strategic plan answers the questions: Where are we now? Where do we want to be? How do we get there? A business model shall be used to detail goals, outcomes and measurements.
- (7) An executive committee shall be formed and invited to participate in the strategic plan development. The plan shall be presented to the board for review and approval and then emailed to the full membership. It may also be presented at a monthly program.
- (8) The strategic plan will be evaluated for compliance and relevancy, periodically, determined by the board.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2023

PRIORITY GOALS AND ACTION PLANS

AAUW Mission:

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

Vision:

Simplify and prioritize goals and action plans with respect to branch capabilities for recruiting volunteers and fundraising.

Organize infrastructure including financial accountability, monthly statements, and well-planned budgets.

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Use the policy booklet as a tool for operations.

Board and executive committee meetings will follow rules of governance protocols.

Provide training materials to all board members and detailed processes for all volunteers working on projects or events.

Continue to increase membership for the benefit of the entire branch organization and to ensure its continuity. The long-range goal is to increase membership to 200.

Goal I: Continue initiatives to support and fulfill our mission: NCCWSL, Tech Savvy, Savvy Teens; Seminars for Career Success, the Paramount Area High School Arts Exhibition and consider expanding service projects to include community college scholarships.

Action: The annual fundraiser will provide financial resources to pay for branch initiatives allocated per the budget and based on specific plans and needs.

Goal II: Build success, support, and awareness of the annual fundraiser by offering a consistent themed event titled, *An Evening of Inspiration & Empowerment*.

Action:

- a. Analyze the marketing plan based on past results and adjust or improve it to accommodate changes.
- b. Form a planning committee to lead the effort and begin one year in advance.
- c. Begin to promote the event to members six months in advance and continue communications leading up to the event.
- d. Develop financial procedures and document for accountability.
- e. Conduct a post-event committee meeting to discuss results.

Goal III: Membership Growth and Retention

Action: Membership Growth (A)

- a. Continue the membership campaign and review the membership marketing plan for relevancy.
- b. Work on building enthusiasm through team effort; networking, face-to-face conversations, coffee breaks, lunches, events, invitations to programs, book clubs, or social events.
- c. Promote the website as a valuable tool of information for prospective members
- d. Utilize membership packets, brochures, applications and e-flyers for new members

Action: Membership Retention (B)

- a. Create value through messaging and communications.

- b. Encourage member involvement through feedback, surveys and opinions.
- c. Conduct open and transparent board meetings,
- d. Offer high quality monthly programs, annual recognition, social outings and events
- e. Provide training binders and support available for member volunteers
- f. Engage members to actively participate through personal contacts
- g. Promote inclusion of active and non-active membership.

Goal IV: Establish and document procedures for board members in accordance with branch policies.

Action:

- a. Distribute binders to each board member and college/university representatives, containing standard branch documents and forms: Bylaws, Policy Booklet, Conflict of Interest, Record Retention Rules, Formal Motion(s), Expense Reimbursement, etc. Examples of procedures and previously written documents should be included, if available.
- b. Explain the purpose of training and recommend that typed updates are added to improve the training materials.
- c. Communicate and follow-up with each board member to ensure that they are given the information and support needed to do their work.

- d. Create informational binders for the branch community service initiatives: *Tech Savvy*, *NCCWSL*, *Savvy Teens*; *Seminars for Career Success*.

Goal V: Acknowledge Alignment with AAUW and AAUW Minnesota programs and policies.

Action:

- a. Encourage individual member donations
- b. Conform to AAUW and AAUW Minnesota Bylaws & Policies
- c. Set high standards of professionalism through the branch use of images, logos, communications, website, AAUW MN Pine, etc.
- d. Promote *SmartStart* and *WorkSmart*.
- e. Continue *Shape the Future* membership incentive program.
- f. Host the state convention in 2022 & promote the 100th branch anniversary.
- g. Inform members of the *One Minute Activist* opportunities.
- h. Increase awareness of AAUW's Public Policy issues.
- i. Review the *Five Star Recognition Plan* for branch applicability.



SAINT CLOUD AREA
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