

A A U W

The American Association of University Women is an organization committed to practical education, ^{to} the advancement of women, and to discharging their special responsibilities to society.

Eighty-two years ago, in 1882, Marion Talbot called together 17 college alumnae in Boston to discuss the possibility of an organization in which women college graduates might band together to open doors of higher education to other women, and to find wider opportunities to use their training. They formed the Association of Collegiate Alumnae---with 65 graduates of 8 colleges and universities as founders. Their purpose was "to unite alumnae of different institutions in practical educational work".

Shortly after, a research study was undertaken: establishing that--contrary to general opinion--- higher education did not affect the health of women college graduates adversely. This was the first of a long line of fact-finding studies.

In 1888 the first graduate fellowship was offered to encourage women to become creative scholars. Thru the years American women have been helped to gain advanced training for responsible academic posts or other professional careers, and women from other countries have received international fellowships for research and study in a country other than their own.

The other groups were soon organized--a Western one in Chicago, and a Southern one in Knoxville. In 1921 these three associations merged to form the American Association of University Women, which now has a membership of over 155,000 in more than 1500 branches in the 50 states, District of Columbia, and Guam. There are over 800 American colleges and universities whose women graduates are eligible for Association membership.

The decision that institutions of higher education must meet certain standards if their graduates were to be eligible to membership was a historic one. It marked the beginning of the policy of using the

Association's membership as a means of encouraging higher standards in education for women. The requirements for approval of an institution were high academic standards, adequate provisions for women students, women on faculties and in administration, a sound basis of liberal education, and intellectual freedom. By action of the National Convention last June, a basic change in membership policy was made-- Any institution offering at least a recognized bachelor's or higher degree may request such listing and receive it, provided it has full regional accreditation.

The program of the Association was one of study and action and it was carried out in the areas of the Arts, Elementary and Secondary Education, Higher Education, Fellowships, International Relations, Legislation, Mass Media, Social and Economic Issues, and Status of Women.

Thru a Legislative Program, the AAUW supports local, state and Federal legislation to carry out aims and goals developed in the study program. The Association emphasizes women's responsibilities as citizens--it encourages more active and intelligent participation in public affairs, and works to remove various discriminations against women---educational, legal, economic, social and political. Members of AAUW testify before Congressional committees on matters of interest to the Association, and we send a Representative as an observer to the United Nations.

Early in 1960, the Committee on Organization and Structure was formed and directed to study the structure of the Association in order to recommend organizational changes to improve both our program and its implementation.

Action of the Convention last year brought a new program into being. We now have four areas of interest which outline the traditional concerns of our study-action program--- Community Problems, Cultural Interests, Education, and World Problems.

Four topics for study will be chosen each biennium. The present ones are: The American Family in a Changing World, Bridging the Gap between Science and the Layman, Expectations for Education, and Occident and Orient. The four topics do not relate one by one to the areas, so that each topic bridges all four areas in its implications for the community, for our culture, for education and for the world situation.

AAUW is a member of the IFUW--the International Federation of University Women. This is an organization of 52 national associations of university women--from Iceland to Chile and from Thailand to Greece--

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Headquarters of the IFUW are in London, where the Federation was formed in 1920. Clubhouses are maintained in London, Paris, and Milan, which may be used by AAUW members traveling in Europe.

Probably one of the most important and significant projects the AAUW has ever undertaken was the establishment in 1958 of the AAUW Educational Foundation. Activities include research projects, the preparation of study materials, the administration of the Fellowships Program, and the maintenance of a library, devoted primarily to women's interests and achievements. There is the College Faculty Program for the further education of mature college women for college faculty. A Roster of Women Holding Earned Doctorates is available to colleges and universities seeking information about qualified candidates for faculty and administrative positions. The Foundation published the quarterly Bulletin, "Women's Education".

Offices and administration of the Foundation as well as those of the Association are housed in the AAUW Educational Center in Washington. This beautiful new building was built in 1960 with contributions from members throughout the country providing the funds, so that no money was borrowed to finance the project.

The Fellowships Program is one of the most vital parts of the AAUW work. Since 1888, the Association has been giving graduate fellowships to encourage gifted women to go on to advanced study and research. Endowment funds of nearly \$3 million have been built up. Awards totaling \$250,000 are given annually to over one hundred American and foreign women graduate scholars.

All Fellowships to American women are given to scholars who have completed the resident requirements for the doctorate, or who have already received it, or who have attained professional recognition.

The International Fellowships and Awards Program began in 1945, when the Association decided it could best help the devastated countries by providing the means for women to come to the United States to gain training and learn new techniques needed in the reconstruction of their countries. Emphasis is on professional training and not necessarily on scholarship. This program is outstanding among exchange programs because it brings mature women here to work and study. The impact made by these women in their own countries and professions after a year here is therefore greater than that of exchange students at the undergraduate level.

The fund-raising project of the Buffalo Branch for our contribution to the Fellowships Program is our annual Book Sale. We will have our 11th sale this coming year. We collect books of all kinds, paperbacks, the better magazines, and records. If you have any books you no longer want or if you know any one who has any, please let us know. We would appreciate very much having them, and will be happy to pick them up. Then come to the sale and buy some!

Apart from the Fellowships Program, buffalo branch has another way of assisting young women in their educational endeavors. We administer the Chamberlin Loan Fund. An applicant for a loan must be beyond her freshman year, in good standing in an accredited college or university,

and found worthy and responsible. A loan is without interest and is payable after graduation or completion of the course according to specified terms. We have granted loans to approximately 50 women working for their baccalaureate or graduate degrees.

Buffalo Branch has a number of study groups--two literature groups, one in music, fine arts, architecture, French, bridge, a Great Decisions Group, and the Megalopolis group which is concerned with problems of the city and suburbs, and one studying the Occident and Orient. A volunteer group goes out to Wendt to the Erie County Home and Infirmary, once a month, and we have a birthday party for the blind. We have just gotten a piano for out there, and this will be a great help with our singing and the rhythm band, which they all enjoy. We hope to have new groups formed to study the various topics in our new program.

Article II, Section 2, Sentence 2 of our National bylaws states: "In keeping with its purpose, the Association shall develop a program to enable college women to continue their intellectual growth, to further the advancement of women, and to discharge the special responsibilities to society of those who have enjoyed the advantages of higher education." This is the purpose of AAUW.

I hope that this has given you an idea about the American Association of University Women. You, by the right of your baccalaureate degree, which is approved by AAUW,--and the Buffalo Branch is delighted that you are--- you are eligible for membership. You do not have to be invited to join; all you need do is apply. We would like very much to have those of you who will be in this area join our branch. Where ever you are, I know there will be a branch nearby. I hope you will become a member of AAUW--it is a most worthwhile organization, and one which I am sure you will find stimulating and rewarding.