



FORMING AN AAWCC CHAPTER

Why a Local Chapter?

A local chapter provides the opportunity for women at community colleges to participate directly in the kinds of activities, networking, communications, professional development, leadership, nurturing, mentoring, and personal growth that have made AAWCC strong at the national and regional levels.

AAWCC activities and events create a synergy that promotes and assists women in their professional goals. When women come together in a campus chapter, the power and resources of the group are greater than the sum of its parts. AAWCC is a catalyst for empowerment.

All women at a college can be invited to participate in chapter activities and to become members of AAWCC if the college has an institutional membership. Faculty, students, secretaries, security staff, accountants, administrators, presidents, and trustees - all are eligible for membership. Members and chapter officers express their commitment and support for the goals and agenda of AAWCC through their national membership. Officially recognized chapters are authorized to use the AAWCC logo, pins, colors and publications. Training for chapter officers also is provided through the regional network of the national organization and through national conferences.

Because we are an organization for women (not of women), male supporters can be encouraged and informed through chapter events and activities as well as actual membership.

What is the Purpose of Local Chapters?

- Encourage educational program development for women in community colleges.
- Support women in leadership roles.
- Develop communications among women in community colleges.
- Promote and offer local and state workshops for women in community colleges.
- Disseminate information on courses, programs and services for professional women.
- Address equity and other issues pertinent to women students and staff.

What Can Be Done on the Local Level?

Educate

- Publish a newsletter. Include book reviews, articles, poems, pictures, and other contributions from members as well as news about women's issues.
- Conduct seminars on women's safety and health issues.

- Hold a team-building workshop using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (or similar inventory) to help members have a greater understanding of self and others.
- Host diversity events that focus on women of other cultures and races. Invite women to speak openly about the differences that separate us as well as the similarities that bind us together as women.
- Invite a financial planner to address concerns of women such as planning for retirement.

Cooperate

- Adopt a "sister" college and help potential members begin an AAWCC chapter.
- Invite members from nearby institutions to join your chapter activities.
- Support local charities - battered women's shelters, soup kitchens, adolescent pregnancy programs, etc.

Elevate

- Raise scholarship money for women students or staff who are furthering their education.
- Hold a recognition breakfast for female staff.
- Sponsor an art exhibit, musical presentation, poetry reading, etc. recognizing works of women on your campus.
- Sponsor a deserving student or employee by giving her a membership in AAWCC as a gift.
- Publish a directory of members. Include pictures and information on special talents, interests, and achievements.

Celebrate

- Host a quarterly tea or coffee to welcome new employees.
- Host a dinner honoring one or all of your trustees.
- Host a champagne reception for faculty, staff and/or administrators.
- Give an AAWCC Student Leadership Award.
- Plan an annual outing to a museum or theatre featuring works by or about women.

How Would We Form an AA WCC Chapter

Your regional director would be happy to assist you in completing these simple steps. In addition, she may be available to attend your initial meeting or suggest a knowledgeable speaker. Downloadable membership brochures are available on the website.

1. Schedule a meeting of interested women (and men) at your college.
2. Check to see if your institution has an institutional membership (on the national website)
3. Elect a president, president-elect, secretary, and treasurer.
4. Develop chapter bylaws. AAWCC will help by providing an example to use on the website.
5. Provide the above information to your regional director.
6. Approval and recognition of your chapter will occur at the next meeting of the national AAWCC Board of Directors (usually in early October and early April).

Additional Chapter Ideas

More ideas for chapter activities, membership drives, and projects are available from the Vice President for Membership* and your Regional Director*. Here's a brief sample of some of the exciting things that can happen at AAWCC chapters.

- Olympic College, Bremington, Washington, stimulated work toward solving campus issues of safety, sexist language and sexual harassment.
- East Central Community College, Platte, Missouri, adopted a family from the Center for Survivors of Domestic Abuse and Violence as a community service project.
- Many chapters have offered annual scholarships to outstanding women students. Selection may be based on an essay about women's issues, financial need, demonstrated service to women students or other appropriate criteria.
- Central Community College, Hastings, Nebraska, provided a pre-commencement hospitality area for the families and friends of graduates. The chapter also sponsored a summer picnic for all of its members and their families.
- Frederick Community College, Maryland, tackled breast cancer through a series of activities for the college and the general community. Many chapters have sponsored Relay for Life and/or Komen Race for the Cure teams and activities.

- Modesto Junior College, California, worked with local businesses in various fundraisers for local charities that assist women.
- A number of chapters have created "clothes closets" to provide suitable professional attire to women students in need.
- AAWCC chapters in the City Colleges of Chicago have adopted designated chapter colors that are reflected in their dress at conferences and meetings-an easy and effective way to build identity. Harold Washington College sponsored a "Phenomenal Women Award Luncheon" to honor contributions of local women leaders, which has become an annual event at CCC.
- Workshops, seminars, conferences and leadership retreats are other important activities that chapters have undertaken. Brown bag luncheons and discussion groups featuring local women as resources are a low cost way to begin.
- More ideas on developing your chapter, once recognized, can be obtained in the Chapter Development Kit available from the Vice President for Membership.

For more information on forming a local chapter, consult your AAWCC Regional Director.

To determine your region and the name of your Regional Director, use the AAWCC web site address below. There you will find the names and contact information for all national officers, including the Vice President for Membership.

<http://www.aawccnatl.org>