

## Volunteers First Session 2 Narrative

**PRE-PROGRAM INTRO:** This **Volunteers First** presentation will last about **35** minutes.

- It is designed so attendees do not need to take notes. The program slides, narrative, and handouts mentioned will be made available on the website.
- There will be time **after** the program for sharing comments and asking questions.
- If you have a comment or question, you would like the **monitor to ask for you**, please put it in the chat as we go along.

### Slide #1

Pivot 4 shown before the beginning of the narrative

### Slide #2

Thank you, Beckie and **Good** evening! It's WONDERFUL **so** many of you **chose** to... give of your **time** to attend the second part of this ground-breaking program.

**Volunteers First** took a “village” of long-time AAUW CA and Oregon leaders and a few non-members. Today's program would **not have been possible** without:

- Sharrell Blakeley former president of AAUW Palm Springs Branch;
- Author and consultant with AAUW of CA, Barry Altland who **enlightened** our understanding of why and how *Engaging the Head, Heart and Hands of Volunteers* increases member engagement, retention and leadership. **And... consented** to our using his book for this program!
- Sigrid Moranz, AAUW CA Branch Leadership Development Chair,
- And...Gloria Holland Salem Oregon Branch member

I thank them all!

### Slide #3

This is session 2 of Volunteers First. If you attended the first session, you'll be hearing the background information repeated for several slides. A brief review of session 1 will catch everyone up on the basics.

**Volunteers First** is an awareness program designed specifically for leaders of volunteers.

**Volunteers First** seeks serious consideration for a voluntary **pivot** – **FROM** a transactional approach where leaders *primarily* **assign tasks TO** a transformative approach where leaders *primarily* build and facilitate relationships. **Volunteers First** provides AAUW leaders and members with research-based information on how to discover, connect, support and recognize volunteer-members in ways that bring each joy as individuals.

### Slide #4

To wrap our heads around the **importance** of this pivot requires your knowing a bit of background on why and how we arrived at Volunteers First.

### SLOW

Since 1881, AAUW has prided itself in being unique by conducting research - giving us **guidance** for legislative advocacy and developing programs that empower women and girls **externally**. AAUW's continuing decline in membership begged to be researched **INTERNALLY**.

### Slide #5

Sandi Gabe, former AAUW of CA President made a bold decision to do just that. In 2022, former AAUW CA members were surveyed and **asked... why** they dropped their branch **membership**. Particular attention was given to answers of those who had been leaders and/or actively engaged.

**Other than moving or illness**, a significant number said they left AAUW because they felt unwelcome, disconnected and/or just became disinterested in participating... **even for the cause.**

Sandi challenged the CA Leadership Development Committee to find a new and different but credible and effective volunteer leader program.

#### Slide #6

SLOW Our educational journey took months of research. After reading Barry Altland's book, *Engaging the Head, Heart and Hands of Volunteers* and meeting with him in person, we started to understand WHY we were losing members and HOW to make an effective leadership correction.

Barry had us look inward for **our** volunteer motivators. Once done, Barry suggested **OUR** collective **INTRINSIC** motivators are likely the **SAME** motivators as those of most of our members. Interestingly, they are similar to the ones on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs on this slide.

Barry **suggested**: all AAUW leaders have to do is learn and focus on satisfying the intrinsic needs – volunteer motivators - of our members and modify our volunteer leadership best practices accordingly.

#### Slide #7

We looked for and found **credible** RESEARCH that supports Barry's theory.

Volunteer leaders **around the world** were also **seriously** concerned about the drastic decline in volunteer membership. South American volunteers decided to conduct a study interviewing volunteers **WORLDWIDE**. The results were conclusive: universally, people volunteer

to satisfy **one or MORE** of their **INTRINSIC needs**. Those intrinsic needs are...

- **to...Altruize**
- Socialize
- Learn and
- Self-Actualize

These **INTRINSIC** needs of volunteers look much like the higher needs on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, confirming Barry's theory.

**Credible research** indicates most AAUW members will **choose** to give of their time, talent and skills when at least **some** of their **INTRINSIC** needs are met.

### Slide #8

Managing volunteers so they'll renew and lead to is NOT a matter of how we run our "business". Volunteerism is an **AFFAIR of the HEART!**

If you take home nothing else from this conference, remember this:

**Fulfilling** the member's intrinsic motivators for volunteering is what touches their heart.

**Fulfillment** drives their choices for volunteering,

And **that JOY** is what sustains their passion for serving.

The **HEART** you see here represents this new-found awareness.

### Slide #9

If AAUW leaders want to increase and retain membership and develop leaders they **MUST PIVOT...**

**FROM...** focusing primarily on the **TASKS**, (policy, procedure, process and business practices)

**TO...** focusing on **PEOPLE: Our members!** To sustain our organization, AAUW leaders must focus on **Volunteers First!!!**

### Slide #10

Australians also studied volunteerism. They compiled many studies of volunteer leadership from around the world and came up with a list of specific leadership “best practices” to improve member-volunteer retention, engagement and leadership development.

The results of the Australian study were universal!  
Successful leaders of volunteers **BUILD AND FACILITATE RELATIONSHIPS**. They make it their #1 priority.

### Slide #11

We simplified the recommended “best practices” for **HOW** to build and facilitate relationships into four interchangeable leadership abilities:

## **CARE, CONNECT, SUPPORT AND RECOGNIZE**

In this session, we will cover how to **SUPPORT** and **RECOGNIZE**  
CARE and CONNECT are covered in the first session.

### Slide #12

To build and facilitate relationships with and among members, AAUW leaders **MUST first and always** show they **gen-u-in-ely CARE** about **each and every** member.

**CARE** means discovering:

- **What** moves **each member** to volunteer

- **What** interests and activities bring **each member** satisfaction and joy?
- **What** each member **hopes to gain** by being an AAUW member and working for the cause to:
  - Altruize?
  - Socialize?
  - Learn? and/or
  - Self-Actualize?

### Slide #13

After “Getting to Know” new and unengaged members, AAUW leaders are then able to **CONNECT** them to other members who are involved in branch activities *of similar interest*. Connecting builds and facilitates relationships with and among members. The need for connection is powerful, especially now. Research shows a key difference between very happy people and less-happy people is good relationships.

Remember, AAUW leader’s #1 priority is **NOT to assign tasks** - even when **CONNECTING** members to each other.

**Assigning tasks does not build relationships.** Nor does it serve the purpose of putting the wants and needs of our member-Volunteers First. And, at this stage, it certainly might not bring them joy!

### Slide #14

After connecting members to others who are involved in branch activities of similar interest, effective leaders focus on **SUPPORTING** them.

Effective leaders of volunteers support members in ways that are personal to **THEM – the members!**

**The first way** to personalize SUPPORT is to...

Show the engaged member you **CARE** about her as a person.

If you haven't already done so, now is the time to discover, re-discover ask or refresh your memory about that member's Intrinsic Motivators discussed previously.

### Slide #15

Remember what research tells us...

A member's engagement depends on **fulfilling the member's volunteer INTRINSIC motivators** *while they are engaging* in an AAUW activity.

**THEIR** needs to **altruize, socialize, learn or self-actualize.**

### Slide #16

**Pivoting from hustle to flow** couldn't be more of a challenge when it comes to **SUPPORTING** each member to sustain interest, engagement renewal in the short-term, not to mention the long-term.

AAUW leaders and members want a magic formula we can apply **NOW** so younger members will **quickly** grow into a beautiful branch of engaged, energetic and long-term committed members who make sustaining AAUW a priority and become leaders.

I wish I could provide you with that magic formula. But, like Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman illustrated in this Zits cartoon, there are many "distractions" that are barriers to a "quick fix".

The reality is women, young and old alike, are developing "**short-term**" attention spans and find it difficult to relax. Volunteer organizations want instant results. But we're competing with iPhones and social media for women we believe could find so **much more** satisfaction and joy in being an AAUW member.

So...anytime an engaged member does choose to show up, it's really important to, give personalized **SUPPORT** for attending and engaging in ways that touch their heart. Support begins by creating a welcoming branch environment that will, eventually, be more appealing than sitting alone on the couch on their iPhone or taking a warm bath.

### Slide #17

The **second way** to personalize SUPPORT is...

... to confirm for yourself that each member is actually **CONNECTED** to or matched with activities that are aligned with their interests.

Volunteers First leaders take time - while they, themselves, are engaging as a speaker or with a group, to OBSERVE each engaged member:

- How much are they engaging? Are others encouraging her?
- Are they smiling or frowning?
- Do they stay until the end or leave early?

These observations can be touched upon in personalized conversations by....TOUCHING BASES with members.

### Slide #18

TOUCHING BASE" is the single most critical, proactive and effective **support measure** a leader can take to sustain a member's passion for volunteering.

Touching base with each member is best when done – ideally -in person in a café, on the phone or if on a short zoom:

- Schedule one-on-one chats when there is plenty of time to talk.
- Express your sincere positive appreciation for the member's participation and any recent special contributions.
- Let the member know it's the **serving** is what matters **NOT** how much **time** she serves.
- Ask about satisfaction and fulfillment.



- Discuss dissatisfaction and any fulfillment barriers
- Ask for feedback and suggestions
- Offer alternative ways to serve
- Better yet, encourage creative thinking for new ideas for programs, planning and implementation.

Slow down and take time to ask engaged members “how’s it going”?

### Slide #19

With this slide, I would like to introduce Tobi Johnson who is the President of Tobi Johnson & Associates, a consulting firm whose mission is to help nonprofit organizations make connections with remarkable volunteers. In 2015, Tobi founded an online training program for leaders of volunteers. Tobi has an MA in Modern Art History and is a Certified Volunteer Administrator. Tobi’s training is research-based and I encourage you to Google it for enlightening educational insights. Tobi gave me permission to share her summation of new research she found debunking myths about volunteers of **ALL ages**.

What matters to volunteers **no matter their age is:**

- A well-run organization
- Mutual respect
- Challenging work that meaningful and makes a difference
- Short term micro-volunteering opportunities
- Choices and control – autonomy
- Support and training
- Knowing where they stand: when they’re doing well and how to do better

When offering SUPPORT, don’t hesitate to be assertive. Ask an engaged member about her comfort level with these most-important personal needs. Are they being satisfied and what seems to be missing. **Listen**. Then **act quickly** to make member-specific need-satisfaction changes.

## Slide #20

Before we move on to RECOGNITION, there are some very important and effective ways to “grow leaders”.

### **Prioritize your Leadership Development Energy.**

Along the way, **assess** which engaged members appear to enjoy leadership

- **Assess** whether or not an interested-potential leader has the HEART for caring, connecting and supporting OTHERS
- Spend your time and energy developing and elevating those engaged members who have the interest and ability, time and care for others to become leaders.
- Leadership positions are best left vacant rather than being filled with members who cannot put others first, have no time or interest in leading or the heart for doing so.

### **Empower newly engaged members to be AAUW leaders**

- Start by creating many, small do-able lead roles with small teams for leading or co-leading activities of their interest.
- Create many opportunities for member-volunteers to share in branch roles, program and active decision-making;
- Effective leaders create opportunities for members to take a small lead
- Sometimes it’s good to bow out of a long-held position – create a vacancy and give others a true opportunity to step up.
- Effective leaders allow member-volunteers to “**own**” **implementation** of their mission-related suggestions.
- Effective volunteer leadership involves **giving member-volunteers autonomy** over their roles providing opportunities for growth and development.

### **Empower and challenge all AAUW members to be AAUW sustainers**

- Via branch participation, leadership, advocacy or philanthropy.

### Slide #21

The fourth leadership ability is **RECOGNITION**.

We wanted everyone who attended Volunteers First to meet and hear from Barry Altland, author of EHHH of Volunteers. Barry is here tonight to share one of his favorite topics: “Rethinking Volunteer Recognition.”

Welcome Barry....

Thank you SO much, Barry for engaging your head, heart and hand with AAUW. We so appreciate all you have done for us!

### Slide #22

In summary, AAUW member engagement depends on AAUW leaders creating a volunteer environment of engagement activities that **touch each member’s heart, fulfills THEIR need to altruize, socialize, learn or self-actualize** while benefitting women and girls.

AAUW member engagement depends on leaders’ building and facilitating member-relationships. The future of our organization and all we hope to accomplish depends on... AAUW leaders implementing **Volunteers First**.

### Slide #23

When **we as leaders** - nurture belonging and joy within our membership;

When **we as leaders** genuinely **CARE** for **each and every** member as person;

When **we as leaders** personally discover what moves **each member** to volunteer and make that personal **CONNECTION**,

When we as leaders **SUPPORT** each member by asking “how’s it going”  
And **RECOGNIZE** the contribution each member has made to fulfilling  
the mission **in ways that are meaningful to THEM**

**Then...** We will see growth in membership, an increase in member participation, engagement and invest in sustaining AAUW by stepping up to lead. Volunteers And... leaders will experience the joy **they hoped to gain** by becoming leaders!

Thank you!

Sigrid/Bev:

Thank you so much, Peggy. If anyone has questions about the presentation, please put them in the attendee survey. Peggy will get back to you next week.

Bev ask attendees to:

- Share HOW each would prefer to be recognized one-on-one and by whom
- Share HOW each would prefer to be recognized in a branch meeting and by whom
- Each give an example of how she will SUPPORT a newly engaged member

10-12 mins.