

**AAUW Longmont  
Local Scholarships and Community Action Grants  
Fund and Distribution History and Guidelines**

The Longmont Branch has a long and robust history of awarding local scholarships and community action grants. Awarding scholarships locally began in 1951-52 with one \$50 scholarship going to a senior at Longmont High School. In 1992-93 local scholarships totaled \$1,500 and in 2022-23 \$3,000 was awarded. To-date \$76,805 has been awarded in local scholarships.

Community Action Grants were first awarded in 1992-93 with \$3,000 being awarded that year. In 2022-23 \$3,000 was awarded. To date \$71,750 has been awarded in community action grants.

The main source of funding for both of these grant programs was the proceeds of the branch's Annual Bargain Book Fair held from 1953 through 2015. The book fair was always a huge success with 90% of our members actively and tirelessly participating in this fundraising effort each fall. At its peak, the branch netted \$25,000 from the book fair and ultimately raised a total of just over \$388,000. Until 1998, branch finance officers managed the funds in savings accounts and branch committees awarded board authorized amounts.

In 1998, the Board decided to establish an AAUW Endowment Fund at the Longmont Community Foundation (LCF). This Fund was originally in conjunction with the Denver Foundation and was the first such fund of the LCF. According to the branch's policy document at the time, "the purpose for joining the LCF is to establish an endowment fund that would generate earnings for eventual distribution as local scholarships. Until the earnings of the designated fund reach a minimum of \$100,000, all of the earnings will remain in the designated fund." The fund agreement was signed in June 1998 and the fund was opened with \$10,000.

By September 2010, the local scholarship fund had grown to slightly over \$90,000 as a result of contributions from book fair proceeds and earnings. At that time the Branch's Board and membership voted to split the AAUW Endowment Fund into 2 endowed funds, one titled Local Scholarship Fund (LS) and the other Community Action Grant Fund (CAG). In October 2010, the 2 funds were established with \$65,000 in Local Scholarships and \$30,000 in Community Action Grants.

At this time, 75% of the 54 Branch members responding to a survey supported the splitting of the existing AAUW Endowment Fund into the 2 funds and 85% wanted to keep the amounts awarded for scholarships and community action grants equal each year. Becoming part of the LCF is a long-term commitment to growing our funds to support scholarships and grants.

The final book fair was held in 2016, due to reduced interest in such fairs in general as well as the aging of our membership. This change eliminated the annual source of revenue previously used to bolster the fund balances of each of our Funds at the Longmont Community Foundation. This situation made the growth of the Funds and ultimately the ability to distribute scholarships and grants more dependent than ever on strong financial management.

To honor the direction set by those who worked so hard to build these funds, the following goals drive our annual recommendations on the annual amounts to be distributed:

- To award equal amounts from each of the two AAUW Funds annually.
- To ensure awards will go on in perpetuity, target a minimum fund balance of \$100,000 in each Fund.
- To comply with the agreements between AAUW Longmont and the Longmont Community Foundation.

In 2019, a one-time fundraising campaign resulted in Branch members donating slightly over \$10,000 to equalize the two Fund balances. This balancing supported the goal of equalizing annual awards from the two funds. Members are encouraged to donate to the Funds on an ongoing basis, but additional Branch-wide fundraising campaigns are not anticipated, based on feedback from members.

AAUW Longmont policies, practices, and the previously stated goals guide the Branch's Board in determining the amounts to be distributed each year. In February the Board reviews the history of giving, the fund balances at the end of the previous year, and the resulting recommended distributions. In accordance with the agreements, the recommended distributions are calculated at 6% of the fund balance, less the actual administrative fees (approximately 1.5%). Adjustments may be made to the final recommendations to ensure the distribution amounts from each of the Funds are equal. The Board reviews the final recommendations and confirms the amount to be distributed in the current year.

The recommended distribution amounts are relayed to the Longmont Community Foundation, the CAG chair, and the AAUW members on the scholarship committee. The specific recipients of the Local Scholarships are determined by the LCF's AAUW Scholarship Selection Committee. The recipients of Community Action Grants are determined by the Branch's CAG Committee. The AAUW members of these committees are not in a position to make any adjustments to the recommended distribution amounts approved by the board.

The recommended distribution amounts are set in February and not revisited during the awardee selection process. Issues such as market fluctuations/improvements, the number of applications received, the excellence of the candidates, etc. are not part of the process to determine the distribution amount recommendations. The calculated, internal LCF *spendable balance* is not considered in the Board's decision-making process. The recommendations are made based on specific goals that have been outlined by our members, our long-term goals, and our agreements with LCF. This approach has proved to be financially sound and is focused on the long-term stability and health of the two Funds.

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Branch Interfaces with the Longmont Community Foundation

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