

College University Connection THB March 2015

Western Carolina University (WCU) began organizing an AAUW presence in 2010 and officially joined the Tarheel branch in 2011. Since that time, a core group of University women have been involved in a number of advocacy efforts, including initiating a comprehensive salary equity study, participating in WCU's annual Gender Conference, facilitating a book group discussion on Sheryl Sandberg's *Lean In*, organizing fundraising activities for local domestic violence prevention agencies, and opening a dialogue on the accessibility of affordable childcare options for WCU faculty and staff.

In October, the University released the results of a comprehensive Gender Equality Salary Survey, which found that, despite the fact that women faculty at WCU make an average of \$2,000 less per year than their male counterparts, the University is in legal compliance with federal regulations concerning salary equity. The study has prompted a number of campus-wide conversations regarding equity, and results of a follow-up study on salary equity among WCU staff members are expected soon.

WCU's AAUW presence is comprised entirely of currently employed members of the faculty and staff. While this configuration offers some advantages because of the proximity of stakeholders, responsibility for maintaining the group's coherence falls to a handful of people who are equally committed to a number of other high-profile University priorities. As the western-most campus of the UNC system, WCU is geographically isolated from other Tarheel branch members. In order to maintain momentum for the important activities and conversations already underway at WCU, the current C/U representatives are seeking participation among community members and retired college/university affiliates in the greater Western North Carolina region.

Respectfully submitted,

Chesney Reich

Western Carolina University C/U Representative

2/20/2015

---