

# Promoting STEM Growth

## AAUW Joins the National Girls Collaborative Project



AAUW regional liaisons for the National Girls Collaborative Project, along with AAUW staff (from left): Carolyn Hayek (WA), Dot McClane (PA), Michelle Staben (NC), Catherine Hill (AAUW director of research), Christi Corbett (AAUW research associate), Elizabeth Vandenburg (VA), Jennifer McDaniel (FL), Michele DesAutels (MA), and Marie Wolbach (CA).

AAUW has embarked on an exciting new initiative to provide more opportunities for girls in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields. With funding from the National Science Foundation, AAUW is partnering with the Puget Sound Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology on the National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP). This five-year project is a cooperative venture by the Educational Foundation and the Association, with close collaboration between staff and volunteers. AAUW regional directors have provided critical assistance in launching the first seven regional collaboratives.

While many projects across the country focus on getting more girls interested in STEM fields, information about these projects is often scattered. Girls and their parents may not know where to look for opportunities, and willing mentors may not know where or how to volunteer. Individuals working on one “girls in STEM” project are sometimes unaware of similar projects nearby. As a result, opportunities to pool resources, share ideas, and make the best use of limited resources go untapped.

The National Girls Collaborative Project is designed to address these needs. Tools include an online directory of programs to identify complementary projects and help individuals find activities in

their region. The directory also provides an opportunity for program leaders to learn about and collaborate with other programs. Mini-grants of \$1,000 per region will be available to organizations that work together to increase the number of girls in STEM. For example, an organization that has meeting space and computers may partner with another organization

that has mentors and interested participants. Both organizations would register in the program directory and then jointly apply for the mini-grant to help pay for their shared event. AAUW branches are encouraged to register their programs, use the directory to learn about other opportunities, and apply for mini-grants. To learn more about the NGCP National Program Directory or to register your project in the directory, go to <http://www.pugetsound-center.org/ngcp/directory/index.html>.

To facilitate AAUW’s participation in regional NGCP collaboratives, the AAUW Educational Foundation Board of Directors selected seven AAUW members to serve as NGCP regional liaisons. The regional liaisons will help program participants make connections—with one another, with resources on gender equity, and with AAUW. The liaisons met for the first time in January in Washington, D.C., to learn about the project. Representing the great diversity of AAUW members, the liaisons come from seven different states and a variety of different backgrounds. They include a biochemist, two engineers, a former judge, two 30-year AAUW members, and two new AAUW members. Along with a strong shared interest in encouraging girls to explore science, technology, engineering, and math, the group brings a wealth of knowledge, contacts, ideas, and experience to the NGCP.

If you’d like to get involved with the NGCP in your area, contact your AAUW regional liaison. Don’t see your region listed? Don’t worry—a new set of collaboratives for the remaining regions will start next year and continue for the remainder of the five-year NGCP project. The first seven regional liaisons are

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To find out more about the National Girls Collaborative Project, join us for a workshop on the project at the National Convention in Phoenix—yet another good reason to book your flights now!

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