

Council of Women and Girls

Education and STEAM Subcommittee

Tuesday, June 28, 2022
1:00 P.M. TEAMS format
Meeting Minutes

Director Larson welcomed all and thanked the group for all of their efforts over the past few years to support and increase the number of women and girls in STEAM fields.

In attendance at the meeting: Director Larson, Noele Kidney, Janice Floyd, Tracy Ariel, Lynn Raicik, Jennifer Michalek, Rhona Free, Melissa Hickey, Eric Smith, Cameron Diaz, Debra Goss, Winnie Yu Ng, Dr. Heidi Gold, Shamare Holmes, Ellyn Savard, Nana Amos, Elizabeth Durgin, Gwen Brantley and Kristin Violette.

Subcommittee reports -

- A. **Tech Champions** – Jennifer Michalek reported out for Tech Champions (slides attached). There was a total of 430 submissions (teams and individual students) this year in the Lt. Governor’s Computing Challenge - 182 concept, 28 prototype and 46 development submissions from 55 different schools. Submissions were down this year but as an SDE employee this didn’t surprise me as it was a very difficult year for educators across the state. General concept submissions breakdowns were pretty equal between females and males but after that is when we are not keeping girls interested in computer science. If you recall last year, we noticed the biggest gaps in ethnic diversity, so the good news is that we saw an uptick in our black or African American population as well as our Hispanic and Latino students – particularly in the prototype challenge. On June 8th we were able to hold an in-person recognition event at Infosys in Hartford – well over 100 attended. In addition to its award to the opportunity district school with the most participation, Jackson Lab surprised the 8 students from that school each with a \$100 award. Every prototype and development submission had their landing page made into a poster so those in attendance were able to see them all and talk with the students. As far as next steps, the team has already met to discuss the sustainability of the challenge – the Infosys Foundation participated in the call and teacher training, webinars and vendors to support was discussed. Funding and project management continues to be an ongoing challenge for the group.
- B. **Information/Opportunity Hub** – Noele Kidney reported out for the Information/Opportunity Hub team. On June 1st, the team held an event at Sunset Ridge School in East Hartford to launch the new STEAM Portal https://portal.ct.gov/steam/?language=en_US It was a great event and resulted in the following news articles:

https://www.journalinquirer.com/towns/east_hartford/state-launches-steam-portal-for-women-and-girls/article_bd19c1da-e27f-11ec-bf29-bfe180c9721c.html

<https://www.govtech.com/education/k-12/connecticut-launches-online-steam-portal-for-women>

Jonathan Richter, who was instrumental in piloting this website through the development process, is no longer working at our agency – as his UCONN graduate internship ended. Our plan all along was to start small and grow it. Currently working to determine how the site will be maintained so that material remains current, and the site can be expanded to include the Internship Toolkit, a link to the Million Women Mentors CT Chapter site and resources for female professionals in STEM fields.

- C. **Internship Toolkit** – Lynn Raicik and Cameron Diaz, CCAT reported out for the Internship Toolkit – Lynn thanked all of those who contributed toward the development of the Internship Toolkit and now that its in its final draft form, we believe the Info Hub is the perfect place to house it. Cameron Diaz detailed the toolkit and its table of contents and explained that they’d like to send it out to some CCAT staff currently supervising interns and a few employers to receive feedback. Hoping to have everything finalized in order to be sent out to many employers by next Summer (slides attached).
- D. **ARTS** – Shamare Holmes (LiveGirl) reported out for the Arts Group. An in-person social event was held on May 26th at the South End Hartford Hartford Boys’ and Girls’ Club with approximately 17 students attending. A special shout out to Alex Novak who sponsored us so that we could have a teacher come and hold a poetry workshop. Lynnette Johnson did some hands-on art with the girls – it was a great event that was free of charge. There was pizza and snacks, and it didn’t take a lot of “wo” manpower or legwork – simply the effort of getting girls together, having someone who is in the arts field who’s doing the work, loving the work and willing to talk about the work. Excited to plan another event like this soon.

Million Women Mentor Update – Noele Kidney relayed an update from Carolyn Alessi – mark your calendars, MWM is planning an in-person event for September 23rd at the State Capitol and would like to invite the entire subcommittee to attend – details soon to follow.

ED and STEAM Subcommittee Next Steps – general consensus that the social event held by the Arts group and the in-person recognition Computing Challenge event were a big hit. The Subcommittee chairs have discussed whether holding more of these events might be a great way to expose young women and girls to women who have established themselves in these fields. There were no comments or suggestions made by the those in attendance. Noele and Janice plan to send out a survey to subcommittee and steering committee members to get feedback and ask for additional ideas.

Upcoming ED and STEAM Subcommittee meetings/watch for a meeting invite:

- Tuesday, August 16th -3PM
- Tuesday, September 20th – 3PM
- Tuesday, November 15th – 3PM
- Tuesday, December 13 – 3PM

Meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.