

## Ballwin-Chesterfield Branch Projects

An important branch goal is to encourage young women in their pursuit of careers in the STEM fields, where women often are underrepresented.

### ACADEMY OF SCIENCE ST. LOUIS SCIENCE FAIR

Each year, AAUW Ballwin-Chesterfield Branch provides judges for the St. Louis Science Fair and special recognition of several outstanding science projects entered in the Fair by female students.

In April of 2022, our two AAUW B-C judges evaluated eight Honors Division science projects. Each of three awardees selected received a \$125 MOST 529 college scholarship and a personal letter of congratulations from our branch.

Due to public health concerns, the Science Fair was held as an e-fair in 2020-2023. This event will again be held as an e-fair in the spring of 2024.

### EXPANDING YOUR HORIZONS (EYH)

Expanding Your Horizons is a national conference that encourages students in grades 6 through 9 to explore STEM careers. Attendees participate in hands-on workshops and hear from professional women who are actively working in such careers.

In St. Louis, the EYH events, held on local university or community college campuses, are organized by the Mathematics/Science Network of Greater St. Louis. Volunteers from AAUW Ballwin-Chesterfield assist presenters, and guide students to their workshop sessions. The branch also sponsors the attendance of several young women from one of the city's middle schools by paying their registration fees. We look forward to the resumption of EYH events in our city.

### STEM GIRLS OF PROMISE

Starting in 2014 with one high school, AAUW Ballwin-Chesterfield Branch has provided STEM Girls of Promise recognition every spring. More recently, at each of three schools--Valley Park, Pattonville, and Maplewood- Richmond Heights--AAUW B-C honors four or five female students who are in their junior year of studies. These girls are chosen by their teachers and principals as having an interest in pursuing a STEM career; exhibiting perseverance; striving for excellence; demonstrating responsibility, integrity, and respect for others; and having a positive learning spirit.

In past years, each of the girls selected received a \$100 check to add to their college fund, a scholar's medal, and a frameable certificate of excellence.

During in-person events, the branch STEM Committee provides a light breakfast for the awardees, their parents, and their teachers before school. One of the high schools invited AAUW B-C representatives to present their awards at an evening banquet.

The Girls of Promise we have the privilege of meeting are so impressive in their plans. The parents and teachers who attend these events are a delight to talk with as well.

A new part of the program was sending a letter in the fall to the 2022 junior honorees, encouraging them to stay in touch. A second letter was later sent about connecting with AAUW when in college. It included pointers to become stronger future job candidates. Please check the AAUW Ballwin-Chesterfield website to see copies of these letters.