

Report for Live Your Dream 2016 Conference

Through a “grassroots” movement, several AAUW members came together in December of 2015 to get Live Your Dream going again. In 2015, the conference was not held for the first time in nine years, and it could have been the end of LYD, but Live Your Dream came back in 2016 stronger than ever. In fact, LYD 2016 included record-setting attendance with 106 sixth and seventh grade girls from over 25 local elementary and middle schools. New this year – the Lunch with Women Leaders segment, the Big Sisters program and simultaneous Parent/Guardian Thread to name a few!

The first meeting held in December 2015 at Barbara’s home brought Lori and Diana together; creating a team that complemented each other. At that meeting, we began with a core group of women who were willing to work on the committee and their experience with the conference was invaluable to both of us. The conference could not have been as successful as it was if it weren’t for the hard work of the ladies of our committee. Having co-chairs was invaluable to our success. The conference is too big an undertaking for one person to handle, even if she has excellent skills. Diana brought knowledge of the school districts, and her work as a former school counselor was invaluable in knowing what girls want. Lori’s working at DCC helped immeasurably with the facilities management. Also, Lori is responsible for a weeklong conference for incoming college freshmen, so her talents are also well suited to the LYD conference.

106 of 120 applicants attended

Volunteers

- AAUW Members – 25
- DCC staff and faculty – 8
- Non-members/Community - 3

Big Sisters

- Vassar students – 3
- Marist students - 3
- DCC students - 6

Workshops

1. Cultural Immersion – “What Make Me Me?”
2. “Yes I Play” – The Pigskin Princess Project.
3. It’s the Journey, not the Destination – How our Values Shape our Lives
4. Dreams – A Poetic Experience
5. How to Be a Good Friend – Developing Health Relationships
6. Lula At Work – Fuzz Therapy
7. Focus Group – Defining Who You Are.
8. “Love Your Ugly”
9. “Stand Up... Be in CNTRL.”
10. “Women Codebreakers: Deciphering Secret Messages.”

Activity and Activism Tables

1. AAUW "Art on the Go"
2. AAUW "Leading to Reading"
3. The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie
4. Grace Smith House
5. Youth Mission Outreach

Budget

This year, we began with \$1183 plus \$1,500 from the Writers Tea. We received \$1990 in donations from the membership of AAUW. We were overwhelmed by the generosity of our membership. Our biggest expense was the food for the event and then the purchase of lanyards, and bags for the girls. We provided lunch for the girls, workshop presenters, and volunteers who were committed for the whole day. In addition, we provided breakfast for the girls as well. We purchased 500 lanyards and 250 bags for the girls, we are committed to next year for the bags and perhaps three years into the future with the lanyards.... Money well spent, thanks to our generous donors.

Recruitment

In the past, recruitment has been the biggest stumbling block. Without the girls there is no conference. Working with administrators and counselors from local schools, helped our cause this year. The recruitment committee, Suzi Stoller, Bonnie Auchincloss, and Monique Jones did a great job in noting Open House activities at the schools and securing volunteers to man our tables with brochures and Tri-fold advertising (thanks to Mary Coiteux for the tri-folds

EVALUATION

This very rewarding event is a labor of love and commitment from a group of about 15 women who attended our monthly meetings, formed a workshop committee, and a recruitment committee that recognized the need and worked tirelessly to recruit girls and presenters. This year, we made some changes to the day that worked out terrifically for all involved. Each girl was asked about her interest areas and we used them to place girls in workshops. Asking for the interest area rather than a specific workshop helped when a girl didn't get what she wanted as there was nothing specific in their requests. The girls also were exposed to a lunch with women leaders, where they lunched with leaders of our community and were given to opportunity to meet accomplished women. Once again Girl Talks and Activism activities were highlights of the day for the girls. We added a Parent Thread this year and over 20 parents stayed for talks about bullying and internet safety...again well received by the parents.... Only complaint....no coffee (due to a mix-up with catering). In their evaluations, girls talked about having more time to do activities and workshops and Girl Talks...so I guess we were a success. We also added two college girls as Big Sisters to the groups, and girls stayed with the same girls throughout the day. All in All, we affected adult women, college women and girls at this amazing event. Lori and Diana will chair again next year.

Lori Scolaro
Diana Babington