

2021 STEAM In A BOX Program Breaks Records; 195 Girls Served!

Despite the pandemic, the wonderful women of AAUW Greater Naples Branch were determined to produce a 24th annual STEAM program for 5th-grade girls. Though a live conference was not possible as in the past, the STEAM Committee invented a STEAM in a Box program, which provided 144 fifth-grade girls in Collier County Public Schools:

- Two STEM project kits to complete at home;
- The book, Girls Think of Everything, written and signed by Kathleen Thimmesh, about women scientists and inventors; and
- Links to professionally produced videos of local women in STEAM careers.

Once again, Collier County Public Schools worked with the STEAM team to select the girls for the program, to create an on-line feedback tool for the girls and will compile the feedback for the Branch's STEAM Committee.

When all 144 kits had been distributed to the Collier County Public Elementary Schools for the girls, funds for the program remained, and the STEAM Committee decided to expand the program to include an additional fifty-one 4th and 5th-grade girls at Grace Place and New Horizons. All of these additional STEAM in A Box packages have been distributed too.

Many thanks to Charmaine Klein, 24th Annual STEAM Program Committee Chair, and the whole committee: Nancy Beights, Laura Candris, Susan Coman, Maryanna Crawford, Catherine Hackney, Judith MacGregor, Mary Schell, Mary Schoenheider, Jacky Terri-to, Elaine Wade, Donna Walker, and Lanetta Warrenburg. We look forward to resuming our live STEAM Girls Count Conference with hands-on workshops for the girls in 2022.

The Branch is grateful for:

- The amazing women who generously contributed their time and talent to mentor young women via the STEAM videos: Alicia Abbott, Project Manager, Collier County Public Utilities; Joanna Fitzgerald, Director, von Arx Wildlife Hospital, Conservancy of Southwest Florida; Stephenie Liebler, Ph.D., Biomaterials Research Supervisor, Arthrex, Inc.; and Barbara J. Reed, DMD, MS, PA, Reed Orthodontics.
- The continued support of the Collier County Public Schools, Superintendent Dr. Kamela Patton, the Fifth-grade teachers and Assistant Principals of the Collier County Public Elementary Schools and especially that of Lindy George and Jonathan Woofter, who worked so diligently to develop the electronic feedback form for the girls.
- The time and talents of Andy Beights of Beights, LLC, who produced the wonderful videos of the local women working in STEAM fields at a very generously discounted rate. The Committee expects that these videos will be the start of a video library available to inspire young women to pursue STEAM education and careers for years to come. (Go to <https://greater-naples-fl.aauw.net/steam/> and click the link to "2021 STEAM videos" to watch them
- Kathleen Thimmesh, author of Girls Think of Everything, who signed the bookplates for all 195 books.

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