

Report on Live Your Dream 2019 Conference

Date: Saturday, November 2, 2019

Time: 8:00am – 3:00pm

Location: Dutchess Community College

Co-Chairs: Diana Babington and Lori Scolaro

Background:

- For the second year, we had eighth grade girls in attendance. We had only 14 attend which is not surprising as the girls get older they lose interest.
- Conference planning started later than usual since the prior planning and schedule worked so well last year. We continued to meet in Room 315 at Hudson Hall, DCC. Our committee was much smaller this year. Meetings were publicized in The Branch newsletter.
- The co-chair model clearly works best for successful planning and delivery of the LYD Conference. Having Diana Babington's knowledge of AAUW and LYD in the mix along with Lori Scolaro acting as the Dutchess Community College liaison made for a fabulous combination of leadership.
- The Lunch with Women Leaders segment and well as the Parent Workshop Series were once again included and very well received. The Big Sister role was key to the guidance the girls received throughout the day.
- To forge relationship building, the girls were grouped together and paired with a least two Big Sisters for the day. Grouping considerations included interest areas indicated on the registration form (to allow for a fit for workshops attended), grade-level and school.

Participants:

- 85 registrants attended – late registrants were told to register on the day of the conference.
- 22 returning girls from last year
- Grade-Level Breakdown – Grade 6 (36), Grade 7 (35) Grade 8 (14)
- From 25 local elementary and middle schools, plus home schoolers
- Schools were fairly equally represented averaging 6-10 girls per school
- When asked how they heard about the conference – Returner (7), Friend (25), School (20), Guidance Counselor (7), Girl Scouts (5), and several other methods yielded one or two participants

Planning Committee:

- Consisted of 12 members including the co-chairs, with a few new members stemming from the AAUW Open House volunteer sign-up and interests indicated on the AAUW membership form.
- Sub-committees were established to complete the varying tasks necessary to execute the conference, including: Conference Registration, Marketing Materials Development, Participant Recruitment, Advertising, Budget Development and Fund-Raising (Divas, Dreamers & Darlings campaign), Publicity and Social Media Promotion, Participant Journal Preparation, "Big Sister" Recruitment, "Big Sister" Training, Workshop Presentations, Lunch with Women Leaders, Activism Activities, Girl Talks, Closing Celebration, Parent Workshop Series, Conference Program Design, Conference Entrance Activity (Self-Portrait Collage), Participant Packet Preparation, Participant Name Tags and Completion Certificates, and Conference Evaluation

- Other tasks include: room reservations and set-up coordination, food ordering and catering coordination, securing Diane Jablonski and Pamela Edington for welcome remarks, and establishing volunteer assignments and schedule for the day of the conference.

Conference Volunteers:

- Total – 24
- Tasks included: set-up, check-in/registration, monitor breakfast area, assisting with girls' entrance activity, lunch help, presiders for workshop sessions, clean up, etc. Specific assignments were given.

Big Sisters:

- Big sisters are college students who volunteered to guide the girls throughout the day. Formal training was conducted to prepare the Big Sisters to fulfill their role.
- A thank you dinner for the Big Sisters was hosted in November, with lots of thoughtful feedback and ideas shared.
- Number of Big Sisters and Colleges Represented
 - SUNY New Paltz – 2
 - Marist College – 1
 - Dutchess Community College – 9
 - Vassar - 1

Workshop Sessions:

- Workshop topics were included to fully support the LYD Conference mission and purpose. With clear connections to the Conference goals, topics focused on girls' personal development and how girls can make a positive impact on their community.

Workshop Facilitator	Job Title/ Organization	Workshop Title
Jacqueline Goffe-McNish	Professor, Department of English and Humanities, DCC	Cultural Immersion... What Makes Me, Me?
Anthula Natsoulas	Professor Emeritus, Math Education, University of Toledo	Puzzles, Patterns and Women in Mathematics
Liz Torres	Yoga Instructor	Mindful Yoga
Raphael Kosek	Poet Laureate DC, Professor of Literature Marist College	Come Find Your Own Voice
Roza Makhmudova Brittany Semenovich	Coordinator of Transfer Services, DCC Therapy Dog Handler	Gaila, the Therapy Dog Lola, the Service Dog
Ivy Reeves	Community Educator,	F-O-C-U-S G-R-O-U-P – Defining Who You Are
Laura Bagnarol	MSW, Social Advocate	The Confidence Checkup & PARENT THREAD
Megan Bejana	Community Educator, Grace Smith House	Developing Healthy Relationships & PARENT THREAD
Kristen Masson	Theater educator	Theatre Games and Improvisation
Larissa Alvarado	Artist/ herbologist	Herbs, Art and Inner Peace

Lunch with Women Leaders:

- Number of women leaders from our community – 26
- Girls sat round table with a women leader (or two) in their groups along with their assigned Big Sisters, engaging in conversation over lunch
- Table set up included name signs for the women leaders and discussion director questions to guide conversation

Activism Activities:

- Local agencies who participated with an activity for the girls to engage in that provide for community needs included:
 - AAUW “Leading to Reading”
 - AAUW “Days for Girls”
 - The Children’s Home of Poughkeepsie
 - Grace Smith House
 - Meals on Wheels

“Girl Talk” Discussion Circles:

- The girls met in small groups to discuss friendship, relationships, school, sisterhood and safety.
- Girl Talk Facilitators included –

	Title/Affiliation
Mary Camburn	School Counselor Todd MS
Domonique Garrett	Therapist LMSW, Astor Services
Sarah Hicks	LMSW, Hudson Valley Bridge Builders
Ivy Reeves	Program Director, Important Values for Youth
Jennifer Wrage	Director, Academic Services & Testing, DCC

Parent Workshop Series:

- Number of attendees – 16
- Very positive feedback received on evaluations.
- Hosted by Mary Lou Davis, and Diana Salsberg, programming included –
 - Laura Bagnarol – The Confidence Checkup, Help Build your Daughter’s Confidence
How comfortable is your daughter at raising her hand in class, making friends, trying new things? Laura will help parents explore why confidence is so important and how you can help your daughter become her most confident self.
 - Megan Bejana & Bekah Polonsky, Keeping your Daughter Safe Megan
& Bekah are community educators who present to students from middle to high school ages on various types of violence, bullying, internet safety and relationship violence.
 - Open Discussion – Q & A – “College Prep & Planning”
Diana Babington, Retired School Counselor

Budget Details:

- According to our treasurer our beginning balance for 2020 is \$3,900.
- The income (\$1,225) generated from the Divas, Dreamers and Darlings campaign and additional individual donations clearly gives evidence that Live Your Dream is supported by AAUW members. Additionally, the allotment from the Writer's Tea demonstrates the AAUW board's support of Live Your Dream.
- In 2016, lanyards and swag bags were purchased at \$1,657.38, and the supply was used in the last four years, this year we will need to purchase swag bags again, but we have enough lanyards and name tags.

Summary Evaluation and Chairs' Comments:

When we expand our frame of thought, we could take into account that Live Your Dream positively affected upwards of 50 or so adult women involved with the conference as volunteers, workshop presenters and girl talk facilitators, many playing multiple roles, 13 college women who fulfilled the role of Big Sisters and 84 middle-school aged girls, an impact that weighs well over our number of participants in 2017. Also, noteworthy is the opportunity to have over 25 influential community women observe the greatness of Live Your Dream during the Lunch with Women Leaders segment.

Additionally, community engagement crossed over to the 16 parents who attended the Parent Workshop Series and the girls got involved in Activism Activities to satisfy needs of five local agency programs.

Our expansion to eighth grade girls has been a success. For returning girls, this creates an opportunity to attend LYD up to three times, allowing for an even greater impact. Another benefit is economies with promotion in the middle schools, with all potential grade levels included, marketing and promotion efforts are further reaching. Keeping in mind that, developmentally, there is substantial difference between grade levels, eighth grade girls were in separate groups with mixed groups for sixth and seventh graders.

Diana Babington and Lori Scolaro are pleased to co-chair again next year.

Submitted by: Diana Babington and Lori Scolaro

Date: 5/15/2020