

## INDIVIDUAL PROJECT/ PROGRAM/ EVENT:

**Note: Any program since last year's deadline is eligible.**

**Category: (Please circle or highlight the category for which this program is being submitted.)**

- Women – Education – Community – International – Cultural – Diversity – Public Policy

**Title:** Enhancing the Education of Children in Schenectady

Part I:

**(X) Other community groups** involved, if any (list):(5 points)

Schenectady Schools, Puppet People, Kids Arts Festival, Working Group on Girls

**(X) Number of members involved in planning or putting on** the program (5 points) 35

**(X) Number of nonmembers involved** in the program (5 points) teachers and students Kids Arts Festival-200; mentoring 16 teachers and students; Theatreworks 900+students; Puppet People-120+ students; WGG- 150 students; 1 scholarship winner

**(X) Number of members who attended or benefitted** (5 points) 30

**(X) Number of nonmembers** who attended or benefitted (5 points) 150+

**(X) Number of new members** who joined (if any)(5 points) 3

Part II:

**Describe** your project/ program/ event in 75-150 **words**. Be sure to include:

**(X) how the project addressed AAUW's mission** (15 points)

**(X) branch goals** in doing this program (10 points)

**(X) specific action steps** in planning this program (15 points)

**(X) steps taken for community visibility** (Attach newsletter and newspaper articles.)(10 points)

**(X) measurable impact on the community** (10 points)

**(X) lessons learned** for future programs/ projects/ events (10 points)

**Attach copies** of newsletter and newspaper articles about this project/ program/ event.

(No more than 4 pages maximum)

**Mail or email** the original of your entire application with supporting materials to:

- Peggy Kelland, AAUW-NYS Program Vice President

- 13 Susan Lane, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

Questions? (845)297-0507 smkell45@aol.com

## Enhancing the Education of Children in Schenectady.

Last year, for the first time, our Branch made a concerted effort to perform community service and we focused on the children in the Schenectady Schools. Since our efforts proved to be very successful from a number of perspectives, we continued with this theme this year. However, our plan changed to enriching the learning experience of the child beyond the purely academic.

In June we participated in the Kids' Arts Festival in downtown Schenectady. There, community groups sponsored a craft or art activity for over 200 children. We plan to do this again in June. In addition to being a heart-warming experience to see children in a no-charge event in which they would be unlikely to participate, the visibility for AAUW is wonderful. (We wore our aprons labeled with "AAUW Schenectady" on them.)

Our Branch also continues to mentor once a week from Nov.-June in reading and math at the elementary level, and some of our members volunteered to read aloud in *Reading Across America*. AAUW has been invited to speak at a PTO forum in April to discuss a district-wide mentoring program in the Schenectady Schools. We will be able to share our experience with mentoring these past two years with the other organizations that will be in attendance. This showcases the service work of our Branch.

We have a history of securing grants to partially fund a live theatre performance for over 900 students. However, due to the fact that this fall's performance generated a substantial profit of \$725, we decided to apply this to contract with *The Puppet People* for a puppet play for first and second graders at two elementary schools at no cost to them. These are children who are unable to be bused to see the Nov. musical.

For the older children, we sent a donation to cover the cost of lunch for a table of ten girls, and we had representatives from our Branch helping to plan and execute the Working Group on Girls' "Girls Day Out." This was a program in which 150 troubled Middle School Girls had a chance to identify problems they face and how to deal with them. They were also given opportunity to build self-confidence, be both productive and creative, and attend follow-up sessions later in the year.

We also presented an award to a high school senior girl last June for the first time, and we will continue to do this again. We earmark a percentage of the proceeds from our fundraisers to a community project, and we will make sure some of that is set aside to recognize a worthy girl each year.

Did we fulfill our goals? Yes. What did we accomplish? We certainly enhanced the children's lives by supplementing their academic experiences in a variety of ways. Did our Branch and its members benefit too? Yes. We have substantially increased our partnerships with other groups in the community this past year, and we definitely have become more visible. Some of the child-related activities were the ones that actually enticed some women to join AAUW this year.

What have we learned? Although it oftentimes takes more time and work to reach out beyond Branch activities that benefit only us, the hands-on effort is well worth it. Having an impact on the children in a community where they frequently struggle is a goal to which we should all aspire!

## References to Enhancing the Lives of the Children in Schenectady in *Visions*

*Excerpt from Sept. 2009*

### **Presidents' Notes**

In early June, our Branch participated in the Kids' Arts Festival in Schenectady. Volunteers ( Maxine Borom, Robin Eddy, Betsy Forkas, Sondra Grady, Pam Haller, Nancy Ottati, Gerri Pinkerton, and Bobbi Richardson) manned the AAUW table at which over 200 children decorated white paper tote bags with stickers, foam shapes, pastels, crayons, stencils, and markers. Chaired by Karen Johnson, this was a wonderful day for children to participate in a series of art projects and entertainment at no cost to them. We look forward to having an AAUW table or two next year. Without a doubt, this is a worthwhile, heartwarming experience!

We were contacted by the Dept. of Health and asked to be advocates for Child Health Plus, a health plan that provides coverage for children who are underinsured or without health insurance. We will share this information with the schools, and we will continue our mentoring in the elementary schools. Again, we will be looking for people to volunteer and are examining a schedule where you could team with a partner and only mentor once every two weeks if you are not available an hour each week. If you would be interested in mentoring at the elementary level, please contact Pam Haller at Haller915@aol.com or 399-8580. This will not begin in Oct. or Nov.

*Excerpt from Oct.*

### **Presidents' Notes**

As for **service to others**, we have the potential to have an even greater impact on the lives of people in our community than we did last year! We will be mentoring again in the Schenectady elementary schools. If you are available most weeks to mentor children one hour per week, please let us know. If you are not available to commit to each week, but could alternate with a partner in a more flexible schedule, we can still use your help. Please contact Pam Haller (399-8580 or Haller915@aol.com ) if you can contribute your time to this very valuable project. We know we made a difference last year; we can make one again this year! The plan to buddy with secondary students has been put on hold for the time being.

*Excerpt from Oct.*

### **Children's Play**

On Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup> AAUW will again sponsor a performance for area school children by the professional theater company, TheatreworksUSA. This year the performance will be **IF YOU GIVE A PIG A PANCAKE & Other Stories**, a bright and bouncy new musical based on several favorite children's books.

The performances for elementary school children will take place at 9:30 a.m. at Schenectady H.S. With grants from the Schenectady County Initiative Program and the Stewart's Foundation, we are able to keep ticket prices affordable for the children. As always we need volunteer ushers to greet and seat the classes as they come into the auditorium. If you would be interested in helping in either the morning or afternoon, please contact Robin Eddy at 346-1683 or red5@nycap.rr.com.

*Excerpt from Nov.*

### **Presidents' Notes**

Our Board voted to support the Working Group on Girls' "First Annual Girls' Day Out" at Glen Sanders on Nov. 18. At that time, middle school girls will meet to discuss breaking barriers and building relationships. We hope some of our members will be able to participate in this worthwhile day.

*Excerpt from Dec./Jan.*

### **Presidents' Notes**

Mentoring of elementary students will have began in November. Our mentors, Irene Marsh, Ellie Rowland, Gerri Pinkerton, and Pam Haller, are working one hour a week with first graders in reading and fifth graders in math, and Dottie Potochnik is volunteering in the library at Keane Elementary School.

*Excerpt from Dec. /Jan.*

### **Children's Plays**

On Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, nine hundred thirty-six students, teachers and chaperones from nine elementary schools arrived by car, bus, and on foot to attend the morning performance of Theatreworks USA's musical production of "**IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A PANCAKE & Other Stories**" at Schenectady High School. This production was a bright and bouncy musical based on several favorite children's books. We heard rave reviews from those who attended.

Once again we are grateful to the Schenectady County Initiative Program and the Stewart's Foundation for providing grants that enabled AAUW to bring professional live theatre to the children of Schenectady County at a reasonable cost. A special "Thank You" to our volunteer ushers: Pat Buczkowski, Betsy Forkas, Pam Haller, Gerri Pinkerton, Carol Reynolds, Lois Rowe and Rochelle Shapiro who helped greet and seat the classes. As always, the cooperation from the staff at Schenectady School of Fine Arts was outstanding.

*Excerpt from March*

### **Presidents' Notes**

If we are invited, we also expect to participate in the Kids' Arts Festival in downtown Schenectady again this June. As soon as we know the specific date, we will ask for your help. We have also been invited to participate in the Read-Alouds again this year to help Keane Elementary celebrate *Read Across America Day*.

*Excerpt from Feb.*

### **Presidents' Notes**

Mentoring at Keane Elementary began in November. The eight first graders and four fifth graders are working hard in reading and math. Since we had a surplus of funds leftover from Children's Plays last year, it was decided to use this for an extra program for some of the children who do not have transportation for the fall Theatreworks performances at the High School. We are happy to report that we will be sponsoring a performance by the Puppet People of Schenectady of *The Last Dragon*, a play about character education. They will perform for Keane and Lincoln first and second graders on April 15.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW)  
is sponsoring Theatreworks USA's production of

## **IF YOU GIVE A PIG A PANCAKE & Other Stories**

A bright and bouncy new musical based on your students' favorite books including:

DIARY OF A WORM  
FLUFFY THE CLASSROOM GUINEA PIG  
HORACE AND MORRIS BUT MOSTLY DOLORES  
HOW I BECAME A PIRATE  
IF YOU GIVE A PIG A PANCAKE  
LILLY'S BIG DAY  
THE PAPER BAG PRINCESS

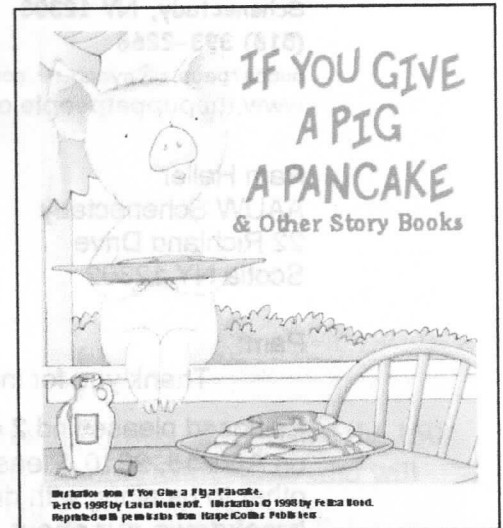
Location: Schenectady High School Auditorium  
1445 The Plaza, Schenectady

Date: Monday, November 16, 2009

Performance Times: 9:30 a.m. and 12:45 p.m.

Cost: \$3.00 per student. Teachers and chaperones are free.

Performances are one hour. This production is approved for BOCES funding.



Grants from Schenectady County, the Stewart's Foundation and an AAUW donation  
have made this production possible for the reduced cost of \$3.00.



Stewart's  
Shops

Study guides may be downloaded at: [www.theatreworksusa.org](http://www.theatreworksusa.org)

Select: Educator/presenter toolkit on the left

Select: *If you give a Pig a Pancake & Other Stories*

Select Study Guide



Please send registration forms to: Shellie van der Zee, 35 Warwick Way,  
Schenectady, NY 12309 or email information to: [rsvanderzee@yahoo.com](mailto:rsvanderzee@yahoo.com)

For questions contact: Robin Eddy, [red5@nycap.rr.com](mailto:red5@nycap.rr.com) or 346-1683

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate number attending: Students: \_\_\_\_\_ Adults \_\_\_\_\_

Performance: (circle one) 9:30 a.m. or 12:30 p.m. Payment will be due in November.



November 30, 2009

1236 Waverly Place  
Schenectady, NY 12308  
(518) 393-2268  
puppetpeople@nycap.rr.com  
www.thepuppetpeople.org

Pam Haller  
AAUW Schenectady  
22 Richland Drive  
Scotia NY 12302

Pam:

Thank you for including, **The Puppet People**, as part of your cultural programming!

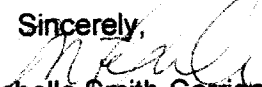
Enclosed please find 2 copies of our contract for one performance of **THE LAST DRAGON** on April 15, 2010. Please sign the contracts, retaining one copy for your records and return the other to us along with directions. **We will need 2 HOURS to set-up and 1½ HOURS to breakdown our show. So, we will need complete access to the performance area a full 2 hours prior to and after the show.** Please make sure any before school, after school or during school programs (ie. YMCA, wrestling, basketball, volleyball, gym class, chorus, music, orchestra, band, drama, PT/OT or Speech) are notified of our presence so they can adjust their schedules.

We will need:

- 15 ft long x 15 ft deep x 10 ft high of unobstructed space to set-up our stage. We can set up on any level surface, a stage is not necessary.
- Access to an electrical outlet for our lighting and sound equipment.
- If we are on a stage, we will need a way to get our large body puppets off the stage during the performance. If you have a set of free standing stairs have the custodial staff place them at the center front of the stage, if you do not have a set of stairs one chorus riser will work just fine.
- To know how to shut on and off the auditorium lights. The darker we can make the room we are performing in, the better!
- 2 hours set-up
- 1 ½ hours to break down
- To know if we can use our fog machine

As a reminder, **THE LAST DRAGON** is a 55 minute show. We will follow our program with a Q & A session, time permitting. If you have any further questions regarding our programs please do not hesitate to contact us.

We are looking forward to performing for AAUW Schenectady at Kane Elementary!

Sincerely,  
  
Michelle Smith-Carrigan  
Artistic Director

# SCHENECTADY COUNTY WORKING GROUP ON GIRLS

November 15, 2009

**PARTICIPANTS:**

American Association of  
University Women  
Capital Region BOCES  
Boys & Girls Clubs of  
Schenectady  
Girl Scouts of  
Northeastern New York  
Girls Incorporated of the  
Greater Capital Region  
League of Women Voters of  
Schenectady County  
NYSUT  
Parents, Families, and  
Friends of Lesbians & Gays  
Planned Parenthood  
Mohawk Hudson Sexual  
Assault Support Services  
SAFE, Inc. of Schenectady  
Schenectady City  
School District  
Schenectady County  
Public Library  
Schenectady Federation of  
Teachers  
YWCA of Schenectady  
Volunteers & Students

**Pam Haller and Gerri Pinkerton**  
Co-Presidents  
AAUW Schenectady  
22 Richland Drive  
Scotia, NY 12302

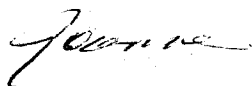
Dear Pam and Gerri:

On behalf of the Schenectady County Working Group on Girls and the 150 seventh and eighth grade Schenectady City School District girls who will attend and benefit from the First Annual Girls' Day Out: Breaking Barriers/Building Relationships, we thank you for your generous support of \$200.

Your contribution will be carefully and wisely allocated and your support acknowledged in our program booklet as well as at our May 2010 Community Forum.

We are truly appreciative of your help to underwrite our project and your recognition that its participants are at a vulnerable age and stage, and both need and merit this program.

Sincerely yours,



**Joanne Tobiessen, chair, Schenectady County Working Group on Girls  
president, League of Women Voters of Schenectady Co.**

We certify that no goods or services were received as a benefit of this gift.  
Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law.



22 Richland Drive  
Scotia, New York 12302  
November 22, 2009

Joanne Tobiessen  
Chair, Working Group on Girls  
2452 Rosendale Road  
Niskayuna, NY 12309

Dear Joanne:

Thank you for giving a representative of AAUW, Schenectady Branch, the opportunity to attend the "Girls' Day Out" on November 18. I am convinced that I was 100% correct when I mentioned at the time we sent our donation and original letter of support, "This is definitely a wonderful opportunity to have an impact at this very crucial age. **We are sure the attendees will remember the day for years to come.** AAUW was happy to be able to provide funds and volunteers to help plan and execute this special day to advance education and self-development of middle school girls."

Although I personally did not sit in on the morning workshops or afternoon sessions to understandably protect the safe and supportive environment for the girls, I was privy to two particularly interesting conversations. One was with Teresa Kennedy from Oneida Middle School who spoke to me about the criteria that were used to select which girls would participate. At lunch, I also listened to one of the workshop leaders of "Mean Girls" speak about the use of the eye-opening contracts amongst the students and her frustration with only having such a short time to discuss the issue of bullying. And then I thought to myself, "But this is only a beginning! The WGG has wisely provided for some follow-up sessions for the girls in their own schools with Muses, and I am sure the issue will be addressed many times. Not to worry!"

Between the brochure, hearing some of the teachers and workshop leaders, and reading the Gazette article and online feedback from the adults who volunteered, there is no doubt in my mind that this project WAS the perfect recipient for our support. From what Betsy Forkas has told me, you are the ultimate organizer, and your efficiency and effectiveness know no bounds. Thanks to your ability to draw people together and your hard-working steering committee, this was truly a memorable experience for the girls and adults involved. Bravo! AAUW was delighted to be a part of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pam".

Pamela Haller  
Co-President  
AAUW, Schenectady



22 Richland Drive  
Scotia, NY 12302  
April 20, 2009

Mrs. Sarah Curcio  
Guidance Department  
Schenectady High School  
1445 The Plaza  
Schenectady, NY 12308

Dear Mrs. Curcio:

I called the Guidance Department and was told that you were the person in charge of scholarships. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the Schenectady Branch of **AAUW** (American Association of American Women) would like to make an award of \$250 to a graduating senior. We would appreciate it if you, or others in the guidance department, would select someone on the basis of the following criteria:

- Female senior graduating in June
- Top 25% of her class
- Will attend a two or four-year college in fall 2009
- Active in the school and/or community; demonstrates integrity
- Financial need
- Not likely to receive a number of other awards

As soon as you have a specific person in mind, please let me know her name at the address above, 399-8580, or [Haller915@aol.com](mailto:Haller915@aol.com), and we will forward the check to you with an accompanying letter to be presented to the recipient. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your assistance with our AAUW Schenectady Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pam Haller".

Pamela Haller  
Co-President  
AAUW Schenectady

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gerri Pinkerton".

Gerri Pinkerton  
Co-President  
AAUW Schenectady





22 Richland Drive  
Scotia, NY 12302  
May 22, 2009

Jinny Cheung, Student  
Schenectady High School  
1445 The Plaza  
Schenectady, NY 12308


Dear Jinny,


AAUW is a national organization with a long history of advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy. We have an Educational Foundation that raises funds for education, research and self-development for women and to foster equity and positive societal change. We also have an AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund that provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for gender discrimination. Currently our organization is very active in the fight for pay equity for women.

There have approximately 40 branches in New York State. Schenectady is one of them. This year our Branch's focus was entitled, *Brightening the Future of the Students on the Community*. Many of our activities centered around this theme. We participated in Operation Back-to-School to provide school supplies to students, mentored in the elementary schools, had a book drive for one of the schools, sponsored live theater for the elementary children, participated in the Dr. Seuss Read-Alouds, had a forum on educational equity, and for the first time, established the AAUW Schenectady Award.

We sought the help of the guidance department in helping us choose a qualified graduating senior girl, and we are pleased to inform you that you are the recipient of our award. We have heard that you are a fine student who has been active both at school and in the community. Please accept this check for \$250. We wish you the very best at Syracuse University and hope this will help you buy some of your books this coming semester. Much success to you!

Sincerely,

  
Pamela Haller  
Co-President  
Schenectady AAUW

  
Gerri Pinkerton  
Co-President  
Schenectady AAUW