

## **COMMUNITY ACTION/OUTREACH HIGH SCHOOL SUMMITS for GIRLS**

NHC AAUW will sponsor at least two summits this school year. We target high schools that have low socio-economic and multi-culturally diverse campuses. The goals of the summits are to increase the graduation rates, build self-esteem, leaving a positive digital image, create interest in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) subjects/careers, and prepare young women to become successful in the 21st century. This year the summits will be expanded to two non-traditional high schools. Over 400 freshman girls and 200 upperclassmen girls will enjoy a school day of educational and motivational sessions, which will challenge them to think about new possibilities and responsibilities. The all-day event will begin with a keynote speaker setting the key ideas of the day to "never give up" and that "education is the key to future success." The students will be inspired by various speakers. The T-shirt that each girl receives reminds her of the day and what she heard in each of the sessions. Attendance prizes are given at the end of the day. At the freshman level, the event is a bonding agent for the class. Students write their own personal high school mission statements based on what they learned and answer an assessment of the day.

Nationally AAUW is a powerful advocate, researcher, and visible leader in equity and education for women and girls. Our branch especially aims to bring educational components to the girls in our area. Over the past ten years, 7,700 students have been inspired by attending a summit in the Klein, Cypress Fairbanks, and Spring school districts. Hurricane Harvey kept us from adding any new girls to that statistic in 2017-2018. Statistics have shown an increase in graduation rates and an increase in number of students attending Advanced Placement/Dual Credit classes and more STEM classes. Klein Forest High School increased its graduation rate to 87.9% which equaled the state average and was chosen as one of the top high schools in the U.S. by *Newsweek* magazine. It won a grant of \$5,000 from the College Board Association and was featured in its report for "Getting into College."

Funding for the summit comes from money raised by our Outstanding Women Awards Luncheon that is held in February or March. The keynote speaker, outside speakers, administration and teachers present the sessions of the summit at their schools. AAUW volunteers facilitate the logistics of the day and thus show community support for the girls to reach their potential. For us, it is an uplifting day to hear the speakers, see the students' reactions, and have lunch with the speakers, teachers, and other volunteers. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Kati Woodward at [Katiwoodwardaauw@aol.com](mailto:Katiwoodwardaauw@aol.com) or 713-515-5093.