

COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

Jan Stout, Chair

For the past five years assuring that children birth to five years are ready to learn has been a focus of the Branch's Community Grants program. If pre-school age children do not thrive in a caring and intellectually stimulating environment during those years, they will not be prepared for STEM or other careers in later life.

The Branch has sponsored training for child care providers on the Eastside by partnering with Child Care Resources (CCR), a non-profit child care referral agency, to provide a series of workshops. These workshops have prepared the providers to meet the State's requirement to be licensed providers.

Initially some members questioned whether this was an appropriate role for our branch. However, as the reports came back to the branch, they quickly realized that we were playing an important role in the future success of the children in our communities.

This work concluded in the spring of 2016 with the final check being presented to CCR. During the past five years the branch has given CCR \$25,000 in support. In the future the focus will be on supporting work with older young women as they explore STEM and leadership roles through our involvement with *Tech Trek*, *Expanding Your Horizons* and the *National Conference of College Women Student Leaders*.