

AAUW / Girl Scout Leadership Tea

Identify a community problem; develop an action plan to address this problem; engage at least four people to be involved; make a budget; make sure the project is sustainable!

This kind of effort would be a challenge for most adults, but Girl Scouts in 6th to 8th grades are doing this kind of work to earn their Silver Awards. The Girl Scout Leadership Tea on April 8 at West Chester University brought together a group of 30 motivated girls with seven members of our West Chester-Chester County AAUW branch, who helped them begin the planning of their work.

The get-together began with tea in beautiful teapots, elegant cups and saucers provided by our members, along with a lovely array of tea sandwiches and sweets. After a welcome by Rebecca Saunders of the Girl Scouts, our Co-Presidents introduced the girls to AAUW and to the purpose of the program.

To provide an example of a service project that was begun by just one person and that has helped scores of students, Khabeera Calaman, a graduate intern from the WCU Resource Pantry, spoke to the girls about the important work they do. She began with asking a few girls to create a pyramid with plastic cups, which represented all of the support that a person needs to be successful. When she removed one cup, the one of family, the entire pyramid collapsed, showing how vulnerable a person would be without this critical support system.

The girls were then invited to tour the Pantry, followed by an activity in which they assembled goody bags for summer students, containing sun block, some snacks, and water bottles, all of which the girls had donated. When the girls had finished with the project, they formed small groups led by an AAUW member to brainstorm their own action plans. Many girls were excited to come up with great ideas!



Brainstorming ideas over tea.

Many thanks go to our participants, who not only worked with the girls, but provided the refreshments, tea set-ups and flowers: Mimi Jones, Anne Anderko, Peggy Staarman, Barb Lathroum, Cindy Knisley, Kim Levan, and Eva Kaufmann. A big thank you to those who donated sandwiches and sweets, including Sandy Kwisz, Pat Bove, Toni Gorkin, Pat Schultz, Pamela Gray, and Terry Houle.

--Eva Kaufmann