

The Tech Trek girls wow AAUW Members . . . >. . . at the annual Fremont Branch Fall Brunch</h3> by Kathy Garfinkle

The annual Fall Brunch held at Niles Discovery Church on Saturday, September 19th was a rewarding experience for all who attended. Members and guests entered a lovely and spacious venue decorated in a rainbow theme by Carol Easter as Fremont Branch prepared to fly Over the Rainbow in the year 2015 -16. Tables displayed information about interest groups and upcoming programs. The delicious brunch was carefully prepared and served by our generous members.

After brunch, everyone moved into the sanctuary for a remarkable program led by Leadership Team member Steve Cho. Steve welcomed everyone and reminded attendees that this was the first business meeting of the year. Members were given an opportunity to look at the proposed budget. Mary Lynn Pelican made a motion that we accept the budget as presented. The motion was seconded and passed.

Kathy Bray will be leading the Fremont Branch along with Steve Cho. Kathy was regretfully unable to attend the program. Elin Thomas delivered a welcome message from Kathy in which she welcomed everyone and thanked those attending for their support. She sent a special welcome to our new members and encouraged everyone to commit to the AAUW mission of equity and education for women and girls.

To focus on the importance of math and science for girls and have a little fun, Steve asked the audience a few math and science questions. The first person to correctly answer won a pen. There were four lucky winners. Mary Lynn Pelican introduced and welcomed our new members.

The Tech Trek committee composed of Jo Szeto, RoseMarie Everett, Letha Saldanha, Karen McCready, and Mary Lynn Pelican proudly presented the Tech Trek girls Madison Bartolome, Amanda Chu, Maham Junaid, Vanshika Sharma, Jahmila Khalfani, Eden Mercado, Simer Shera, and Smrithi Surrender. The girls spoke eloquently of their experiences at the math and science camp. They were poised, enthusiastic and sincere as they spoke of how much they had learned and how much fun they had at Tech Trek. Three Tech Trek alumnae--Sarah Chong, Maghna Okhade, and Rhea Advani--spoke of how the Tech Trek experience impacted their lives. All the girls expressed gratitude for the scholarship money raised by AAUW and the opportunity to attend this inspiring science and math camp.

The Tech Trek girls gave us a sense that the science and math camp was truly a life changing experience that opened doors to the possibilities in math and science for them. The girls spoke of the varied and challenging activities such as building a robot, learning coding on the computer and building a model of Golden Gate Bridge. They also went on field trips and learned to work together as a team. These vivacious young ladies ended their program with a thank you song to the beat of The Cup Song.

Gene Wang, son of Jo Szeto, led everyone in a sing-a-long with lyrics dedicated to Tech Trek. The audience sang to the tune of Row Row Row Your Boat and Mary Had a Little Lamb. Gene then challenged everyone to sing in two and four parts. It is amazing what AAUW women and men can do when they set their minds to it! The program ended with a raffle of a quilt and Kindle. Carol Easter won the beautiful quilt donated by the Piecemakers Quilt Guild of Southern Alameda County. Carolyn Johnston was the lucky winner of the Kindle Fire.

Jo Szeto surprised everyone by announcing that she would match funds donated to Tech Trek that day. Pauline Weaver generously donated \$900. Attendees contributed \$2,028 to Tech Trek at the Fall Brunch. The matching funds gave us a grand total of **\$4170!** Thank you to all who donated. Thank you to the Tech Trek committee for their tireless effort in presenting the Fall Brunch for the year 2015 –16.