

AAUW CA Tech Trek Annual Report October, 2011

The 2011 season of 10 Tech Trek Science and Math camps came to a satisfying close in August. Nearly 800 twelve and thirteen-year-old California girls enjoyed classes in a wide and creative variety of STEM subjects, met and talked to women in STEM professions, bolstered their self-confidence and entered 8th grade knowing that continuing their science and math studies will benefit them forever.

Purpose: Fourteen camp directors and their staffs worked hard to develop curricula to meet Tech Trek's original goals:

*To **encourage** a diverse group of young women to take math and science courses throughout high school; to **motivate** students to attend college and to **inspire** young women to consider STEM careers.*

Change: The Tech Trek administration has undergone a slight change. Nancy Andren (Big Bear Lake), formerly Co-State Project Coordinator, has become Financial Liaison (FL).

Nancy will handle all questions involving money. And she will continue to advise me, Carol Holzgrafe (Chico, Paradise, Morgan Hill), as I become the sole State Project Coordinator (SPC). Karen Manelis, former *Fresno* camp director and state AAUW CA president, will now handle camper tracking. Messages to Nancy should be sent to her personal email address (neandren@charter.net); the Tech Trek address now comes only to me (Carol).

Debriefing: Camp directors met in September to discuss past and future camps, to learn new policies and procedures designed to improve efficiency in handling checks and camp issues, to share ideas and to enjoy each other's company. Most exciting among them are Cassie Resendez and Becca Jennings, the new directors for *Tech Trek Fresno*. Both are very young women with solid Tech Trek experience. Cassie is a former camper, junior and senior counselor and dorm mom. She designed the brochures for both recent Tech Trek Reunions. Becca, from a Tech Trek family, has worked at the *Fresno* camp for several years. State Co-President Judy Pfeil and SPF President Sue Cochran also attended and contributed to the meeting.

The New: Three northern California camp directors resigned for various reasons, leaving openings at the *Sonoma*, *Davis* and *Stanford Curie* camps. Teacher Melissa Bryden (Online) will take over *Sonoma* and Eileen Hutchinson (Novato), *Stanford Curie*. Recent directors will advise and support their replacements. *Davis*, so far, does not have a director; however, it does have a full committee of women thrilled to use the deep campus resources and Tech Trek hardware to the fullest. These three camps will operate under a new leadership structure. Instead of one traditional director doing all the work, these three directors will act as project managers, interfacing with their universities and keeping track of their committees which include curriculum, staffing, budget, campers, logistics, procurement etc. The

State Project Coordinator (SPC) is working closely with directors and committees. One more change: Maureen Buchner (San Mateo) will join Melinda Moir (Santa Rosa) in co-directing *Stanford Hopper*. Maureen replaces Marie Wolbach.

Budgets: After an appalling over-run in the camp budgets proposed in January, every camp director reworked her budget, slashing field trips, stipends and every possible extra to come within the \$1,000 limit imposed by the board. Many went out to their communities and branch members to secure funding for field trips; several wrote successful grants to help fill the gaps; many will continue to do so again for the 2012 camp year. The \$50 increase in scholarship fees allowed by the board will help but, since university fees will rise even more, outside funding is mandatory.

Marketing: To help branches seek funds from corporations, local businesses and service clubs – instead of relying entirely on branch members - the SPCs are working with Roberta Coffin (Tustin) to prepare a professional-level marketing package. It will include brochures targeted to business entities, a 7-minute DVD of all 10 camps prepared by Abigail Erickson, a 2005 Stanford camper, and hints on how to use the information. The package will be mailed to branch coordinators before the end of October or shortly thereafter.

Help needed: Grant Writers: The SPC and FL will continue to write grants to support camps (outside of scholarships since those fees do **not** cover costs at most camps) and administrative costs. We have been extremely frugal, thrifty – even penurious – in spending any money not directed toward our campers. However, we must have people to help write grants. We will provide language and documents required to make it easy. So, please send us suggestions of possible grant scribblers.

Grant Clearinghouse: We have asked Kris Downey (Poway-Peñasquitos) to collect names of all corporations and businesses branches intend to approach for funding. The aim is to keep any one company from being deluged with requests. Branches are reporting to Kris who is reporting regularly to the SPC and FL.

Reservations: As of Oct. 15, we had reservations for 756 campers, ahead of last year. There is still some room at camps except *Sonoma, Davis, Irvine* and the two *Stanford* camps. *Santa Barbara's* two camps and *San Diego* are nearly full.

Branch Packet: This collection of forms and instructions will be sent to all branch coordinators, once all camp dates have been confirmed, probably in early to mid-November. As in 2011, the packet will be on CD, not hard copy, saving hundreds of dollars in printing and postage fees.

Website: The Tech Trek website is up and running and performing brilliantly, as hoped. There are pages for former campers, teachers, branches and the general public. The marketing video (10 camps) is posted on the home page and joins the one by CBS News. Descriptions of who we are and how we select our campers are

there too, educating the public and providing language for grant writers. Pictures and videos can be found on each camp's page.

Prominent on the home page is a *Donation button* from which we have received our first contribution, in honor of a birthday. Let's hope this "honoring" idea catches on.

www.aauw-techtrek.org

Gratitude: We want to thank our 2011 camp directors for their dedication, cheerfulness and endurance in a job that is sometimes difficult but always, ultimately, rewarding. We also want to thank the AAUW and SPF boards for their continuing support of a project that adds to AAUW California's gleam. Several branches have told us that Tech Trek has kept them going.

We also want to thank the hundreds of branch coordinators and members who are an equally important part of the Tech Trek team.

2011 Camp Directors: *Sonoma State:* Sheila Garvey and Erin Fightmaster; *U.C. Davis:* Lisa Beauchamp; *Stanford Hopper:* Melinda Moir and Marie Wolbach; *Stanford Curie:* Carol Holzgrafe and Barbara Palmer; *CSU Fresno:* Cathy Trevino; *U.C. Santa Barbara:* Susan Pease; *U.C. Irvine:* Jan Cook and Amy Harbin; *Whittier College:* Nilsa Arias and *U.C. San Diego:* Rozanne Child and Virginia Seaton.

Thank you all,

- Carol Holzgrafe

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"Nothing done for a child is ever wasted. They are the future. One of the girls sponsored through this program will find the cure for cancer, save people from AIDS, become president, change the world. And she will need all the help and encouragement she can get. The most powerful thing you can do for someone is to believe in her more than she dares believe in herself. I can personally guarantee you, it will change her life."

Vanessa Cox, Chico Tech Trekker, at Stanford, 1999

Quoted in the 2012 Marketing Video produced by Abigail Erickson, Oroville, Tech Trek Stanford, 2005