



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Girls Inc. of Worcester Receives AAUW Community Action Grant

WASHINGTON – The American Association of University Women (AAUW) awarded a 2015–2016 Community Action Grant to Girls Inc. of Worcester. The funded program, Girls Promoting Safety (GPS), is a strength-based violence prevention education program for middle school girls. Implemented in collaboration with the YWCA Central Massachusetts, GPS uses evidence-based curricula to teach girls the resiliency skills needed to avoid being victims of violence and promote healthy relationships.

Since 1972, [Community Action Grants](#) have provided funding to individuals, AAUW branches and state organizations, and local, community-based nonprofit organizations for innovative programs that promote education and equality for women and girls. Special consideration is given to projects that focus on girls' and young women's achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Projects must be collaborative, focus on women and girls, and bring together AAUW branches, schools, and local community groups and nonprofits.

More than 70 percent of the 2015–16 Community Action Grant projects will serve girls in urban populations. About 15 percent of projects will support rural areas.

“We are grateful to AAUW for supporting “Girls Promoting Safety”, a violence prevention program that has successfully been delivered to middle school girls for over 10 years,” said Victoria Waterman, CEO Girls Inc. of Worcester. “Your support has helped to expand the program to serve 50 more girls in an additional middle school. On behalf of Girls Inc. of Worcester and YWCA of Central Massachusetts, we are proud to continue making a difference in the lives of girls through this impactful program.”

GPS will serve a diverse group of 50 girls and will be offered on-site as part of the school day at Burncoat Middle School in 55-minute weekly class periods for 32 weeks. Topics include communication, assertiveness skills, understanding healthy relationships, recognizing and dealing with stress, handling angry feelings, resolving conflict, peer/media pressure, bullying and sexual harassment, and understanding relationship violence resulting in an increase in the participants' knowledge and skills in

conflict prevention and resolution, in their ability to recognize what constitutes a healthy relationship, in their knowledge and understanding of positive values as well as a reduction in their absences from school due to safety concerns.

“We’re so proud that these AAUW grants have such a positive impact on local communities across the country,” said Gloria Blackwell, AAUW vice president of fellowships, grants, and global programs. “Former grantees have even seen their projects scaled to the national level, such as [AAUW’s National Tech Trek camps](#). We’re excited to see what new programs will be started to advance equality for women and girls.”

For the 2015–16 academic year, AAUW awarded a total of \$3.7 million through six fellowships and grants to 241 scholars, research projects, and programs promoting education and equity for women and girls. AAUW is one of the world’s leading supporters of graduate women’s education, having awarded more than \$100 million in fellowships, grants, and awards to 12,000 women from more than 140 countries since 1888, and the AAUW Fellowships and Grants program is one of the oldest and largest in the world exclusively for women.

Read AAUW’s [announcement](#) about this year’s awards. To find out more about this year’s exceptional class of awardees, [visit the online directory](#). To reach an award recipient, call 202.728.7602 or e-mail fellowships@aauw.org.

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The American Association of University Women (AAUW) empowers women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. Our nonpartisan, nonprofit organization has more than 170,000 members and supporters across the United States, as well as 1,000 local branches and more than 800 college and university partners. Since AAUW’s founding in 1881, our members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day — educational, social, economic, and political. Learn more and join us at www.aauw.org.