

EAST and The Women's Foundation of Arkansas Align To Be A Part of the National Movement, *The Future is Female.*

LITTLE ROCK, AR. -(October 3rd, 2018)--EAST and the Women's Foundation of Arkansas (WFA) have joined forces for a mutually beneficial partnership in the form of a \$15,000 grant, the largest single organizational grant in WFA's 20 year history, that will connect female EAST students and the women who believe youth empowerment is how to prepare for the future. EAST, an educational initiative in the non-profit sector, is known for creating an environment where students are encouraged to explore their educational and social interests with no limits. Through service-based learning that is technology driven, EAST seeks unique collaborations with organizations like WFA to liberate students in their efforts to learn, serve, overcome, and lead when it comes to alleviating social concerns like an enhanced presence of women in STEM.

According to a U.S. Census Bureau study conducted in 2016, women now comprise half of the national workforce, earn more college and graduate degrees than their male counterparts, and by some estimates, women represent the most significant single economic force in the world. However, the gender gap in science is still more prevalent than in many other professions, specifically in the high-end, math-intensive fields like computer science and engineering. WFA is already combatting this issue with its Girls of Promise Initiative and events. Each year WFA hosts an annual conference for 8th-grade girls introducing them to female mentors and careers in STEM fields, in addition, they offer all girls coding summits around the state. These two strategic programs are designed to engage females around the 8th grade which research notes as the typical age that female students lose interest in the field. WFA Executive Director Anna Beth Gorman shared, "We are thrilled to partner with EAST and grow our Girls of Promise footprint around the state, engaging in more girls in career and educational pursuits around STEM."

EAST will support WFA in its efforts to reach more female students by hosting four exclusive training opportunities in the winter and spring on coding and photography, as well as align them with the Million Women Mentors program that intentionally connects female students with successful women in the STEM field. These training sessions will plant the seeds needed to influence what Forbes Magazine describes as one of the biggest challenges facing the tech world today: STEM careers are seen as just for men. STEM requires diversity in thinking, ethnicity, and gender in order to solve the problems of today's world innovatively.



ABOUT WFA

Our mission focuses on ensuring economic security for Arkansas women & girls through focused philanthropic investment in their education and well-being. Through grant-making, research, and our Girls of Promise and Women Empowered initiatives, the Women's Foundation of Arkansas is investing in a future that provides real solutions that allow women & girls to reach their fullest potential. The WFA is the only statewide foundation that focuses solely on women & girls in Arkansas. WFA envisions a state in which Arkansas women have the voices, choices, and opportunities to participate in their community. To learn more about the WFA visit womensfoundationarkansas.org.

For more information about this partnership, please contact Ryder Buttry, Communications Specialist, at rbuttry@womensfoundationarkansas.org or 501-244-9740.