**STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) Projects**

**Pendleton High School Girls Robotics Team**

At the October 1, 2015 meeting, AAUW Pendleton Branch voted to support a PHS Girls' Robotics team as our STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) project for 2015–16. Karen King contacted several organizations in search of a STEM project, and this project stood out as something that will benefit a number of local girls, not only for this year but also in the future.

The robotics teacher/coach is Matthew Campbell, who is extremely enthusiastic about his robotics' students and the potential for a girls' team. Prior to the first conversation between Matthew and Karen, there were four robotics teams, each with 8–14 students. There were only four girls on these veteran teams. After this meeting and via emails, Matthew got excited about forming a girls' team and began writing grants. He currently has $1,200 in grants committed in addition to Pendleton Branch's $500.

The cost of starting a new team is approximately $3,000, which includes national registration ($275), tech hardware ($450; reusable), a base robotics kit ($577; reusable), spare parts and tools ($600; some consumed, some reused), a team laptop ($850), and spirit gear, such as T-shirts ($250). Matthew pointed out that the initial cost is the easy part because there are additional costs, such as some parts that are consumed and costs to travel to competitions.

It has been less than a month since the first discussion, and with his characteristic enthusiasm, Matthew has already started the girls' robotics team; there are currently nine girls on the team. He has been using spare parts to get them started but requested our grant money to buy supplies while he waits for the other grants. The check from our branch has been delivered to PHS, so Matthew was able to order the main competition kit.

Branch members are asked and encouraged to meet or beat this donation as we have done in past Branch supported projects, such as the Oregon East Symphony project. Donations can be made to PHS Robotics, which is a 501(c)(3), so donations are tax deductible. If you wish to donate, you can mail/deliver checks to PHS or the school district office or to Karen. If you mail/deliver yourself, please put AAUW on the "FOR" line and let Karen know the amount for tracking branch donations for the record.

As of November 2015, the team is up and running; in fact, they already have a moving robot!! They have chosen a team name: M.A.L.E.—Most Awesome Ladies Ever. Their first real tournament is Tuesday, November 17, 4-8:00 PM at the Pendleton Convention Center. AAUW members are invited (and encouraged) to attend and show their support. There are no admission fees. The actual game play begins at 5:30 PM.

A special shout-out goes to Karen King who did all the work and made the contacts for this year’s STEM project support.