



EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

2024-2026 GFWC CLUB MANUAL

“LEARNING IS NOT ATTAINED BY CHANCE; IT MUST BE SOUGHT FOR WITH ARDOR AND ATTENDED TO WITH DILIGENCE.” ABIGAIL ADAMS

Equitable, quality education is the key to acquiring the knowledge to succeed in our ever-changing world. Whether in the classroom or via the internet, we gain the knowledge and understanding that forms our perspective, our ideas, and our opinions. It is essential that society provides the best education to all, with no exception to socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, or gender.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education encourages students to pursue careers in the STEM fields. Students learn through interaction, problem-solving, creativity, communication, and collaboration. This approach to learning can help meet the challenges of the future and enable them to be successful individuals.

Equitable access to affordable, high-quality early learning programs provides a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children. Early childhood is generally defined as birth through age eight. Five Key Elements are fundamental to achieving high-quality experiences and strong outcomes for preschool children: the learning environment, daily routine, adult-child relationships, teaching practices, and family engagement. Economic research examining the return on investment for early education suggests tremendous value ranging from \$4 to \$13 in return for every \$1 spent from impacts on educational attainment, employment, health, truancy, and criminality.

Public libraries serve a critical purpose and essential role in our communities not only from books and resources but also as a safe place to meet, learn, and study for all ages. Shining light on public libraries is an important mission to meet the needs of its patrons and the community. They offer free access to all people for information through books, online services, classes, workshops, etc. Libraries can be a safe place for children and adults to learn and interact with friends.

In the 1930s GFWC women’s clubs were credited by the American Library Association as having founded over 474 free public libraries and 4,655 traveling libraries. Supporting local libraries continues to be a Federation priority today. Above all, be supportive of your library and implement a project at your library that makes your club proud.

Epsilon Sigma Omicron (ESO) is an honorary educational society open to all per-capita dues paying GFWC members. The purpose of ESO is to provide clubwomen with a structural reading program, which is educational and stimulates a desire for self-improvement. Are you an ESO member?

As clubwomen, GFWC members promote education for both children and adults. Projects in the Education and Libraries Community Service Program are designed to foster schools and other educational institutions and opportunities, and promote libraries, literacy, and reading good books. Through these efforts, we encourage the growth of individuals and communities at home and around the world.



GFWC
est. 1890
**GENERAL FEDERATION
OF WOMEN’S CLUBS**

2024-2026 EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

Dana Jones, Chairman
6585 Settlement Dr. S
Indianapolis, IN 46250-3447
danajones64@yahoo.com

Direct any questions regarding projects that do not involve GFWC Affiliate Organizations to the Education and Libraries Community Service Program Chairman or GFWC Programs Department at Programs@GFWC.org.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION INITIATIVE:

SUPPORT HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS



Children enrolled in a high-quality program have a safe space to grow and learn. They can explore the world around them, build relationships with trusted, caring adults, feel accepted, and gain confidence to become active learners. High-quality programs engage families in meaningful ways. Positive family-program connections have been linked to greater academic motivation, grade promotion, and socio-emotional skills across all types of young children, including those from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

An early learning program overlaps with a child's development of gross and fine motor skills, physical coordination (hand-eye coordination, biking, running, etc.), and their understanding of healthy skills like handwashing, regular exercise, and balanced eating.

High-quality early learning programs can increase earning potential and encourage and support educational attainment. Early childhood development and education programs can also help reduce educational gaps.

Early childhood education has the potential to mitigate the high costs of special education, dropouts, and other poor educational outcomes. Investing in early childhood is a solution that creates upward mobility through opportunity. Instead of costly and marginally successful programs later in life, quality early childhood education helps prevent the achievement gap by building the cognitive and social skills necessary for school readiness.

Establish a working relationship with an early learning program in your area. Engage your members to participate with their ideas, talent, and time. Engagement can be volunteering to read, supporting a parent meeting, providing needed supplies for arts and crafts, providing books for the children to take home, and hosting a library card sign-up drive.

Collaborate with the local elementary school to ensure that first-time parents can visit the school prior to their child's enrollment so that they feel comfortable enrolling their child and, when appropriate, to become involved as a parent in the school.

Other Ideas:

- Members can be classroom volunteers - this offers flexibility in time and skill level. Volunteers can help with art projects, reading, field trips, and many other activities.
- Special Event Volunteers - programs often have parent nights and family fun nights. Club members can help with event logistics, silent auctions, registration, and beverage carts.
- Facility Volunteers - plan a club project for a cleanup day. This may include yard work, painting, cleaning, and playground repair.
- Members can volunteer to do clerical work to relieve front office staff.
- Members can hold a library card sign-up for children in the program. This can be coordinated with the local library to be done when parents are there to pick up the children from the program instead of making a separate trip to the library.
- Host a Scholastic Book Fair, handling all the logistics of organizing the program. Perhaps the club can purchase a book for each child.
- Celebrate the Week of the Young Child, held each April, and Advocates for Children Week in October as well.

