



Free for release on April 27, 2019 at 3.30pm

Zonta to support girls' interest in STEM subjects:
75,000 euro donation to LUMA Centre Finland

The Zonta organization raises funds for ZAU Clubs with the aim to inspire young girls to study science-, technology-, engineering- and mathematics-related (STEM) subjects. The first donation was made in the Zontian's spring seminar in Pietarsaari (Finland) on April 27, 2019, to LUMA Centre Finland, the collaboration partner responsible for organizing club activities.

In Finland, there is still a clear division into female- and male-dominated professions, and a distinct difference in their salaries. Girls do well at school, but when choosing their subjects, they still avoid science-, engineering-, technology- and mathematics-related subjects, thus closing the doors to further studies at a very early stage.

Zonta International (ZI) will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2019. In honor of this occasion, ZI District 20 has decided to highlight the organization's basic idea about improving the status of girls and women and promoting gender equality. The ZAU Campaign, started in spring 2018, aims at raising funds for the LUMA Centre Finland network to organize phenomenon-based club activities related to STEM subjects. This network has experience of STEM clubs for children and young people since 2004.

The 75,000 euro donation was given by Governor **Lea Helle** on behalf of the Zonta organization, and received by **Maarit Mäkelä** (Ph.D.) of LUMA Centre Pohjanmaa on behalf of LUMA Center Finland. The second donation will be made in Helsinki in connection with the Zontians' centennial seminar on November 8, 2019.

"Our common ZAU project is unique and extremely important for Finland. It will generate new openings based on the latest academic research and improve our knowledge in STEM subjects," says **Maija Aksela**, Professor and Director of LUMA Centre Finland. She wishes that everyone can find the joy of discovery and success.

100 clubs and 1 000 participants as a target

The enrollment of organizations for the practical ZAU club arrangements and club instructors is currently ongoing. The first clubs will start in 2019, and the activities will continue in 2020. In the Helsinki metropolitan area, two pilot clubs are already working. The campaign target is 100 clubs and 1,000 participants all over Finland in 2019–2020 as well as a new, permanent operating model for schools.

The clubs aim at attracting the interest of 10 to 12 year-old girls in STEM subjects by utilizing topics that are important to them and the latest teaching methods based on academic research in universities. Learning includes topics such as the environment and sustainable development, food and reactions, sciences and art, space and the stars, digitalization and robotics. The clubs are mainly intended for girls, but also welcoming boys.

Members of the Zonta organization attend the club activities by raising funds but also by acting as godmothers and mentors, encouraging local schools and also by being role models and scouting role models. The LUMA Centre Finland network is responsible for organizing club activities and training instructors as well as for communications for schools and teacher and student associations, etc.

Further information:

Lea Helle, Governor 2018–2020, Zonta International District 20, lea.helle(at)zonta.fi, +358 44 350 8112

Vuokko Skyttä, Manager for the ZAU Project, President for the Service Committee for Zonta International District 20, vuokko.skytta(at)gmail.com, +358 40 501 8675

Maija Aksela, Leader of the ZAU Project, Director of the LUMA Centre Finland network, Professor, maija.aksela(at)helsinki.fi, +358 50 415 1450

Iisa Rautiainen, Contact Person for the ZAU Project, iisa.rautiainen(at) helsinki.fi, +358 50 311 4538

Images and logos:

"ZAU-kerhokuva_1", source: LUMA Centre Finland
Zonta 100, Zonta International District 20, LUMA Centre Finland, ZAU Campaign

ZAU – Zonta Advances U – is a project implemented in collaboration with Zonta and the network of science and technology universities of LUMA Centre Finland by organizing phenomenon-based club activities for young girls with the aim to attract their interest in STEM subjects. www.zau.fi, www.luma.fi/zau/, www.facebook.com/zaukampanja/ (mainly in Finnish); www.luma.fi/en

Founded in 1919, **Zonta International (ZI)** is a leading global organization of professionals empowering women worldwide through service and advocacy. The organization envisions a world in which every woman and girl is able to achieve her full potential. ZI District 20 includes Finland and Estonia. www.zonta.fi (in Finnish); www.zonta.org