

<https://www.zonta.org/Local-Action/Local-Service-Advocacy/Detail/district-20-members-donate-to-support-girls-in-stem>

## ZONTA INTERNATIONAL

### District 20 members donate to support girls in STEM

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In Finland, there is still a clear division between 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 STEM subjects, thus closing the door to further studies at a very early stage.

In honor of Zonta International's centennial anniversary, District 20 clubs in Finland and Estonia decided to highlight the Zonta'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 club activities related to STEM subjects. The LUMA Centre Finland promotes studies in STEM subjects. The campaign target of the LUMA Centre Finland is to support 100 programs with 1,000 participants from all over Finland in 2019 as well as a new, permanent operating models for schools.

Zontians will raise funds, but also act as godmothers and mentors, role models, scouting role models and encourage local students. The LUMA Centre Finland network of universities is responsible for organizing club activities and training instructors as well as for communications for schools and teacher and student associations.

Zonta clubs in Finland and Estonia raised funds with the aim to inspire young girls to study science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) subjects. The first donation of US\$84,000 was made on 27 April to LUMA Centre Finland.

The first donation was presented at the Zontian's spring seminar in Pietarsaari, Finland. District 20 Governor Lea Helle presented the award on behalf of Zonta to Maarit Mäkelä of LUMA Centre Pohjanmaa, of LUMA Centre Finland. Service Committee members Anna-Maija Hirvi, Arja Schadewitz and Vuokko Skyttä also attended the event recognizing the donations. The second donation will be made in Helsinki in connection with the Zontian's centennial seminar on 8 November.

"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," said Maija Aksela, professor and director of LUMA Centre Finland.