

# **Women's Fund El Dorado Site-Visit Committee Report**

## **Boy's & Girl's Club El Dorado County Western Slope**

On February 15, 2017, Sean McCartney, CPO/Executive Director of Boys & Girls Club, El Dorado County Western Slope, met with members of the Site-Visit Committee for a tour of the new facilities and an on-site observation of the SMART Girls program which was awarded a \$22,500 Focus Grant for 2016/2017.

Committee chair, Claudia Taylor, and members Paula Grady, Helen Walsh, Martha Hom, and Emogene Haller viewed the new computer lab, art room, music room, gym, outdoor lunch area, teen room and the kitchen. Students arrive on school buses and check in at the main counter before heading to different areas for activities or classes.

The SMART Girls program uses curriculum developed by the Boys & Girls Club of America. Trained staff covers topics such as bullying, body image, sexual health, peer pressure, self-esteem and the dangers of social media. The goal of the program is to set girls up for success and personal empowerment. Classes are held Monday and Wednesday and have served 40 middle school age girls as of January 2017. The two separate classes are for girls in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The SMART Girls staff meets weekly with the program director to evaluate each girl's progress in the program. Girls are offered pre and post tests before and after each session of classes.

The girls in the middle school group started with a "daily self-love worksheet" to fill out. They cut out magazine pictures stressing how the media presentation of women/girls affects their self-image. The discussions included questions like, "How do these ads make you feel? What's being sold? Who's being portrayed?" The girls in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade group were writing short poems to each other describing positive attributes, which they later read out loud.

The welcoming environment of the Boys & Girls club appears to encourage students to participate in the variety of programs offered. The non-lecturing and interactive format of the SMART Girls classes creates a comfortable atmosphere for interacting with the instructor and with each other.

The Site-Visit Committee was very impressed with the positive and encouraging message presented in the SMART Girls program. We felt the grant money has been well spent on a program for empowering young girls in our community.

Claudia Taylor  
WFED Site-Visit Committee