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Women STEM Series
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Girls STEAM Project Talladega County, AL

*AAUW advances
equity for women and
girls through
advocacy, education,
philanthropy and
research.*

The Girls STEAM Project goal is to help seventh and eighth grade girls in Talladega County expand their horizons in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) with an Art component.

Cornelia Maria Clapp (1849-1934)

Earned both the first and second (from Syracuse and Chicago, respectively) biology doctorate degrees awarded to a woman in the U.S.

Cornelia Maria Clapp, (born March 17, 1849, Montague, Mass., U.S.—died Dec. 31, 1934, Mount Dora, Fla.), American zoologist and educator whose influence as a teacher was great and enduring in a period when the world of [science](#) was just opening to women.

Clapp graduated from [Mount Holyoke Female Seminary](#) in 1871, and after a year of teaching elsewhere she returned to Mount Holyoke as an instructor in mathematics. Later she also taught gymnastics. Her budding interest in natural history was encouraged when, in 1874, she was selected to attend the summer Anderson School of Natural History conducted by [Louis Agassiz](#) at Penikese Island in [Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts](#). Soon Clapp was teaching [zoology](#) at Mount Holyoke, where she developed a vivid laboratory method of [instruction](#) that proved highly effective. She continued her own education on numerous field trips and in formal studies at the [Massachusetts Institute of Technology](#) in Cambridge, at Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts, at Syracuse (New York) University, where she received a Ph.D. degree in 1889, and at the [University of Chicago](#), where she took a second doctorate in 1896.

In 1896, eight years after Mount Holyoke became a college, Clapp helped organize the department of zoology, and in 1904 she was named professor of zoology. From its opening in 1888 she was involved in the work of the [Marine Biological Laboratory](#) at [Woods Hole](#), Massachusetts. She carried on research there, primarily in the field of [embryology](#), and served as librarian in 1893–1907 and as a trustee in 1897–1901 and again in 1910. She retired as professor emeritus from Mount Holyoke in 1916 but continued for several years to summer at Woods Hole. She published little during her career, her major influence being to extend scientific knowledge and opportunity to women through education. In 1923 Clapp Hall,

housing the science departments and laboratories, was dedicated at Mount Holyoke. (Source: [The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica](#))

AAUW Issues: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education



The American Association of University Women supports promoting and strengthening science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education, especially for girls and other underrepresented populations. These efforts will increase America's competitiveness by reducing barriers that deter women from pursuing academic and career goals in these fields.

Workforce projections for 2018 show that [nine of the 10](#) fastest-growing occupations that require at least a bachelor's degree will require significant scientific or mathematical training. STEM jobs are expected to grow by [17 percent](#) from 2008 to 2018, while non-STEM jobs are expected to grow by 9.8 percent. The supply of new workers in these fields is struggling to keep up with demand, and women remain [severely underrepresented](#).

[Before Title IX](#), many opportunities to advance in STEM were denied to women, such as participation in some advanced courses and math and science clubs. Today, girls' participation in STEM courses has increased. However, to meet the needs of the 21st century economy, we must increase girls' interest in STEM and encourage more women to pursue STEM careers. Title IX remains an excellent tool to help us meet these goals. (Source: www.aauw.org)

Want to be involved with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Girls STEAM Project?

Share your interests and passions with the Girls STEAM Project Co-Directors to find a perfect fit for you. Be a part of the action to begin today to prepare for future Scientists, Computer Technologists, Engineers, Artists, and Mathematicians. Are you interested in planning a program to introduce young girls to women in STEM fields? Volunteer in an area you feel comfortable. Be a productive member of your community. Email audrey5190@yahoo.com, or call 205 249-7788 to learn more.

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