



Empowering Community  
Leaders Network, Inc.

# NEWSLETTER

December 2021



## From the Desk of ECLN's President

Phyllis York

"Year's end is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on, with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us. ~Hal Borland

We have truly had to be quite agile and non-traditional in our programming this past year. As I reflect on the many successes and challenges ECLN has navigated this year alone, I find myself counting so many blessings and feeling especially grateful:

- \*Partnership with USAMRDC to deliver STEM training for this year's SWAG participants
- \*Partnership with Banner School to conduct SWAG programming
- \*Membership with Maryland Nonprofits and a beneficiary of world class training and networking with likeminded nonprofits globally (35,000 in Maryland)
- \*Training and consulting with The Word Woman LLC (Ms. Michelle Nusum-Smith)
- \*Rock solid commitment of ECLN volunteers in providing direct support to SWAG participants and support for administrative demands
- \*A Successful second annual virtual fund-raiser that was planned and executed by our invaluable ECLN Board Members

## NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

From the Desk of ECLN's  
President

Invest In The Future This Holiday  
Season

Updates from the Volunteer  
Coordinator

From the United States Army  
Medical Research &  
Development Command  
(USAMRDC)





\*A first annual golf tournament with enthusiastic golfers marking the date for the second annual tournament with promises to bring their professional associates in 2022

\*Repeat donors who financially support ECLN in meeting our mission and realizing our vision of empowering young ladies and equipping them to be leaders in our community and beyond.

These reflections are merely the tip of the iceberg. So many other attributions that could have been made!

It is my joy to take the time to say “Thank you!” to each and every one of you. Your prayers, kind acts, financial contributions and well-wishes have inspired the ECLN Board to lean forward “... with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us”.

Season’s Greetings! May God bless you richly as this year ends and we enter into all the possibilities and potential that awaits us in the year 2022.

Sincerely,  
Phyllis A. York  
President, Empowering Community Leaders Network, Inc.

# INVEST IN THE FUTURE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

A gift to ECLN, Inc. is an investment in the future.

## Giving options

1

**Give securely on-line at our website.**

[eclninc.org/donate](http://eclninc.org/donate)

2

**Give via check through U.S. Mail.**

P.O. Box 369 Walkersville, MD 21793

3

**Amazon Smile**

Simply designate Empowering Christian Leaders Network (our former name) as your charity of choice. A portion of your transaction will benefit our mission. To learn more, visit Amazon Smile’s website: [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com).





# Updates from the Volunteer Coordinator



First I must say, I am so excited to see S.W.A.G. expanding to include the City of Frederick Middle Schools & Walkersville Middle! We have come so far since that first year and now seeing our dreams of expanding come true is truly wonderful. Each year I get anxious over the summer - last year's virtual program had its challenges which we overcame - I was especially anxious this year with girls coming from various schools - how will the girls adapt, will they form a bond, will they respect each other, will they be kind to one another, will they learn to be

leaders? And then, as the program year gets underway I wonder why was I anxious? They do bond, they build a team, they problem solve, they care about each other, I see leadership qualities in each of them come forward – and they have fun! As the saying goes though, it takes a village! As an organization, it's imperative we have a functioning Board that sees the potential, looks to the future and makes things happen. I can assure you we have a wonderful, supportive Board. Yes, donors are also an important piece – their support is immeasurable to our success. But if it were not for the talented and diverse group of volunteers, we would not be able to offer S.W.A.G. Many of our volunteers attend the weekly workshops and field trips. They are there to mentor and demonstrate what leadership is about. These volunteers see first-hand their impact. Although not everyone who wants to participate can attend the workshops. But there are so many other ways that volunteers can contribute to S.W.A.G.'s success. We are always looking to add team members to the following support groups:

- The Planning Committee which puts together the yearly program and enlists speakers and activities.
- The Parent Communication Coordinator who lets the parents know what to expect each week, coordinates permission forms, etc.
- The Coordinator for In Service Projects so the girls get credit towards their high school requirement.
- The Videographer and/or Photographer that documents in pictures and videos our workshops, field trips, and creates various videos summarizing events.
- Volunteer Coordinator Assistants with duties such as onboarding, communication, volunteer hours, and more.



Our list also includes:

- ECLN Historian that can put together a history of the organization from inception to now
- An Alumnae Volunteer who keeps in touch with our Alumna
- Someone with experience in marketing, communication, or graphic design for visual presentation of our program in brochures or newspaper articles
- Expand and maintain our social media presence
- And as we move forward there will be more needs!

If you are inspired to get involved with the S.W.A.G. Volunteer Team, then it's time to get more information! Please note, to protect our students' well being and provide confidence to their parents, the onboarding involves an application process including a background check, interview and training. Please contact me for more information at [skschmidt.74@gmail.com](mailto:skschmidt.74@gmail.com).

Lastly, a BIG shout out to all of our current volunteers! Thank you from the bottom of my heart to each and everyone of you for your contributions, both big and small, to S.W.A.G.

Sincerely,

Shireen Schmidt  
Volunteer Coordinator  
Empowering Community Leaders Network, Inc. (ECLN)



## From the USAMRDC

USAMRDC Partnerships office has been working with the Empowering Community Leaders Network, Inc.-ECLN Sisters Wholesome Aspiring towards Greatness (SWAG) program to supply volunteers for hands-on STEM education nights for middle school girls within Frederick County. U.S. Army Telemedicine & Advanced Technology Research Center - TATRC and U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases - USAMRIID Soldiers have volunteered to host STEM-related activities. Volunteers included Veterinary Pathologists, LTC Diana Hoffman and MAJ Brittany Beavis, and Animal Care Specialists, SPC Amanda Casselman, SPC Summer Astleford,



SPC Melanny Rodriguez Vazquez, and SPC Cheyanne Everett.

TATRC senior female leaders, Deputy Director, LTC Sharon Rosser, and MMSIV Division Chief, MAJ Patty Schmidt, recently gave inspiring and engaging discussions on "Check. Call. Care." and the basics of emergency situation safety and assessment.



## College Tour 2021: Frederick Community College



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ECLN SWAG, VISIT THE ECLN WEBSITE AT  
[WWW.ECLNINC.ORG](http://WWW.ECLNINC.ORG) | [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ECLNINC](https://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ECLNINC) | [WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/ECLNINC](https://WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/ECLNINC)