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VIRTUAL "CREATIVE MINDED MENTORSHIP PROGRAM" LAUNCHED THROUGH WOMAN'S CLUB OF COCONUT GROVE

Zoom and FaceTime Video Conferencing Sessions Are Tailored to Student Advancement in the Arts and Humanities

(MIAMI, FL, September 18, 2020) The virtual Creative Minded Mentorship Program, recently launched through the Woman's Club of Coconut Grove, connects experienced club members as mentors (creative writers, playwrights and visual artists) with local students intending to hone and study their craft through extracurricular activities. The program's Zoom and FaceTime video conferencing sessions target beginning through advanced instruction and skills in a range of arts and humanities subjects: Creative writing, manuscript editing, playwriting, drawing, painting, and collage, as well as test-taking techniques.

"The idea for this program came to me through an opportunity I had to work with a friend's niece with her creative writing aspirations," says Karen Bernal Cunningham, founder of the program and club recording secretary. "I realized that during these troubling times, schooling has been difficult for many students. Extracurricular clubs in schools such as creative writing, art and drama have been sidelined or in some cases completely omitted from the curriculum. I felt that we could pair up some of our talented artists, writers and drama experts with students from across our city who would like to have some guidance in the work they are creating."

Current participating students, in grades 9-12 and college, are encouraged to develop their individual strengths in favorite subjects and are matched with mentors working in similar fields to their interests. The program has a flexible grade range and students and mentors work out their meeting scheduling and frequency on their own.

The mentors, also role models for students, include creative writer and manuscript editor Karen Bernal Cunningham, playwright Sandra Riley, educator Emily Boland, and visual artists Erika King, Lisa Remy and Cynthia Shelley. All are talented experts in their various fields, ensuring a quality program that offers powerful learning experiences and an outlet for students that keeps them focused in their art.

Mentorship is free to the community. To learn more about the program or to sign up, please contact Karen Bernal Cunningham at KCunninghamWCCG@gmail.com.

About the Creative Minded Mentorship Program Mentors

Karen Bernal Cunningham has a BA in Marketing and minor in History from Pace University. She is a writer, manuscript and content editor who has worked for ten years with novelists to present their works for publication. She has guided writers to execute crisp storylines and well-paced novels, blogs and other editorial submissions.

Sandra Riley is an artistic director and retired teacher of English and theater, whose thirty-year tenure culminated with the development of the International Baccalaureate Program for Theatre Arts at Coral Gables Senior High. She worked with wonderfully talented students in that program, many of whom form the nucleus of actors, designers and technicians who are the Crystal Parrot Players today, www.crystalparrot.org/index.php/our-history.

Erika King is an international artist who has worked and presented collage art in galleries in the United States and internationally, www.erikaking.com.

Lisa Remeny is a renowned artist working and living in Miami, www.lisaremeny.com.

Emily Boland created the first Learning Resources Program for students in grades 5-12 at The Browning School in Manhattan. For twenty years, she worked with students and teachers to enhance reading, writing, note-taking, memorization, time management, and test-taking strategies. After retiring, she continued this work as a volunteer with formerly incarcerated adults at The Fortune Society. She holds a BA from Cornell University and an MS from the Bank Street College of Education.

Cynthia Shelley is an artist living and working in Miami. As a professional fine artist for over thirty years, her work has been shown in galleries throughout the US and primarily in Miami. Most of her work is in corporate offices and private collections and has been commissioned by Mt. Sinai Hospital and Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines.

About the Woman's Club of Coconut Grove

The Woman's Club of Coconut Grove was founded in 1891 and is dedicated to enriching the community through the promotion of public welfare, education, civic improvement, historic preservation, and the advancement of the arts and culture while fostering good fellowship among its members. The club has served as a social, educational and cultural center throughout its history. It is a place where women and men come together, build relationships, and create community through their service activities, www.womansclubofcoconutgrove.org.

About the General Federation of Women's Clubs

Founded in 1890, the General Federation of Women's Clubs (www.gfwc.org), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization chartered in Washington, DC, is an international women's organization dedicated to community improvement by enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service. GFWC members work in their own communities to support the arts, preserve natural resources, advance education, promote healthy lifestyles, encourage civic involvement, and work toward world peace and understanding.

GFWC is made up of 50 state federations, to which local clubs belong. GFWC international affiliates include Aruba, the Bahamas, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Curacao, Cyprus, Ghana, Korea, Mexico, Peru, the Philippines, Taiwan, Uganda, Ukraine, and other international clubs. GFWC Florida's (www.gfwcflorida.org) headquarters are in Lakeland, FL.

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Information, images and interviews about the club are available upon request.
The Woman's Club of Coconut Grove is located at 2985 South Bayshore Drive, Coconut Grove, FL 33133. Phone: (305) 446-2909.