

TEXAS WOMEN AND GIRLS IN STEM SUMMIT

<https://www.txqcp.org/2018-texas-women-girls-in-stem-summit>

TOTAL ACTIVE HOURS : (8 hrs, 3 people) 24 HR

SUMMARY

This summit is designed to share the best practices, connect organizations and individuals, and showcase different organizations' outstanding efforts to increase the number of girls in STEM and support the retention of women in STEM careers.

WHO	WHAT	WHEN	WHERE	WHY
STEM professionals (those who are engaged in education, outreach, recruitment, and/or retention of women and girls in STEM)	- Promoting FIRST and sharing how the program impacted our lives - Connect with STEM professionals, and receiving mentoring from female engineers	December 8, 2018 Held during Computer Science Education Week held in recognition of the birthday of computing pioneer Admiral Grace Murray Hopper	The Engineering Education & Research Center at the University of Texas' Cockrell School of Engineering	To spread our passion for FIRST and, more importantly, gain insight for our futures in STEM by networking with other female STEM mentors and professionals.

OUR ROLE

ADVOCATING **FIRST**

This was an incredible opportunity to spread our passion for **FIRST** programs. We spent 30 minutes talking about the different programs that **FIRST** offers, how it retains STEM participation, and essentially inspires students to explore career options and develop or expand on an appreciation for STEM -- the opportunities, the community, and the excitement.

ESTABLISHING **CONNECTIONS** WITH STEM PROFESSIONALS

This was also an incredible opportunity to reach out to STEM professionals who are dedicated to offering mentoring and advice to girls like us. We worked on **actively seeking** mentors, and even potential coaches / volunteers / contributors to **FIRST**. We wanted to recruit participants in **FIRST** as well as mentors for us as future women in STEM. But it isn't just women -- we wanted to find interesting companies that everyone on our team could eventually meet and learn from. Now we have a whole list of people to contact for mentoring and company tours.

PRESENTATIONS ATTENDED

INTRODUCTION CEREMONY POWER OF MENTORS PANEL

PRESENTED BY [Tricia Berry, UTwep](#) ; [Emerson](#) ; [PepsiCo](#) ; [Dawn](#)

Panelists talked about: the Power of Mentors! We learned about the importance of reaching out to STEM professionals, what they can offer, how they can impact careers, how to *be* a mentor, and where you can get with the help of a mentor.

We plan on applying this by both seeking mentors (*which is facilitated by being given the whole list of attendees with their contact, business, and position!*) and also being a valuable mentor for students who either have not explored STEM or students who are interested/ are participating in FIRST.

SESSION 1 HEARING STUDENT VOICES : WHAT HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS IN STEM HAVE TO SAY

PRESENTED BY Students & teachers from Westlake High School

Although we are high school girls in STEM, we wanted to take this opportunity to network with other girls who are pursuing the STEM field. We were able to talk to them about where they interned/shadowed, and even talk to them about what we do through *FIRST* programs.

SESSION 2 PREP

We spent this breakout session preparing for our presentation.

SESSION 3 WHEN ALL MEANS ALL

PRESENTED BY Clauthia Fields, *Why I'm So Loud*

We learned how to teach and motivate girls from a minority background, and how we personally can make a difference in lives of others. We learned different was to empower and mentor young girls who may not have access to the same resources or opportunities.

LUNCH

This time was dedicated to, yes, eating, but also self-guided tours and networking. We walked around the Cockrell School of Engineering and explored the different libraries and makers labs. We also had the chance to talk to a representative from a company called **Emerson**, whom we hope to connect to sometime in the future. (*This season if time allots, but definitely next season, and even for future internship / shadowing opportunities and mentorship!*)

SESSION 4 MY STEM CAREER PATH

PRESENTED BY Wendy Howell, *Cisco* ; Tamra Kerns, *National Instruments* ; Oksana Malysheva, *Sputnik ATX* ; Brooke Myers, *Lean In ATX* ; Julia Lamorelle, *Kiwi Compute*

There was a panel of female leaders in STEM. They discussed their career paths, obstacles to success, and offered advice to others. They answered predetermined questions and open ended questions from the audience. It consisted of a diverse group of panelists of different ages, backgrounds, and roles.

We were able to see other women in different STEAM professions and gain insight as to how we could get involved in the STEM field when we graduate from high school. Some of the obstacles they faced had to do with competition and some lack of gender inclusion in the STEM field, and some of the advice had to do with **persistence**. To keep trying and take failures as

learning opportunities. This was a great opportunity for us to see a female figure in STEM and get advice as to how we could pursue a job in the STEM field.

SESSION 5 INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION OF INNOVATORS THROUGH *FIRST*ROBOTICS

PRESENTED BY Mia Thompson, Abby Pomerantz, and Angela Phan (*this was our presenting slot!*)

“FIRST Robotics is a non-profit organization with the goal of encouraging students to pursue education and careers in STEM-related fields, inspire them to become leaders and innovators, and enhance their 21st century work-life skills. Our team, 7161 Hydra, is dedicated to inspiring the youth within our community to do just that. Our vision is to tap into the endless supply of creativity within a student's mind and encourage them to take charge and find innovative ways to approach a particular task. This session will introduce an opportunity for girls and parents to explore their inner engineer and immerse themselves into the wondrous world of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and the arts.”

OUTCOME

VISITED THE COCKRELL SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

This is our second time visiting UT's Cockrell School of Engineering for robotics this season, but this time, we were the ones presenting! Visiting the Cockrell School of Engineering was an incredible opportunity as it allowed us to visualize ourselves as students at the school. During our free time before and after the event, we had the chance to talk to UT students and gain insight as to what it was like to be a student there, as well as how to get there in the first place.

FUN FACT: We actually ran into two Viperbot alumni and caught up with them ; what our team was up to and how they were enjoying their time in college.

CONNECTING TO STEM PROFESSIONALS

When preparing for this summit we were expected to present in front of many people including STEM Professionals, eager STEM teachers and leaders, and girls our own age. Being able to Meet with these professionals helped us make connections for events in the future and for future mentors. Speaking with so many successful people from STEM based companies inspired us to keep these connections and take what we learned into our own lives.

ADVOCATING WOMEN IN STEM

Working closely with the Texas Girls Collaborative Project allowed us to fully expand and connect to the girls and women in our area who are just like us. The organization itself is committed to motivating young girls to pursue careers in STEM, which is precisely what we want to advocate for! Seeing so many young women with the same goals as us, taking action in their own communities, inspired our team to spread our message even further.

ADVOCATING STEM ACCESSIBILITY

Being in a program with many STEM opportunities and going to a school with lots of STEM accessibility has encouraged us to provide STEM accessibility to schools and communities that may lack it. During our presentation, we spoke about how to help the audience's communities provide better STEM accessibility and enhance the involvement of STEM education. The attendees spoke with us about how they are advocating and spreading STEM in their areas.

ACQUIRED USEFUL RESOURCES

Throughout the day, we were exposed to many incredible people and organizations. Many of these groups could become useful resources in the future. Thanks to the Connectory, provided by the event coordinators, we were able to obtain the contact information of many of these resources. One sponsor of the event, Million Women Mentors, reaches out to young women around the country and exposes them to STEM. Texas STEM connections is another organization with the same general goals. We will definitely be reaching out to these groups and several others to aid in our future endeavors!

PROMOTING *FIRST*

This event will allow us to spread recognition for *FIRST* and its programs. We have created brochures that explain *FIRST* values and programs, and includes information regarding how parents and students can bring the program to their communities.

POST-EVENT REFLECTION



- **17 attendees** attended our presentation. We had the opportunity to introduce parents, teachers, and students to *FIRST* programs and the world of STEAM.
- **Summary:** We attended the UT Women and Girls in STEM Summit as presenters, where we spread *FIRST*, Hydra and STEM. After listening to empowering presentations by other women, including those which focused on increasing access to resources and equality in STEM, it was incredible to see so many individuals and organizations fighting for the future that we want to see.