

WOMEN LEADERS IN TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

TOTAL HOURS : (4 hrs per person, 3 people) **12 hrs**

SUMMARY

In *FIRST's* Women Leaders In Technology Conference, 8 Featured Women in STEM (professional women in STEM jobs such as Google, Amazon, and Adobe) were part of a panel. Discussed topics focused on understanding obstacles encountered in your career, finding mentors and advocates, road map to promotion, work life balance, and more.

WHO	WHAT	WHEN	WHERE	WHY
Women in tech careers, young women in the community	Panel of female industry professionals	September 18th, 2019	JJ Pickle Conference Center Austin, TX	To help empower other women to be more confident in their places in STEM

ACTIVITIES

LISTENING TO A PANEL

We listened to eight women, who are all involved in STEM occupations. They discussed the many hardships they have faced in their professional journeys and how they overcame them. One recurring hardship that all eight women had experienced was imposter syndrome, that they weren't qualified enough to be where they were; they felt out of place. Although it's a very common feeling, the women all overcame this in different ways. Other topics discussed include how they balance their careers and families, an embarrassing moment they had experienced and how they kept their confidence, and one piece of advice for the audience.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

After the panel discussion, both the presenters and company representatives divided into breakout sessions. With each company at a table, attendees got the chance to connect with the professionals. The companies we spoke to include Google, Amazon, Adobe, Owlchemy Labs, and Indeed. When speaking with the company representatives, we asked about different ways their companies spread STEM in the community and how we can help spread it even further. We also discussed mentoring and the possibility of an industry visit.

OUTCOME

CONNECTING TO STEM PROFESSIONALS

Not only were we able to listen to the professionals on the panel, but we were also able to attend the breakout sessions afterwards, where we were able to actually connect with the professionals. Our team had many insightful discussions with the panelists and the company representatives on potentially mentoring us, and taking tours of their company. A large focus in these conversations was how the companies were reaching out to their own community and how we could help, as well as the opportunity to learn more about potential careers in the STEM field.

GAINING INSIGHT

As young women in robotics, the topics discussed and the advice given to us by the STEM professionals was very relevant to us. Even though these women are older than us, we have experienced the same feelings, roadblocks, and reservations that they experience in the workplace. Knowing that these women faced the same hardships and were able to find so much success through it all, we feel more confident and solidified in our abilities in STEM. The women also held many different positions in their companies; this variety allowed us to get a sense for the many different types of STEM careers we could go into if we choose to do so.

POST-EVENT REFLECTION



- There were about **300 total attendees**, made up of mostly women, as well as STEM professionals. We had the opportunity to connect and listen to many different women professionals with occupations in STEM.
- There were a total of eight panel speakers from tech careers such as Google, Amazon, and Adobe. They discussed all the hardships they have faced in the workplace, from not believing in themselves to having to find a balance between family and work.
- After the panel, there were breakout sessions, where the speakers mingled with the attendees, and they were open to answer any questions or just talk. Along with them, there were also representatives from many additional tech companies. We were able to connect with Google and Amazon, who in the near future might be mentoring us.
- “It was really amazing seeing all the different careers that I might be able to go into when I get older. Since I’m still exploring interests and career paths, it was really helpful to hear about their personal experiences and how it shaped them as people. It makes me feel better about where I am on my journey.”
-Avery
- “As I am going into college, it was extremely reassuring to see how these women were able to push through the roadblocks placed before them, some of which that were unintentionally placed there themselves. After being in robotics for three years, I now realize that I have many stories to tell as well, the ones that could inspire the young girls in my community, just like I was inspired by these women.”
- Mia
- **Summary:** We connected with women leaders in technology that are centered in Austin. The industry professionals spoke on a panel about the hardships they face as women in STEM and how they overcame them. The event provided us with the opportunity to further network with women in the tech industry and inspired us to spread their message in our own community

