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AAUW OML's Successful STEM conference reaches 36 schools in the Bay Area

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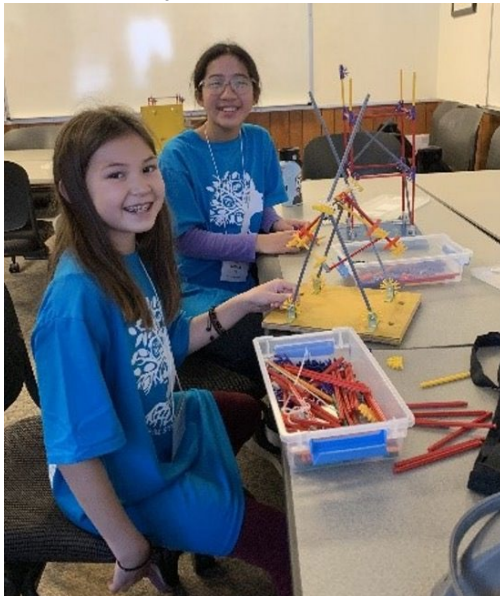


Photo provided

Last month the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette (OML) branch held their eighth Annual STEM (Science-Technology-Engineering-Math) conference at St. Mary's College.

It was an exciting day as the conference played host to 169 young female students from sixth, seventh, and eighth grades from 36 different schools and 33 cities in the Bay Area.

The purpose of this conference was to introduce these young girls to the science, technology, engineering, and math fields such that they could be empowered and make decisions about moving forward in one of these fields. Many of these young attendees already showed interest in specific areas and were planning for a future education in these fields.

An important aspect of this conference was the opportunity for the young attendees to see, first hand, that there are others like themselves with the same interests and goals and that their dreams can become a reality in the STEM fields.

12 female subject matter experts presented workshops, including: chemistry, engineering, the human brain, architecture, and experiments in space, to name a few of the 12 subjects presented.

Each student selected three different STEM subjects and participated in hands on workshops during this one-day conference.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Sonya M. Shuh from St. Mary's College's Biology department, who has an extensive background in research in the areas of reproductive and developmental biology, and toxicology. Dr. Shuh also discussed her educational journey and challenges in becoming a doctor in the field of biology. She encouraged attendees not to give up on their dreams and not to take "no" for an answer.

Aside from learning about the various STEM fields, the attendees mingled with others of the same age and same interests and began to network while sharing their goals and interests.

This conference was made available by the AAUW OML team members' various fund-raising activities throughout last year, as well as the generous donations from St. Mary's College, local rotaries, and Kiwanis clubs in the Lamorinda area.

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