

Name of Program: STEM Panel

Description: On Saturday, April 25, 2009 the Melbourne Branch held a STEM Panel discussion at The Brevard County Educational Services Building.

Our panel consisted of three women (We had hoped for four representatives one for each of the fields but were not able to find a fourth.) They were an electrical engineer, a graduate student majoring in chemistry and a Brevard Community College Math Professor. Panel members were given 3 to 5 minutes to introduce themselves, share something of their educational background, tell how they choose their field and share what they are currently doing professionally.

We then opened the discussion up and asked them to discuss:

Did you encounter any obstacles along the way?

What are some of the highs of your profession?

Have you seen any positive changes for women in your field?

What advice would you offer to the young women here if they choose to pursue a career in any of the STEM fields?

We then opened the discussion up with questions from the guests (They actually asked questions throughout the discussion.)

Target Participants: We sent letters to Guidance Counselors at 7 public high schools asking them to invite 5 ninth grade girls each and a parent(girls would be too young to drive themselves.)

Number of Participants: We had approximately 60 girls and parents and one guidance counselor. This was a general meeting so we had about 45 of our own members. There was much enthusiasm about the program from the girls, their parents, and our members as well as the panelists.

Partners and roles: We did not have any partners.

Cost and how funded: The rental of the building was really the only cost and that was \$175.00 We scheduled it for our salad luncheon where members brought the food and were asked to bring a little more so there was no cost involved there. We gave the panelists an AAUW coffee mug so that was \$20-\$30. Costs were covered from our budget.

Looking ahead: We hope to repeat this program in April 2011. We now have a wonderful contact at FIT - She has a Doctorate in engineering and teaches at the school. She is enthused about this possibility and we will be working with her to hold it at FIT and open it to FIT students. We would target a younger group - middle school girls instead of 9th graders. We were not able to have the program last April but our goal is to repeat it yearly and/or expand it. Next time we would have the lunch catered to make things easier for our branch.

Contact Person:

Judy Graham - President

Melbourne Branch

jdgmb@msn.com