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Ten ways to grow Wonder Women!

July 27, 2017



By Marie Gettel-Gilmartin

The same month "Wonder Woman" was smashing box office records, employees in Denver, Colorado, and Portland, Oregon, worked with the Girls Inc. Eureka! program to create our own young STEM Wonder Women!

Here are ten ways to grow a Wonder Woman:

1. Team up: Believing that fostering STEM education is the catalyst for future



generations to solve our world's greatest challenges, the CH2M Foundation partnered with Girls Inc. to launch and fund the organization's Eureka! program and has continued that support into the program's second year. Girls Inc. Eureka! brings girls

together for a five-year, intensive program that builds their confidence and skills through hands-on STEM opportunities.

2. Pay it forward: In June, 22 CH2Mers in Denver and Portland volunteered their time and expertise to educate 56 girls about what we do at CH2M. The girls learned how STEM work improves the quality of life in our communities and observed how important it is for professionals to give back to their community by mentoring others.

3. Focus: The Denver Women's Network focused on a niche—Transportation Week—by informing 31 eighth-grade girls about roadways, traffic analysis, bridges and airports. The Portland team focused on a goal: educating 25 high school sophomores about the services offered at CH2M. The girls toured the office; networked with CH2Mers Kelly Dancy, Kris Francois, Kristen Jackson, Shannon Bartow and Kristin Travis; heard motivational stories from Carrie Andrews and Melanie Ronchelli; and participated in hands-on activities.

4. Inspire: In Denver, the girls interacted with clients and saw engineers in action. Craig Faessler and Stephanie Privette gave



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them a tour of the Centennial Public Works building, where the city's traffic is monitored and managed in real-time. Next, Molly Hoppe, alongside clients, led a tour of the Centennial Airport's facilities and discussed site and pavement design.



Meanwhile, in Portland, Paul Burnet shared our work on the Willamette Falls Redevelopment project, showing off our colorful hydrodynamic model. Nathan Corser presented a fabulous history of architecture...from the ancient aqueducts to the present architecture of Portland buildings and structures.

5. Equip: Hands-on activities cement the girls' knowledge by equipping them with knowledge and skills. After learning about bridge design, the Denver eighth-graders had a model bridge competition, considering bridge strength, supply cost and aesthetics. Throughout the week, employees engaged the girls in activities focusing on pedestrian safety at intersections, traffic and crash data, roadway signs, road closure detour routes and aviation facilities.

6. Problem solve: The young women solved challenges faced every day at CH2M. In Portland, Stephanie Cook led the girls through a pressure drop activity using straws and a pitcher of water, and Carrie Andrews led a mock raptor survey and summary report task that is a requirement for permitting wind energy farms. When the Denver girls needed to re-evaluate their bridge design after it failed to hold a toy car, the activity drove the point home for the need for strategic thinking in their lives.



7. Motivate: What better way to excite young people about STEM careers than to demonstrate how they can give back to their communities? The Denver girls learned about [our work with Bridges to Prosperity](#) from bridge-building volunteers and heard how engineers can effect

change in the developing world.

8. Keep connecting: Portland's Carrie Andrews, Lyndsey Lopez, Claudia Steinkoenig and Monica Wright have volunteered their time as STEM associate mentors since January 2015. And last December, the Denver Women's Network collected STEM supplies and raised \$3,500 for a 3D printer for the Eureka! program.

9. Celebrate success: This year's Denver Eureka! program concluded with the girls integrating the skills and lessons they learned to build their own digital cities. Video clips of these designs were presented at the annual Eureka! celebration, where CH2M was honored with other industry partners.

10. Support: In addition to the annual Transportation Engineering Week in Denver, the CH2M Foundation provides funds and volunteers for the five-year Eureka! STEM program, including a four-week summer program on the Metro State University campus; a paid summer internship; and a travel-abroad experience.

"As an early and significant investor in Girls Inc.'s Eureka! program, CH2M has been an integral part of the program's development and success in Denver," said Sonya Ulibarri, President and CEO of [Girls Inc. of Metro Denver](#). "The combination of financial and in-kind



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