

**NGCP Webinar**

**Chat Transcript:**

**The Future of Support for Girls and Women in STEM**

March 24, 2025

Karen Peterson: Welcome everyone! Please introduce yourself in the chat.

Nancy: Nancy Penchev, Einstein Fellowsin Rep Stansbury's office

Eva Bradshaw (she/her): Eva Bradshaw, Columbus, OH NCWIT

Darin Gray: Darin Gray, Los Angeles, CA

Maddie Atterberry: Maddie Atterberry, Springfield, IL

Jaime Hubbard: Jaime Hubbard, Indianapolis, IN - Girl Scouts of Central Indiana

C: Virginia Beach Public Libraries!

McFadden Nyla: Nyla McFadden, Garner, NC - ULRI, Office of Research Education & Experience

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: Tricia Berry, Texas Girls Collaborative Project, Austin, Texas (and also Women in STEM at The University of Texas at Austin)

Brittany Brown, GSWPA: Brittany Brown, Edinboro, Pennsylvania - Girl Scouts Western Pennsylvania

Claudia Fracchiolla (APS): Claudia Fracchiolla, North Carolina, American Physical Society

Sarah Pratt - NMOST: Sarah Pratt, Albuquerque, NM - NM Out-of-School Time Network and NM Girls Collaborative

Katie P | IBG she/her: Katie Peterson, Idaho Botanical Garden, Boise, ID

Ashley Felts: Ashley Felts - Cincinnati/ Louisville - Girlhood Explained

Elena Stout: Hi! I'm Elena and I'm a STEM Education Specialist at South Carolina's Coalition for Mathematics and Science.

Carrie (she/her) Napa: Carrie Strohl, Dirt Girls Program Director (Napa, CA)

Abbi Rice: Abigael Rice, NYSNYS, Rochester, NY

Anne Fertitta: Anne Fertitta - AMD, Austin, Tx

Nicole D: Nicole Devine- Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri (Saint Louis)

Christy Roberts (she/her) McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center: Christy Roberts, Outreach Specialist for McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center in Concord, NH

Jeehyun Park- Science Mill: Jeehyun Park: Science Mill in Johnson City, TX

Dale McCreedy: Dale McCreedy - Tennessee Girls Collaborative

Ashley Schaffner- ISEE STEM: Hi everyone! My name is Ashley Schaffner. I am the South and East Idaho Regional Hub Coordinator for the Idaho STEM Ecosystem. I am here because Idaho has a few events that are designed to support girls and women in STEM, so I'm just hoping to hear and learn more to be able to strengthen the work being done in Idaho.

Allison Sommers, Miami U. K-12 Outreach: Allison Sommers - K-12 Outreach Miami University, Oxford, OH

Karen Peterson: Welcome everyone! Please introduce yourself in the chat.

Andrea Wright: Andrea Wright, District STEM Coordinator - DeKalb County School District (Georgia)

Sandy Saha: Sandy Saha, Indiana State Museum

moshea: Meredith O'Shea - Tech Bridge Girls in Dallas, TX

Karen Peterson: Feel free to put your questions here in the chat.

Jessica Short, Dayton Regional STEM Center: Jessica Short, DO STEM Ecosystem, Dayton Ohio

Krista: Hi all! It's Krista Galloway -nthe AYD Geek, based in the Seattle area, but attending today from Nebraska.

Gaby Gonzalez (she/her): Hi Krista, I'm in Seattle as well and would love to meet you in person if you are open to it.

Karen Peterson: We are looking forward to your questions.

Sara Kobilka: Sara Kobilka, owner of Renaissance Woman Consulting and member of the NY STEAM Girls Collaborative. I'm joining from the mid-Hudson Valley in New York.

Amanda Sullivan: NGCP website: [www.ngcproject.org](http://www.ngcproject.org)

Amanda Sullivan: Join us for future webinars: <https://ngcproject.org/events-announcements>

Karen Peterson: This webinar is being recorded and we'll send out the recording, resources, PPT, etc. in the next few days.

Amanda Sullivan: All of our speakers today are from NGCP’s Board of Directors. Learn more about our incredible board members here: <https://ngcproject.org/board-directors>

Gaby Gonzalez (she/her): Welcome everyone! For more information about my work and background, please visit <https://cihuatec.com>

Karen Peterson: We are so glad you are all joining us. If you are just joining us, please introduce yourself in the chat - and feel free to put any question you have in the chat. We'll have time to answer and discuss your questions in a bit.

Courtney R: Hello all. My name is Courtney Randazzo, Seattle, WA.

Amanda Sullivan: Are any of you experiencing cuts to your programming? Or have you heard of examples?

Nicole Domingues: Hi, I’m Nicole Domingues, Senior Program Officer at CEF, a National educational nonprofit dedicated to sparking an early love for STEM in K-8 students. More than half of our participants are girls, and we’re committed to creating opportunities that inspire them to explore, innovate, and lead in STEM fields. I’m excited to be here today and to continue supporting young girls as they discover their passion for STEM!

Sara Kobilka: How do we keep ourselves from having a scarcity mindset and feeling hyper-competitive about opportunities/funding. Also, what role can freelancers, like myself, play in the current environment?

Amanda Sullivan: Great question! We'll try to ask the panelists for any insights on those questions soon.

Ashley Schaffner- ISEE STEM: How do you respond to parents or community members who express concerns about events or programs that specifically support girls in exploring STEM careers? In Idaho there has been a lot of push back on female specific programs, and a lot of orgs have just decided to drop that element and make them events for all, rather than specifically for women and girls. I'd like to avoid that, but would love some advise on how to handle that push back.

Amanda Sullivan: Thank you for that important question! We'll ask the panelists for their insights soon.

Krista: Hi Gaby - I'd love to connect! I'll be back in Washington at the beginning of April. Would you like to meet for coffee some morning? My email is [krista@ayd-geek.com](mailto:krista@ayd-geek.com)

Gaby Gonzalez (she/her): Absolutely! will follow up via email.

Shane Woods (she/her), Girlstart: Hi all. Shane Woods, ED of Girlstart (serving girls and youth in Tx, Ca and Ma). My home is in the Dallas area.

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: How can you meaningfully hire and encourage others to come into these spaces as employees when there is so much uncertainty in funding, viability, sustainability, etc.? It does not seem responsible to hire into this environment without being abundantly clear of the risks that may be involved. I have an open position and I'm hesitant to post the job. But I also don't have the capacity to keep doing it all.

Amanda Sullivan: Good question, we'll pose this to our panelists for their insights

Courtney R: Interestingly, I am on the opposite side of the equation at the moment. I am hoping to re-enter this space but am not finding many opportunities available professionally at the moment. Tricia, maybe we should chat offline. 🙂

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: @Courtney R triciaberry@txgcp.org (position with my Women in STEM at UT Austin world but I'm keeping these conversations out of open records requests) -- contact me!

Amanda Sullivan: This is the CYESS initiative that was mentioned! <https://cyess.org/>

Amanda Sullivan: Find our newly updated stats here: <https://ngcproject.org/resources/state-girls-and-women-stem>

Shane Woods (she/her), Girlstart: Make sure you have this conversation with your board and key partners. What does your mission state and are you willing to stay the course. Happy to connect offline to discuss shane@girlstart.org

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: Also be careful about the "focused on" language. That has still gotten higher ed folks fired in Texas. Watch the laws and intensions of the laws in your own spaces as simply shifting language may not be enough.

Amanda Sullivan: That's a good tip, thank you

Ashley Schaffner- ISEE STEM: Fortunately, my board and Executive Director are VERY supportive and are in full support of the work being done- which is fully in-line with our mission and vision. And we have only gotten minimal push back on our programs. But I have watched organization after organization here in Idaho go through these struggles, so I'd like to be prepared and have a plan, just in case! I appreciate all of the advice and insights!

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: Thanks for your responses. Helpful in thinking how to frame these things.

Sara Kobilka: Thank you all for those suggestions and thoughts.

Claudia Fracchiolla (APS): I am the PI of the STEP UP a national community of physics teachers. We provide high school physics lessons to empower teachers, create cultural change, and inspire young women to pursue physics in college. While as a program we have agreed to change some language on the website but there is disagreement on what we do about one of our lessons in particular. Some teachers want to “resist” while others feel that they will not be able to teach the lessons in their district as currently stand. To me it makes sense to adjust language, while keeping our core mission and values, in order to continue to do the work. But there is a struggle to balance what teachers want and what other members of the team want to do. Any advice?

Karen Peterson: This is a great question Claudia - I know the panelists will have advice. NGCP has been working with a number of programs helping to adjust/adapt language.

Karen Peterson: If teachers can't use the lessons, you won't be able to meet your program goals.

Sara Kobilka: Love the idea of "show, don't tell" which is a maxim of journalism.

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: Also watch what is coming in the state(s) you work. Texas is moving their current higher ed DEI ban into the k12 spaces so schools and districts are likely to comply in advance. Our government officials are particularly vindictive so schools are nervous. Adjust so you can continue...and be mindful of the programming and design like Anita was just talking about.

Ashley Schaffner- ISEE STEM: Thank you Anita, Shihadah, and Gaby! That is great advice and those are great ideas and small adjustments we can make or look at without losing the essence of the goals we are trying to achieve.

Sara Kobilka: Plus we know from research that having events where siblings/young children can come leads to more women attending events broadly. The Science Museum of Minnesota has done a great job with this in their targeted events for ethnic communities.

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: If you do adjust to bring in all, be mindful of any orientation or training for your volunteers and/or activity and program leaders. We just had our STEM Girl Day -- programming open to all and designed for girls. With 20% boys in attendance, boys still took over activities, stepped in front of girls, etc. I need to include more in our orientation of how to ensure all participants (girls in particular although I can't say that out loud) have access and don't get pushed out.

Andrea Wright: Do you all have suggested virtual resources to support exposure to potential careers for scholars? Our STEM schools are always looking for potential partners. Our philosophy is that kids can’t be what/who they can’t see.

May Sagbakken: How do we promote these programs without losing our why?

Sara Kobilka: The If/Then Collection is a great resource! <https://www.ifthencollection.org/>

Tricia Berry (she/her) – TxGCP: <https://www.careergirls.org/>

May Sagbakken: Yes!

Amanda Sullivan: Would you be interested in a follow up webinar? Let us know!

Courtney Randazzo: Absolutely interested

Ashley Schaffner- ISEE STEM: Me too!

Amanda Sullivan: Please also share in our post-webinar survey! I'll also post again at the end of our hour together: Please take our post-webinar survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/qdXLzVL8kb>

Shane Woods (she/her), Girlstart: Yes. A few of us are talking about how to assist volunteers to navigate the complexity of serving all and addressing issues thoughtfully especially if parents are present…grrrrr

Katie Bean (she/her) EcoTarium Worcester, MA: Yes please!! This has been wonderful

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: Let's talk!

Amanda Sullivan: How can we help facilitate this conversation for you going forward? Please let us at NGCP know!

Sara Kobilka: And for younger children (K-2), the new show, Skillsville from Twin Cities Television is about introducing kids to a variety of jobs, not just STEM.

Ashley Schaffner- ISEE STEM: PBS Learning Media has a Fearless Female Scientists Series. I have a link for the Idaho channel, but I'd guess that each state has this same resource as it's not Idaho specific.

May Sagbakken: Remember this has not changed in other countries or the UN!

Sara Kobilka: I'm happy to be in conversation about how to train volunteers. I've designed trainings for multiple organizations on this very topic (and did my master's thesis on this)

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: SciGirls! (our favorite -- @Sara Kobilka 🙂 )

Karen Peterson: We'll send out a link to our NGCP linked in group in the follow-up.

Shane Woods (she/her), Girlstart: The answer is in the room where women are

Eve Boyle: Yes! In addition to a short term follow up, might be useful to have a follow up in the fall. NSF is funded through FY25, so we may not see the full picture of potential impacts of federal funding losses on the STEM education and engagement ecosystem until late this year

Karen Peterson: Great idea Eve!

Amanda Sullivan: Sharing impact stories with NSF - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EDUImpactStories>

May Sagbakken: Encourage young women to study abroad!

]Amanda Sullivan: Youth Voice Week kicks off today. Share your organization’s youth voice/youth spokesperson messages on social media using the tags #YouthVoiceWeek and #afterschoolworks. Feel free to use existing materials! Afterschool Alliance’s social media kit has samples for you to adapt. <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Kp0FF8ttu9RAnQun6UzjJvJpxRwbzfXx812rDDcJD-4/edit?tab=t.0>

Shihadah Saleem, NYSCI, she/her: And it’s ok you don’t have to do it all

Amanda Sullivan: Some additional Afterschool Alliance resources: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/policyTakeAction.cfm>

<https://www.afterschoolstemhub.org/toolkit/>

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: And work hard to not comply in advance! This has been one of the hardest things in my university work. We're nearly 3 years into dealing with this and I feel like I battle these thoughts and actions of my own daily.

May Sagbakken: Thank you for bringing us together!

Shane Woods (she/her), Girlstart: Stay strong my fellow STEMinists. The future needs us. Rest. Rearm. Resist. Most importantly, stay safe.

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: I just got a great shirt that says: Resist, Persist, STEMinist. It's my favorite and I'm wearing it to my university work every week. Stay strong everyone!

Amanda Sullivan: Learn how you can support the work of the National Girls Collaborative Project: <https://ngcproject.org/support-our-work>

Amanda Sullivan: Please take our post-webinar survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/qdXLzVL8kb>

Anne Fertitta: It would be great to also expand the conversation with corporate orgs that fund STEM programs.

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: Anne!! 🙂 Hi!

Sara Kobilka: If anyone wants to join in community on LinkedIn with fellow members of the STEM Community, I'm leading a LinkedIn Sprint just for you! You can find out more on my website. <https://renwomanconsulting.com/career-strategy-sessions/linkedin-sprints>

Tricia Berry (she/her) - TxGCP: I now have a thousand links open on my browser. :)

Amanda Sullivan: Learn how you can support the work of the National Girls Collaborative Project: <https://ngcproject.org/support-our-work>

Amanda Sullivan: Please take our post-webinar survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/qdXLzVL8kb>

Gaby Gonzalez (she/her): I'd love to connect with all of you offline. Please don't hesitate to ask for help or an lend ear to listen. I'm on LinkedIn [www.linkedin.com/in/gabrielaagonzalez](http://www.linkedin.com/in/gabrielaagonzalez) and my email is [ggonzalez@cihuatec.com](mailto:ggonzalez@cihuatec.com)

Amanda Sullivan: Thank you all for being here!

Ashley Schaffner- ISEE STEM: Same! 😂 I love it though and I'm excited to dig in further!

Amanda Sullivan: Take care!

Shihadah Saleem, NYSCI, she/her: Thank you all for joining!

Shihadah Saleem, NYSCI, she/her: [ssaleem@nysci.org](mailto:ssaleem@nysci.org) , we appreciate you

Anita Krishnamurthi: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/anitakrishnamurthi/>

Ashley Schaffner- ISEE STEM: Thank you everyone!