

MARCH
2026



National Girls
Collaborative
Project



Missouri Girls Collaborative Project Launch – Missouri is now home to a new initiative connecting girls across the state with mentors in STEM careers. The program will feature workshops, coding challenges, and innovation showcases, aiming to close gender gaps in tech and engineering fields.

Quick Insights:

Our Mission

To **CONNECT, CREATE, and COLLABORATE** to transform the STEM experience for all youth and advance gender equity in the field.

Overview

The National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP) is a network of organizations committed to informing and encouraging girls to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Founded in 2002 and partially funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), the NGCP uses a "NETWORK of NETWORKS" model to bring together thousands of organizations across the United States. The goal is to reduce duplication of effort, share resources and best practices, and maximize the impact of programs dedicated to girls in STEM. The NGCP facilitates collaboration among more than 42,500 organizations, which collectively reach over 20 million girls and 10 million boys.

NGCP'S THREE PRIORITY GOALS

<p>1</p> <p>Build and sustain a network of advocates to provide equitable and inclusive STEM opportunities.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Catalyze equity in STEM from research to practice by providing actionable knowledge that transforms the STEM experience.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Increase our collective impact by strengthening organizational effectiveness and enhancing our fiscal sustainability.</p>
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How to Get Involved?

Whether you're a student, parent, Professional educator, or STEM professional, there are plenty of ways to join the movement. Sign up for local workshops, mentor young innovators, nominate a STEM STL HERO, or share your story with our community. Together, we can expand opportunities, inspire future leaders, and build a stronger STEM network across Missouri.

MOgirlsLEAD



The Missouri Girls Collaborative Project National Girls Collaborative is honored to highlight these trailblazers and their impact across science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Their stories remind us that representation matters - and that when girls see women leading in STEM, they can envision themselves there too. From pioneering scientists like Betsy Ancker-Johnson and Icie Hoobler to modern innovators like Roseanna Zia and trailblazers like Lelia Thompson Flagg, Missouri women have been shaping the future of science, technology, engineering, and math for generations.

MO Girls STEM

Snapshot of the Month

Motorsports Engineering Leader –
Currently Lead Test Engineer for Arrow McLaren
Historic Achievement – Believed to be the first female spotter to guide a team to victory in an NTT INDYCAR SERIES race.

St. Louis Roots – Proud graduate of Saint Louis University with a degree in Aerospace Engineering.

Aerospace Experience – Previously worked at Boeing St. Louis, applying her engineering skills to advanced aerospace testing.

STEM Advocate – Actively promotes STEM education, inspiring students in St. Louis and beyond to pursue engineering careers.



Nominate a STEM HEROes at Medusasrobotics@gmail.com



STEM Connect





5 Directions, 1 Mission



The 2026 VEX Robotics World Championship will take place from April 21-30 at the America's Center Convention Complex in St. Louis. The events are free and open to the public, but registration is required for spectators. Visit [VEX Robotics Championships](#) for all you need to know to enjoy a week of robotics excitement.



Project Lead The Way (PLTW) is a transformative, hands-on program that empowers students to solve real-world challenges in engineering, computer science, and biomedical science. By integrating rigorous curriculum with industry-standard tools, PLTW helps students build the critical thinking and collaboration skills needed for the modern workforce.

April is officially Showcase Month across Missouri, where high school seniors present their year-long capstone projects to professional mentors and the community. We invite you to join us in celebrating these young innovators at regional events in St. Louis, Kansas City, and Rolla as they showcase the future of STEM.

Event	Date	Location	Details
Innovative Solutions Competition	Apr 21, 2026	Missouri S&T (Rolla) Havener Center	Finalists present novel solutions to judges. Open to all PLTW levels (Launch, Gateway, and High School).
STEM STL PLTW Senior Showcase	April 24, 2026 9:30 - noon	Post Building 1190 Cole St St Louis, MO	Everyone is welcome! The deadline for student project submission for scholarship consideration is Sunday, April 12 at 11:59 pm. Contact mbuchanan@biostl.org for more information.
KC STEM Alliance Senior Showcase	Apr 28, 2026	National World War 1 Museum and Memorial	Academic Competition Deadlines are April 8 at 11:59pm. Deadline for Make it REAL scholarship is April 14, 2026 11:59pm

April is National Volunteer Month

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." — Helen Keller

5 Directions, 1 Mission



The emergence of all-female high school esports teams in Missouri marked an important milestone in expanding opportunities for young women in STEM and competitive gaming. In 2018, *Notre Dame High School* launched what is widely recognized as the first all-female high school esports team in the United States. Shortly after, *Incarinate Word Academy* followed by forming its own all-female competitive esports team, becoming the second in the country. Together, these pioneering programs helped demonstrate that esports could be an inclusive space for young women while also creating pathways into computer science, technology, and leadership. Their early participation helped lay the groundwork for initiatives like Missouri Girls Lead, which continue to encourage girls across Missouri to explore gaming, STEM careers, and collaborative problem-solving through esports.

Women remain significantly underrepresented in esports, making up roughly 5-10% of professional players, yet the industry's global revenue-projected to surpass \$2.5 billion in the next few years-offers substantial growth opportunities. Increasing female participation and visibility is critical, not only to foster diversity and inclusion but also to ensure women shape the evolving narrative, influence game culture, and access the expanding economic potential of esports.

Esports salaries vary widely, with professional players earning around \$50,000-\$100,000 annually on average (excluding top earners with prize money and sponsorships), while non-player industry roles such as managers, analysts, and operations professionals typically earn \$67,000-\$125,000 per year.

TOP five games where women have achieved notable competitive success:

StarCraft II - Sasha "Scarlett" Hostyn (450K) leads as one of the highest-earning female pros.

Valorant - Rapidly growing female presence with all-female teams competing in regional and international tournaments.

Fortnite - Female players have earned major tournament placements and sponsorships.

Overwatch - Strong female representation in the Overwatch League and Contenders circuits.

League of Legends - Women compete in official leagues and women's esports tournaments, gaining recognition and prize earnings.



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2026 Summer STEM Camp Guide: Missouri

As February ends with Engineers Week, it's the perfect time to look ahead to summer. STEM camps provide an intensive, hands-on environment where students can experience real-world engineering projects. They allow them to step outside their comfort zone.

Community Highlight: KC STEM Alliance Camp Directory

The Kansas City STEM Alliance is a great place to check out all of the camps in the metro area.

- **Focus:** Variety of STEM Camps such as AI, Robotics, and even Agriculture!
- **Information:** [KC STEM Alliance Summer Camps](#)

Organization	Location	Dates	Name of Camp	Website
University of Missouri Science & Technology	Rolla	various	Various	https://summer.mst.edu
University of Missouri Kansas City	Kansas City	June-August	Various, coming soon	Camp Descriptions - Camps - Home Suite University of Missouri-Kansas City
St Louis University	St Louis	June 1 - August 7	Various including Mad Science and Aviation	Summer at SLU
Metropolitan Community College	Kansas City	June - August	Various, coming soon	College for Kids - Summer Youth Camp
William Jewell & Liberty Hospital	Liberty	June 25 & 26	Summer Nursing Camp	High School Nursing Camp William Jewell College
Rockhurst University	Kansas City	June 25 & 26	Robotics IQ, eSports, Computer Science	Summer @ The Rock
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	St Louis	June 1-5, June 8-12, July 20-31	Engineering, Odyssey Science Camp	Summer Camps at SIUE
Webster University	St Louis	July - August (varies)	Psychology, Health Data, Virology	Summer Camp Offerings at Webster University
Challenger Learning Center, St. Louis	St Louis	June - July (varies)	Space science, drones, inventor	Summer Camps at Challenger Learning Center St. Louis
The Magic House, St. Louis Children's Museum	St Louis	Varies - some sessions are sold out	Maker	Fun Summer Camps for Kids Ages 5-11 Magic House
St. Louis Aquarium Foundation	St Louis	June - August (varies)	Biology, zoology, environmental	Camp Programs - Saint Louis Aquarium Foundation
St. Charles Community College	St Louis	June- August	Chemistry, robotics, coding, science, rocketry	Summer Camps
University of Missouri - St. Louis	St Louis	June	Engineering, Geospatial	Summer Youth Programs and Camps UMSL
aSTEAM Village	Kansas City	June 9 - July 3	STEA investigations	2026 STEAM Challenges Summer Camp
American Royal Ag STEM Camp	Kansas City	June 11 (1 day)	Animal and Ag technology	American Royal STEM Summer Camp
Barstow Summer Camps	Kansas City	June- August	50 STEm themed camps, incl. AI	Summer at Barstow
Inspirit AI @IdeaSpace	Kansas City	June 15-26	half-day AI program	Dan & Cassidy Towriss IDEA Space KC

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Did You Know? – Women in Architecture

Women make up nearly half of architecture students today, *yet only about a quarter of licensed architects are women.*

Missouri, however, has an early pioneer in the field. Nellie Peters was one of the first women architects in the region and designed more than 1,000 homes in the Kansas City area in the early 1900s- helping shape neighborhoods and opening doors for women in architecture.

For School Partnerships and Pre-college Programs, check out:

[Sam Fox School of Design, Alberti Program at Washington University](#)
[University of Missouri, Kansas City Design Discovery](#)
[Missouri University of Science and Technology Future City](#)
[University of Kansas Design Camp](#)
[Kansas State Summer Design Experience](#)



Resource Spotlight:



Nelle E. Peters was one of Kansas City's most productive architects. She designed numerous buildings during the 1920s when she was one of the few women architects to have an independent practice. She specialized in designing apartment buildings and hotels. During her more than sixty years as an architect, Peters designed almost a thousand buildings, mostly in the Kansas City area.

The U.S. Department of Defense STEM (DoD STEM) program serves as a national resource connecting educators, students, and communities with high-quality science, technology, engineering, and mathematics opportunities. Through grants, partnerships, internships, and classroom resources, DoD STEM supports initiatives that strengthen the STEM pipeline and prepare the next generation of innovators and problem-solvers. For STEM stakeholders, it offers valuable tools, funding opportunities, and collaborative networks that help expand access to meaningful STEM learning experiences.



[K-3rd Grade The Most Magnificent Thing – Ashley Spires](#)

[4th-6th Grade Lydia's Song – Katherine Paterson](#)

[Middle School Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library – Chris Grabenstein](#)

[Teens \(High School\) Legend Series – Marie Lu](#)

[Adults Brunelleschi's Dome – Ross King](#)





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Summer 2026 STEM Professional Development (Low/No Cost) Missouri+National Opportunities for Educators & STEM Leaders

Missouri and national STEM organizations offer low-cost/no-cost professional learning over the summer. Some programs have already closed their application cycles, but there are still many accessible options for immediate participation or planning for next year. Jump in now for webinars, workshops, and local Missouri events!

National Organizations	Accessibility	Description
ORISE Webinars & Virtual PD	Year-round	The Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) offers free, high-quality webinars and workshops specifically for K-12 STEM educators. Topics range from integrating AI and forensic chemistry to "low-prep, high-impact" lesson planning for diverse learners.
NSTA Webinars	Year-round	The National Science Teaching Association (NSTA) hosts "Web Seminars"—live, interactive sessions featuring experts and NASA scientists. Upcoming 2026 highlights include the Hubble 36th Anniversary (April 23) and sessions on the Science of Hurricanes (May 7).
ISTE Virtual PD	Year-round	The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) provides self-paced "Digital Learning Pathways" and expert-led webinars. These focus on practical tech integration and unpacking the ISTE Standards to create "digital-age" classrooms.
Kahoot Teacher Training	Year-round	Beyond simple quizzes, Kahoot! offers a "Certified for Schools" program and free video training. These resources teach educators how to use "student-paced challenges" for formative assessment and how to make remote or hybrid lessons more interactive.
NASA STEM Resources + Live Events	Year-round	NASA provides an extensive clearinghouse of resources and live events.



North South East (St. Louis) West (Kansas City) Central (Rolla)

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**Summer 2026 STEM Professional Development (Low/No Cost)
Missouri+NationalOpportunitiesforEducators&STEMLeaders**

MISSOURI



[Midwest STEM Conference -
Missouri University of Science
and Technology](#)
July 28 - 29, 2026



[Heart of Missouri Regional
Professional Development
Center](#)

Equity Focused



**National Girls
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Webinars and Mini-Grants



[National Center for Women &
Information Technology](#)
Webinars and Mini-Grants