

## **WOMEN IN TECHNICAL CAREERS** **Panel Presentation Guidelines**

### Purpose:

- To introduce young women to technical career opportunities
- To encourage young women to continue taking math, science, and technical courses
- To encourage young women to consider technical or nontraditional careers

### About the lunch:

Pizza is provided by the groups in the partnership. It will be delivered to the school to the counselor. It may be necessary for you to help set things up and/or cut the pizza. When the girls come in encourage them to get their pizza and have a seat. Once things are settled begin the presentation.

### Before the presentation:

You will be able to select from a list of dates and locations to be a member of a two, three- or four-member panel presentation. Laurie Anderson, the program coordinator, will provide you with times, number of girls anticipated, address of the school, and contact information for the other presenters. You can contact the other participants to plan the presentation. One participant will bring the handouts (provided by the K12 coordinator).

### Presentation Outline:

1. Introduce all members of the panel.
2. Consider sharing one of the following "Teasers" with the student participants to break the ice.

**What do the BSU quarterback and women engineers have in common?**

Motion analysis software was created by Michelle Sabick, an assistant engineering professor at BSU, to help analyze and improve the quarterback's throwing techniques.

**What do MRIs, CAT scans, surgeons, and engineers have in common?**

BSU engineers have a lab that can use MRI and CAT scans to create 3-D models of the images. This allows surgeons to plan the surgery better before it is done, which helps reduce the associated risks.

**How are bullet proof vests, skateboards, and the Mars Pathfinder related?**

All are uses for Kevlar, a polymer fiber invented by Stephanie Kwolek. She was a chemist for Dupont and is a member of the Inventors Hall of Fame.

3. Encourage students to ask questions during the presentations. If possible use pencils or other goodies as incentives for asking questions.
4. Share individual stories – see Presentation Suggestions below. Please allow enough time for all presenters.
5. Ask for any additional questions.

6. Show "**You Can Be Anything**" video or "**Women in Engineering**" DVD, if there is a VCR/TV and time available. The DVD has several young women talking about their careers as engineers and is very engaging (provided by K12 coordinator).
7. Encourage participants to pick up any of the brochures that are of interest.
8. Highlight the SWE Scholarship information. Depending on the age of the group, you can have them take an application (Juniors or Seniors) or just make sure they know about it (younger students). Any one who takes an application needs to sign the SWE sheet.
9. Mention the "E-girls" camp and the brochures. This is a free overnight camp for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade girls held at BSU College of Engineering. Groups from past years have said it was a great camp.

### Presentation Suggestions:

1. Tell your own story
  - What you do in your current job and why you like it.
  - What was easy and what was difficult about school, career choices, etc. Don't be reluctant to share failures and what you learned.
  - Why you took math, science, and technology courses.
  - What was your education path? Would you recommend the same path or a different course?
  - Describe the various opportunities/jobs you have had as a result of your technical education and or job experience.
2. Organize your thoughts so you can be brief and to the point. Divide the amount of time available by the number of panelists and then subtract ample time for questions. **Make sure each speaker has an equal amount of time.** You may choose to designate one panel member to keep track of times and cue speakers.
3. Take visual aids from your job (charts, photos, product samples) to show what you do.
4. Ask open-ended questions during your presentation. This will help keep the students engaged during the presentation.
5. **DON'T GIVE YOUR SALARY.** Be prepared to give the starting salary or range for your job. Refer students to CIS (Career Information Systems) available through their guidance counselor for other specific salary information. Another valuable resource for salary and other information is America's Career Infonet (<http://www.acinet.org/acinet/default.asp>)
6. Speak positively about other jobs/careers. Emphasize the importance of finding a career that best fits your personal interests, talents, life and financial goals.
7. Emphasize that learning will continue after high school. Many companies will pay for continuing education. (Community college & college courses, on the job training, workshops, conferences, company taught courses, etc..)
8. Talk about the wide array of possibilities within technical careers.

- Information Systems – field services, networking, programming, data base administrators, support center, training, etc..
  - Material Scientists
  - Technical Writers
  - Engineering – computer, electrical, mechanical, chemical, civil, biomedical, environmental, software, manufacturing, aeronautical, and metallurgical
  - Production Operations Management
  - Electronics Technicians
9. Emphasize that an associate degree, bachelor’s degree, or technical certificate in a high-tech field is VERY flexible and opens a world of opportunity.
- Training
  - Documenting
  - Creating
  - Designing
  - Repairing
  - Inventing
10. Explain that it is typical for an individual to have multiple careers in one’s lifetime.
11. After the presentation, please have the girls fill out the feedback slips, and put them in the WITC bag. You can also email Laurie Anderson, the WITC coordinator (lauranderson@micron.com), with feedback.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### Education:

- What kind of classes did you take in high school and college?
- Do you have to be a great math student to be in a technical career?
- Did you attend a large college or a small college?
- What type of on-the-job training/education qualified you for the position?
- Did you start your post-secondary education directly after high school?
- Did you have any internship experiences? If so, what were they? How did the experience benefit you?
- How did you choose your college?
- What are good colleges for \_\_\_\_\_? Fill in the blank for different career options. If you have ideas of schools that have good programs in your field that is helpful.

### Work:

- How did you end up at your place of employment?
- What is your day like?
- Are you always in the office?
- Do you use computers a lot, e-mail?
- Can you work from home? Is flextime an option?
- Do you have to work a lot of overtime?
- Share examples of the work environment that will help dispel the myth that technical workers work alone in a dark cubicle in front of a PC all day.
- Does your employer have onsite daycare?

### Technical Careers:

- Is there one particular field in higher demand than others?

- Have you experienced discrimination as a woman in a technical career?
- How did you choose a technical career?

Family:

- How do you manage both work and a family? (Students are very interested in how you manage hobbies, family, and work.)
- What opportunities does your company provide for job sharing or flexibility with caring for your family?