HOW MIGHT WE FOSTER PRE-TEEN GIRLS’ NATURAL INTEREST IN STEM THROUGH DECREASING ISOLATION?

THE PROBLEM

UNDERPERFORMANCE AND UNDERREPRESENTATION

Females fall behind on mathematics SAT scores by 35 points, a gap only decreasing by 3 points within the past decade.

The STEM workforce composes 5% of all jobs within the United States, and only 24% of this STEM workforce is comprised of females.

FEWER FEMALE ROLE MODELS

Among first-year college students, women are much less likely than men to say that they intend to major in a STEM field.

While hands-on activities are capable of sparking an interest in STEM, role models are more effective in interesting girls in technical careers.

ISOLATION AND UNDERESTIMATION

Women reported feelings of isolation after exposure to an unbalanced gender ratio at an engineering conference.

THE SOLUTION

AN ACADEMICALLY-ORIENTED SOCIAL NETWORK

WHAT IT IS

- Website establishing a community of like-minded girls with an interest in STEM
- Single-gender environment eliminating gender bias
- Medium for discovering potential
- Utilization of geo-fencing to compile a local community of mentors, professionals, and other STEM resources

WHY IT SHOULD WORK

- 95% of fourth grade students have access to computers
- Positive correlation between internet use and academic achievement, and the internet can support social interaction
- The International Telemarketing program found participation in mentorships indicated increased self-confidence and motivation

DEFINING SUCCESS

While we cannot fix the entire problem of gender inequality in education, we can make small steps in our local community. Success to us means that we are able to convince a group of girls in our area to continue pursuing math and science because they want to and they can, regardless of stereotypes.

THE FEASIBILITY

RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Girl Scouts of America
- Design Team

POTENTIAL SETBACKS

- Difficulty in measuring success
- Parental limitations for their daughters online
- Loss of interest and engagement over time
- Inability to get demographic interested and online

THE NEXT STEPS

Connect with the Girl Scouts of America
Define features for the website
Develop website
Collect and analyze data
Implement and improve

TEAM GIRL POWER

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