

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths)

All fired up and ready to go!

That's the message loud and clear from Calderglen's very own Stemettes. 37 girls from S4 and S5 took part in a Monster Confidence workshop on Thursday 8th September 2016 in conjunction with Stemettes –an organisation that puts girls in contact with women working in Science, Tech Engineering and Maths industries. It is widely recognised that jobs within Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) aren't attractive to girls. Stemettes was created to try to encourage more proportionate representation of females in STEM jobs (currently at 14%) and aims to increase this to be nearer a third of the workforce.



Over 200 girls took part in the event at Glasgow University. By teaming up with job website Monster.co.uk the Stemettes are on a mission to encourage more girls to become creators and not passive users of new technologies. The fun got off to a flying start with the girls actively encouraged to switch ON their phones and send tweets and instagrams as they packed in a whirlwind morning of presentations, workshops on skills, confidence and interview skills and met with a range of mentors from industries as diverse as Zoology, Astrophysics, Construction Engineering and Biomedical engineering.

Inspired by keynote speaker Professor Muffy Calder OBE, the girls were encouraged to face up to the challenges of the 21st century and address major problems such as transportation, energy and climate change.

Motivational speaker and fellow Stemette Sinead Bunting (a former Harvard student and EU Marketing Director) opened up with a quote by Caitlin Moran **"If 90% of coders are men, developing and owning the language of the future, women won't be part of the conversation"** She impassioned her audience that a career in coding can be hugely interesting, rewarding and that coding and technology are fundamental skillsets required for any industry or role they hope to pursue in future years.





An essential part of the mix however is confidence – Science and Technology are not fun subjects – they are challenging and require diligence and concentration. But the reward comes from the end result and the satisfaction of having a career line peppered with change, opportunity, travel and growth. Workshop mentors advised the girls to tackle subjects such as physics and engineering and shared their stories bringing careers information to life in a way that no prospectus could match.

Jill Dodds heads up Developing Scotland's Young Workforce Strategy in Calderglen and is also a Maths teacher. Her belief is that equality and diversity need to be challenged in these male dominated industries and that schools and careers services need to work together with parent and influencers to narrow the gender and attainment gap.



And the future does look promising. Recent reports indicate that there are more women than men gamers in the UK. Head Teacher Liz White endorses the position further. "Our most recent SQA results reflect a trend for consistent improvement and achievement in maths for girls over the last three years. The percentages of girls achieving Mathematics passes in grades A-C has risen from 69% in 2014 to 77 % in 2015 and rose even higher to peak at 83% this August. This is above the national average".

And a final word from a pupil Stemette:

15 YEAR OLD **Eve Bryson** enthused "This day inspired me to become more confident and determined to follow the career path I want without being intimidated by the lack of female participation."

"This day made me realise how much I want to pursue a STEM career and embrace that I am a girl in the STEM industry #GIRLPOWER." **Amy Scott**



