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Describe a Service Opportunity that stuck with you...

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Tuesday, April 1 2022

Describe a Service Opportunity that stuck with you...

Allison George, 2024 cohort

As a second year civil and environmental engineering major, I see so much value and importance in introducing young girls to STEM programs. I have spent a few Saturday mornings working with one of my other organizations, the Society of Women Engineers or SWE to bring STEM knowledge and innovation skills to local Girl Scout troops. The programs have varied in content but one thing has remained constant, the girls are absolutely captivated by STEM and you can see the gears turning as they think about what science and engineering really are.

The programs have been structured age appropriately, as the girls are usually in elementary school, and there have been different difficulties to truly challenge the girls at different school years. Some of my favorite station topics have been building aluminum foil boats for pennies, teaching the basic logic needed for coding, learning about what each kind of engineer actually does, and learning how to build a simple structure.

This opportunity in particular has really stuck with me because on top of getting to see them start brainstorming and working together to problem solve, they begin to see the program leaders— who are all women in STEM— as role models and open up with their questions about why we went into engineering or what we want to do after college. Having young girls leave a program saying to their friends how they thought engineering was so cool or that they think one type of engineering was what they wanted to do when they grow up is so meaningful to me because as a young girl I didn't even know what engineering was. Giving young girls even just the basic information about engineering is an incredible step in the right direction, and I hope to support more events introducing girls to engineering in the future in hopes that eventually there will be just as many women in engineering as men!