Contact:
Jennifer Kmiec
302-689-3032
mwm@dfsme.com

Delaware Proclaims "Women and Girls in STEM Day"

Million Women Mentors Announces the 2026 Outstanding Women in STEM Honorees

DOVER, Del., March 25, 2026 – Governor Matt Meyer and Lt. Governor Kyle Evans Gay presented a Proclamation, and the General Assembly unanimously passed a Concurrent Resolution declaring March 24, 2026 as "**Delaware Women and Girls in STEM Day**." This was the sixth annual celebration of women and girls in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) in the State of Delaware. The special event was initiated in 2021 by Jacqueline Means, "The STEM Queen" and Founder of the Girls Empowerment STEM Initiative.

To mark the occasion, Million Women Mentors – Delaware (MWM–DE), announced this year's ten Outstanding Delaware Women in STEM. This annual recognition highlights the accomplishments, brilliance, and tenacity of women in STEM, as well as illuminates scientific and technological career pathways for Delaware girls.

The 2026 Outstanding Delaware Women in STEM honorees are:

1. **Emily Beale** is a Field Applications Scientist at Illumina. Her work connects genomics, research support, and environmental advocacy. At Illumina, she helps researchers troubleshoot sequencing technology and make better use of genomic tools. Emily's background includes marine science, vaccine research, and fieldwork with marine mammals. A former Miss Delaware, she also promotes conservation, scientific literacy, and environmental education for future generations.
2. **Angel Burns, CIP** is Chief of Interpretation & Programming for the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC). She is a lifelong educator whose work helps connect children and families to the outdoors through Delaware State Parks. Angel leads programs at Brandywine, White Clay, and Lums Pond State Parks, while expanding access to field trips, day camps, and nature-based learning. Through her leadership and partnership with the Children in Nature Fund, she continues to inspire environmental education across the state.

3. **Marie Burns & Lucy Xu** are talented and driven civil engineers whose work helps ensure the safety of Delaware's traveling public. As Project Engineers in Bridge Design at the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), they combine technical excellence with creativity and commitment to STEM outreach. Through their work organizing the Delaware Bridge Design Competition, they helped grow the event from 32 students in 2018 to almost 500 in 2025–26. They have been recognized with DelDOT's 2024 Team of the Year Award, as well as the Governor's 2024 Team Excellence Awards.
4. **Dr. Sunita Chandrasekaran** is an Associate Professor and the David L. and Beverly J.C. Mills Career Development Chair of the Department of Computer & Information Sciences at the University of Delaware. A dynamic leader, Sunita's work sits at the intersection of AI and high-performance computing. She was recently named Director of the First State AI Institute, serves as Vice Chair of the State of Delaware AI Commission, and leads Democratizing Access to Research Software Engineering (DARSE), a $4.7 million NSF-funded program. She's known for orchestrating large-scale hackathons where teams of UD students come together to develop computer code to solve problems facing fields ranging from aerospace to biomedical science.
5. **Dr. Catherine Grimes** is Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of Delaware. Her research lab explores how the body senses and responds to bacteria. She has been nationally recognized with a Pew Biomedical Scholars Award, Sloan Research Fellowship, and ACS Infectious Disease Young Investigator Award. Catherine is a dedicated mentor, co-directing the NIH-funded Chemistry-Biology Interface Graduate Training Program and serving as the faculty mentor of the UD Graduate Scientistas.
6. **Carissma McGee** is a Ph.D. candidate in Aeronautics & Astronautics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Her career uniquely integrates aerospace engineering, artificial intelligence, detector materials science, science policy, intellectual property strategy, and mentorship, positioning her as a next-generation leader at the intersection of space technology, law, and national competitiveness. A native Delawarean, Carissma is a 2024-25 MathWorks Fellow, recipient of the 2026 MIT Graduate Student of Excellence Award, and President of Graduate Women in Aerospace Engineering.
7. **Dr. Mary Ellen McNally**, the first female FMC Fellow, is an analytical chemist whose work has helped make Delaware a center of excellence in separation science and analytical chemistry. She is an international leader and pioneer in supercritical fluid extraction and chromatography and is recognized for her critical role in developing analytical methods that support major agricultural innovations. Mary Ellen is also widely respected for her mentorship, teaching, and leadership in scientific societies.

8. **Dr. Katrina Milbocker** is a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Delaware. Her work focuses on women's brain health, neurodevelopment, and translational neuroimaging. Katrina's research has advanced understanding of prenatal alcohol exposure, brain mechanics, and hormonal influences across the lifespan. A passionate and dedicated mentor, she co-founded the UD Graduate Scientistas and built programs that increased women's retention in STEM through mentorship pipelines and career development workshops.
9. **Dr. Victoria Muir**, an Assistant Professor of Chemistry & Biomolecular Engineering at the University of Delaware, leads an interdisciplinary research group working at the interface of soft matter, cell culture, and biofabrication. Her many honors include an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, Princeton Presidential Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, and AIChE 35 Under 35 Award. She is also a gifted teacher and mentor, known for her empathy, leadership, and ability to help students thrive in engineering.
10. **Lynda Woodward** is a data science and machine learning leader with more than 34 years of experience turning complex data into strategic business value. Retired as Senior Director at FICO, she led AI-driven decision science work across lending, healthcare, and insurance throughout her career. A native Delawarean, she is also committed to mentoring others and advancing women's participation in data science, using her expertise to help grow the next generation of leaders in analytics.

Million Women Mentors is the premier network dedicated to encouraging girls and women around the world to pursue, persist and thrive in STEM careers. The Delaware Foundation for Science and Math Education (DFSME) is the fiscal agent of Million Women Mentors – Delaware.

###