



Chemical compounds that make brilliant colors are used in an experiment to help get high school-age girls and other under-represented students interested in engineering and science.

Inspiring Careers in Math and Science

It seemed like a typical high school chemistry lab, and then the balloons set up for an experiment exploded in a series of loud blasts and rainbow-colored explosions.

The recent Hermanas Conference at Portland Community College's Rock Creek Campus was aimed at increasing the number of underrepresented female students choosing to go to college and inspire them to pursue an education in engineering and science.

More than 225 girls from Portland metro high schools participated in the event which was sponsored by PCC and Intel.

"This all is designed to inspire girls to consider STEM as a career option and elevate the opportunities they have in their lives," said Hirally Santiago, an Intel industrial engineer.

Another goal was to give confidence to the young women by having them talk with female engineers who come from similar backgrounds. Right now, companies like Intel have a severe shortage in engineers who are minority or female.

"It's really important for young women to get exposure to STEM and get them interested in a related career," said Miriam Ceja, a 12-year chemical engineer with Intel. "At Intel, we need to grow that pipeline."

Concordia Expands Reach by Going Online

Concordia University influence is spreading beyond Portland and around the country, but all the way to Africa!

The northeast Portland school recently graduated 90 students in Johannesburg, South Africa who were enrolled and graduating from its master of education degrees offered online.

"When someone graduates, it calls for celebration...but when an African woman, wife and mother graduates, mountains of cultural stereotypes have been moved as she negotiates her role as an academic," shared Simphiwe Mkhize, one of the students.

Concordia's Dr. Glenn Smith, vice provost for student affairs, and Dr. Sheryl Reinisch, dean of Concordia's College of Education, traveled to Johannesburg to confer the degrees. Rev. Dr. David Tswaedi of the Lutheran Church of South Africa delivered the invocation and closing prayer to students and family members.



Concordia University holds commencement ceremonies in South Africa to award degrees to 90 students from South Africa who completed and graduated from Concordia's master of education curriculum offered online.

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