

NEWS RELEASE
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2020 STEM Pathways for Girls Contests Winners Announced

As with every fall, STEM Santa Fe kicks off its STEM Pathways for Girls program with a highly anticipated conference for Northern NM girls in 5th-8th grade. This year was no different even in the middle of the pandemic, STEM Santa Fe proceeded with its plans. But it quickly became apparent that the one-day conference needs to stretch over three days to avoid screen fatigue. The [2020 STEM Pathways for Girls](#) conference took place virtually over a three-day weekend November 13-15 and included 12 hands-on workshops, with live instruction by professional women in STEM. 98 girls in 5th-8th grade from Northern New Mexico participated and attended 2-4 workshops with materials delivered ahead of the conference with safety and social distancing in mind. Among many items received, every girl received a pair of safety glasses, a smartphone microscope and a custom-made mask too.

The [conference program](#) expanded beyond the workshops. Instead of one evening program with a keynote speaker, we had three evening presentations live on Youtube for the girls and their families, and instead of one essay contest, we had three contests: (1) a video and (2) an essay contest as a tribute to Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg to whom the conference was dedicated, and (3) a microscope photo contest, courtesy of U.S. Department of Energy | Office of Nuclear Energy, who provided each girl with a smartphone microscope.

The winners of the three contests were announced on Thursday December 17, 2020 over Zoom in a short live meeting with the families.

Contest	Prize	Winner
Essay 1st place	Dell Latitude Tablet	Jonelle C. from Santa Fe
Essay 2nd place	\$100 gift certificate from WIT	Amor V. from Rio Arriba
Essay 3rd place	\$50 gift certificate from WIT	Ruwaida E. from Santa Fe
Video 1st place	Dell Latitude Tablet	Nadia D. from Santa Fe
Video 2nd place	\$100 gift certificate from WIT	Eden J. from Santa Fe
Photo 1 st place	Dell Latitude Tablet	Ruwaida E. from Santa Fe
Photo 2 nd place	STEM kit	Jonelle C. from Santa Fe
Photo 3 rd place	STEM kit	Lila C. from Santa Fe
Honorable Mention	STEM kit	Lila A. from Santa Fe

Quotes from the essays from entries submitted:

“RBG inspired me because she was born in a time where women weren’t expected to speak out against male domination and her example lets me know I can speak out” – Jonelle C.

STEM Santa Fe advocates for, develops, and provides Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programming, mentoring, and resources for all youth, to realize their potential and expand their opportunities in a dynamic world.

"Justice Ginsburg is an inspiration to me as a young girl, because she fought for equality of women (and men) and she conveyed that anything is possible. It is wonderful to know that today women and men are treated with more respect and expectation and are living in a better world because of her." – Amor

Without Ruth Bader Ginsburg women would still have to have men co-sign for them if they wanted a bank account and mortgage. She made her voice heard and stood up for women's rights". – Ruwaida

Winning photos

		
First Place winner Ruwaida E. for her microscope photo: Soap with Oil	Second Place winner Jonelle C. for her microscope photo: Yeast	Third Place winner Lila C. for her microscope photo: Snowflake

Many Thanks to [Wildflower International](#) for providing the Dell Latitude Tablets as first prizes, to [New Mexico Technology Council](#) and more specifically to the Women in Technology peer group for judging the RBG contests and providing the gift certificates, and to the generosity of private donors who donated STEM kits. We are grateful to Melinda Higgins from [U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Nuclear Energy](#) for providing the smartphone microscopes to every girl at our 2020 STEM Pathways for Girls conference. Also many thanks to the photo contest judges: Melinda Higgins, Lisa Van De Graaff, and Kate Gomez.

STEM Santa Fe was fortunate to provide this conference for only a \$25 registration fee, waived upon request, thanks to the generous support of our 2020 STEM Pathways for Girls sponsors: **Diamond STEM Sponsors:** Santa Fe Hestia Fund, Santa Fe Community Foundation, LANL Foundation, Sandia Area Credit Union, Wildflower International, N3B Los Alamos. **Gold STEM Sponsor:** Enterprise Bank and Trust. **Silver STEM Sponsors:** Intel NM, Walmart, LANL/Triad, Del Norte Credit Union. **Bronze STEM Sponsors:** Santa Fe NOW, NM EPSCoR, Sandia Labs, Descartes Labs, NM Children's Foundation, Nusenda Credit Union, Mathhappens Foundation. **STEM Supporters:** Prescient Models, Souder, Miller & Associates, Openeye Scientific, LAWIS, NMNWS.