

# Giving Women in STEM a Voice Women in STEM Seminar 2018



As the world becomes increasingly connected, the role of science, technology, engineering, and math – also known as STEM – has never been more important. Although women are making significant advances in the workforce, they remain underrepresented in STEM, particularly with regard to leadership positions. Institutions of higher education have a responsibility to not only encourage women to participate in these fields, but also to prepare them to excel.

In 2018, the University of Arizona hosted 20 young women who are promising engineers at their respective universities in Sonora, Mexico. The inaugural Women in STEM Seminar united the undergraduate students for one week in Tucson, where they participated in innovative workshops, lectures, and other activities

designed to advance the role of women in STEM. Topics included: leadership methods, teamwork techniques, communication skills, professional development, and interdisciplinary and graduate career opportunities

Sponsored by Consejo Estatal de Ciencia y Tecnología de Sonora, also known as COECYT, and with marketing support from the University of Arizona Office for Diversity and Inclusive Excellence, the seminar offered a unique perspective from leaders on the University of Arizona campus who are role models for women in STEM. The following stories reflect the voices that were strengthened as a result of this experience.





# Our Stories

## Women in STEM Seminar 2018 | THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA



Women in STEM Seminar student participants from May of 2018. At the far left, Nadia Alvarez Mexia, PhD, Study Arizona: Short-Term Programs Director; on the far right: Adrián Arroyo, PhD, Study Arizona: Short-Term Programs Coordinator.

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### Claudia Pavlovich Arellano Constitutional Governor of the State of Sonora

Governor Claudia Pavlovich was born in Magdalena, Sonora, on June 17, 1969. Her parents are Alicia Arellano Tapia, M.D. (former Mayor of Hermosillo and Magdalena, former Senator) and Miguel Pavlovich Sugich, M.D.

Before going to college, she studied English at the University of Arizona and French in Montreaux, Switzerland. Thereafter, she attended Universidad de Sonora, where she graduated and obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Law with an Honorable Mention.

Governor Pavlovich is married to Sergio Torres Ibarra, father of her three daughters – Claudia, Ana and Gabriela. Their marriage is what gives Claudia Pavlovich her strength.

She has a comprehensive trajectory in politics and public service. Among her most outstanding appointments, she was a member of Hermosillo City Council from 2000-2003. She was President of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in Hermosillo from 2003-2006; and she was a Legislator to the LVIII State Legislature for District XIV (Northeastern Hermosillo) from 2006-2009, when she introduced several initiatives regarding family matters.

During 2010 to 2012, she was the first woman to lead as chairwoman of the Institutional Revolutionary Party in Sonora. She became Federal Senator during 2012 to 2015, when she was also appointed as Secretary of the Transportation and Communication Committee.

In 2015, she became the first female governor in Sonora, with a total of 486,944 votes versus 415,745 won by her closest competitor. Currently, she is the only female governor in Mexico.

Governor Pavlovich has led Sonora in transparency and accountability initiatives, which led to her designation as chair of the Open Government, Transparency and Accountability Committee of the National Governor Conference (CONAGO). Recently, she was also named as Coordinator of the International Affairs Commission of the same association.

Governor Pavlovich has an important agenda for economic development. In less than two years, she has overseen consistent job growth and overall state economic growth of more than 7.5%.

Her favorite quote is "politics serves, only if it serves the people." This vision has guided her political life where service to the people, as well as closeness and results, has always been a privilege.

# Kenia Zaray Baez Arredondo

#### Universidad Estatal de Sonora Mechanical Engineering

I took a gap year after graduating from high school. In that time, I worked for a manufacturing company and decided to pursue engineering. It seemed like a difficult career, since I didn't have a background in electronics or mechanics, but I felt capable.

I'm 22 years old, and I'm finishing my third year in Mechanical Engineering at Universidad Estatal de Sonora. There are 25 people in my class, and I'm one of three women. In my experience as an engineering student, there have been occasions where I felt like I was receiving special treatment, in the sense that I should do certain things differently than my classmates, and feeling underestimated, especially coming from faculty.

I have one year until I graduate, and I'm anxious for what I'll do afterwards. In any situation, I would like to be judged by my capabilities and not for my gender or appearance. I believe that all of our experiences and opinions are valid, if expressed with respect. They can connect us, and even if we don't agree, they can make us more empathetic.





# María Iñigo Carranza

# Universidad UNILÍDER Industrial Engineering

In the dictionary, we can only find one word for success, but there are many ways to achieve it. What do I mean by this? That every person has their own way to define what success is – meaning that you don't have to do the same thing as everyone else to accomplish success.

You have to do what you like, what makes you happy, and what makes your dreams come true. That is what being successful means. Don't be afraid to do the things that make you happy just because everyone else thinks it is not right.

Imagine if everyone lived with fear. Nobody would accomplish anything! Or what if we didn't break any taboos because of fear that everything has a genre? Women would still be housewives, not scientists or engineers, or anything else defined as "for men" – or vice versa! We would not have men who are chefs or designers. We would not have Valentino! Everything would be different.

Don't be afraid to break the rules to achieve YOUR success! Success has many roads. Find YOUR own!

# Stephany Silva Córdova

#### Universidad Kino Digital Graphic Design Engineering

Being part of the Women in STEM Seminar changed my mind a lot and made me realize a bunch of facts that I never really felt were that important.

We know that women can be as good as men in all areas of work. The only thing we need is an opportunity to prove to others that we really can succeed. We need people with an open mind. We need to leave in the past all kinds of stereotypes, to remember that things are just labels that people decide to put on people who they don't really know.

I hope that I can be a good engineer in the future and prove to myself that I can do whatever I want if I fight for it and if I don't let comments of other people tear me down. I think it's important that my voice is heard because, as a woman, I feel that I'm very important too, like any other human being in the world. Everything is about equality and respect. We need to have the mentality that everybody can be good at making things.





## Fernanda Cota González

#### Universidad UNILÍDER Industrial Engineering

"I never knew what I wanted to do, but I knew the kind of woman I wanted to be." - Diane von Fürstenberg

That is a quote that really gets me, because I really don't know what I want to do in the future. I don't know if I want to dedicate my life to being an engineer, but that doesn't worry me. In fact, it encourages me to find what makes me happy.

I believe that success doesn't always come with money and a great job at a great company. I think that success comes with being who you really want to be and doing what truly makes you happy.

So, picking up the last part of the quote, I do know what kind of woman I want to be. I want to be a woman who loves what she does, whose voice and decisions are heard and respected, and who knows how to listen and respect other voices so that we can live in a world of peace, respect, and equality.

# María Concepción Valdéz Gastélum

#### Instituto Tecnológico de Sonora Software Engineering

I am currently studying for a career in software engineering. One of my biggest passions is using software to find solutions to particular problems. When I was younger and some difficulty was presented to me, I would look for some way to fix it on my own. I would try to see how I could get out of that trouble without interrupting someone or asking someone for help. I liked to overcome problems myself and look for ways to overcome the difficulties that were presented to me.

Just as when I was a girl, today, I put a lot of love and commitment into what I do. I seek to find the best solutions to problems that arise and are presented to me. It is important that my voice is heard because I am a person who loves what is going to be her profession and loves her area of performance. I believe that for everything there is a solution.





## Zuemmy Nahomy Palma Hirata

#### Instituto Tecnológico de Hermosillo Mechanical Engineering

I was born in the city of Hermosillo, Sonora, on January 18, 1996. Since I was little, I've always loved mathematics, which in the future would lead me to choose Mechanical Engineering as my career.

My biggest inspiration was my mom. She has always been an image of strength and intelligence. She created a path for me and my brother to walk by, knowing that everything you want in life, with perseverance and dedication, you can achieve. She made me believe that if you feel passionate about something, there is nothing that defines it as exclusive for male or female. It is all up to you to make it happen.

It's important that my voice is heard because I am the reflex of a generation that wants to see a positive change in the world, and wants to contribute to the development of México. I think everybody has something important to say and deserves to be heard. Everything people say creates an impact, and we must make sure that it is positive, inclusive, and enriching.

# Cynthia Lorena Félix Hurtado

#### Universidad Estatal de Sonora **Environmental Engineering**

In a global context, women have difficulties presented by stereotypes and myths about the abilities they have to perform a job or activity. Part of my history, at the beginning of getting involved in the world of engineering, I had trouble choosing a career for fear of not knowing how to fit in to a field dominated by men.

But as the course of my career progressed, the ideals of people changed, and there was equality on the part of my classmates and the differences became smaller. It was made clear that women are capable in the engineering workplace and capable of taking on a different role in society.

We need women's voices to be heard to create an emphasis on the differences we can make collectively as a feminine society, and to create activities that inform and communicate possible changes to stop obstacles for women and transform them into something positive.





### Andrea Castro León

# Universidad UNILÍDER Industrial Engineering

I wanted to learn the same stuff the boys learned. I wanted to be as strong as the boys. I wanted to demonstrate that I have the same ability. I know I am able to do anything, and nothing has stopped me.

I chose engineering because I want to show that I can do the same things as any man. I want to break stereotypes. I want to encourage girls who are capable of doing anything. I learned to choose all my things in the color blue. I was really mad that girls had pink assigned by default and I said, no, I don't want the same stuff as every girl. I want something different. I want to choose a "boy" color for my things just to show that I can, and that it doesn't have to be the same for girls. I have the option to choose a color that is not pink.

My voice is important because I have the ability to make big changes and help others with my ideas.

### Liliana Méndez Martínez

#### Instituto Tecnológico de Hermosillo Electrical Engineering

I am currently studying Electrical Engineering at Instituto Tecnológico de Hermosillo. Ever since I was little, I have been interested in the area of mathematics. As a woman who is passionate about studying something out of the ordinary, I faced challenges, comments, and criticism. My goal is to help society, to be someone who makes a difference. We all have the same capacity and intelligence to solve problems.

I was granted the opportunity to participate in "Woman in STEM," and it was incredible to represent my country, state, and my university. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this seminar at the University of Arizona, and to share with great people and future colleagues.

This experience has left me with a new vision, thanks to the mentors who took time to pass on their knowledge, and to teach us that women are capable of success in the fields of research, technology, mathematics, and engineering. Silence has never been an ally of development and growth. Women must continue to fight to change the role of traditional education.





### Elizabeth Olivares Melieón

Universidad Tecnológica de Guaymas Industrial Engineering

I was born in a small town named Empalme in Sonora, Mexico. I am 23 years old and live with my parents. I thank the Lord that I have them. I also have two brothers. One flew to heaven a few years ago. It's not easy, but I am lucky to have an angel protecting my family. My other brother is a great person who has always been with me

I'm studying engineering in production systems and even though it is not an easy career, I try my best. I think if you are passionate in whatever you really want, you will be successful. Girls are the future, and it is important to understand that. I know girls have dreams, and I invite all women to make them a reality. It is not always easy, but everyone has the power inside to make their dreams real.

Please listen to your heart and your brain. You are always capable of making this world better.

## Diana Laura Covarrubio Nieblas

#### Universidad Kino Digital Graphic Design Engineering

This society is selective in areas originally "created" for men. A culture still exists where women are seen as incapable of doing many things. In my case, I was not quite sure what I wanted to study. I was studying for a degree in Industrial Design, but I realized I wanted a different challenge, so I let it go. I was looking for something wider.

I chose Graphic and Digital Design. I never thought that Graphic Design was possible as an engineer, but here I am. I feel happy because being an engineer is really what I want to do with my life. I want to succeed, and it's not going be easy. I know that.

Spending most of the time with guys is difficult, but I decided to move forward no matter what. I know that if I want something, I have to fight for it. I know I'll succeed in my way because I want to – not to make other people proud, but to just be me. All people in this world are equal and we deserve the same opportunities in life.





# María Angélica Reyes Parra

Instituto Tecnológico de Sonora Software Engineering

Throughout my life, my mother has been an example to me and has made me the woman I am today. She may be a single parent, but that has never stopped her for a second. She is the strongest and most hard-working person I have ever met. She taught me that I could do anything I set my mind to, and she would be there supporting me all the way – so I always had a strong female role model.

Ever since I was little, I had a fondness for computers. One day in a middle school class, our teacher taught us how to code a calculator, and that moment blew my mind. I knew I wanted to study software development. When I told my mother, she was proud that I found something I was passionate about. She is there by my side in this journey, believing in me and being the greatest mother I could have.

I am a soon-to-be female engineer and I owe that to my mother and all the women in history who fought for my rights.

### Rebeca Cambustón Patiño

#### Universidad La Salle Noroeste Industrial Design Engineering

I grew up in Ciudad Obregón, Sonora, in a conservative family with traditional values. I'm the youngest of three kids. While growing up, our parents always taught us the importance of family and being kind. My mother knew we would benefit from extracurricular activities if we were to persevere and to learn about discipline and responsibility.

That's why she filled up our daily schedules with classes such as piano, ballet, and karate, in my brother's case. I guess you can say I grew up within the "art field," which is one of the reasons why engineering seemed like an unconventional choice for me.

As I grew older, I realized I loved knowing how things worked, and numbers made sense to me. That's why I decided engineering was for me, in spite of what others had to say. I think nowadays authenticity is highly underrated. I've learned that you shouldn't let others tell you how you're supposed to be or what you're supposed to like. Be unique. Be yourself.





## Jessica Valeria Hernández Pulido

Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey -Campus Sonora Norte *Mechanical Engineering* 

Since I was little, I have seen my parents strive to give me the best: the best home, a quality education, values of great importance, and, undoubtedly, the best family. Being part of my family has taught me that you must strive to achieve your goals and dreams.

My mother is a great example of life for me. She is a hard-working woman, without fear of anything, who takes every opportunity to grow. She does not do it just for her, but for my siblings and my dad, even for society because she loves to help people who need it most. She has been my greatest inspiration among many women. When I saw her example, the interest to study Mechanical Engineering awakened in me. Since I was little, I liked to know how things worked.

My parents have always said that I am a very intelligent person and that I can achieve anything I set my mind to. For this and many other things, I want to thank them.

# Graciela Natasha Rochín Ramírez

Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey -Campus Sonora Norte *Mechanical Engineering* 

I asked myself: Why do they see only my mistakes? What else do I have to do to be recognized? When will they appreciate my work? Then "congratulations," I heard in the background. I thought to myself: "You're wonderful. I don't get how you manage to do everything."

I was stunned, appreciating the moment, and also angry for not having noticed it before. How did the opinion of the majority matter more than my own voice? We have become our own worst enemies. We have built our own barriers. We have set impossible goals. And we have treated ourselves in ways we don't want to be treated. It doesn't matter if you're a man or a woman, an engineer or an artist. We have to do and be whatever we want, no matter what the majority say, and learn to hear those great little voices that have an impact on our actions, thoughts, and good will.

I think every voice in the universe is important, because even a butterfly flapping its wings can cause a typhoon.





# Estefanía Mireille Domínguez Ramos

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Universidad Tecnológica de Guaymas Industrial Engineering

As I grew up, I discovered I liked mathematics more than other subjects. My parents separated, and I was left alone with my mother. She was sick; therefore, studying was a challenge for me since I did not have the funds to study medicine.

I chose industrial engineering because a person I know and admire had studied this. Classes began and I did not like my field until they gave me the subject of industrial drawing and machining. For my internship, I joined an automotive company and was drawing CAD software. In the end, they hired me. I am working only with men. It has been a great challenge, but I am comfortable.

It is important that my voice be heard for those who think that not having the resources to pay for school is an impediment. Also, as women, we can perform and obtain the same jobs as men.

# Helda Sofía Cano Toyos

#### Instituto Tecnológico de Hermosillo Biomedical Engineering

Hello! My name is Sofia and I study Biomedical Engineering at the Instituto Tecnológico de Hermosillo. Since I was little, I have loved math and science. That's why being an engineer was always my first pick.

While growing up, I also realized I had a passion for health sciences and helping others. That is why Biomedical Engineering was the perfect choice. I am proud to say that being a woman has never been an obstacle for me. I've always had the love and support of my family. My sister also studied engineering. She has taught me that nothing is impossible and that after every storm the sun will shine.

Unfortunately, not all women went through the same situation as I did. Nowadays, I teach social and thinking skills to girls with scarce resources. I want to be a role model for them and other young girls. It's important to have someone to look up to. I want them to know that being a girl should never be seen as a disadvantage, but as a strength.





# Michelle Cristina Fonseca Valenzuela

Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey -Campus Sonora Norte Innovation and Development Engineering

My interest in becoming an engineer started before I could ever imagine what it was. Since I was a little girl, I've always liked to know why things behave in a certain way, and now, by studying engineering, I am finally finding the answers. I am studying Innovation and Development Engineering, and what I like the most about my career is the way it is not limited.

They teach us a bit of everything, and then it helps us to decide a specialty. I learned how in engineering there is not an established path you have to follow when you are visualizing a result. It pushes us to use our imaginations, to do something new, to innovate the things around us to solve problems, however complicated they may be. I've learned how not to be scared of challenges. All of our stories are different.

Being a woman engineering student is not something you hear often. I would like our stories to become inspiration for girls who do not know what to study, to help them break stereotypes, and to teach them not to be afraid of doing something new.

# Marian Rábago Valenzuela

#### Instituto Tecnológico de Hermosillo Mechanical Engineering

When I heard about this seminar, I got really excited. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity. At first, I wanted to participate because of the topics that we were going to discuss in the seminar. I'm studying Mechanical Engineering, and it isn't normal to hang out with a lot of girls, so I was very happy to make new friends.

Every person I met throughout this process changed my perspective in every area. I liked everything about the seminar, but my favorite part was meeting Dany Ibarra, who I can say is an expert in software and programming. I was amazed by her trajectory. She was a software support engineer and developer of hexagon mining. Now she is Technical Support at IBM, and she's only 22!

Seeing successful woman in STEM makes me want to take part in changing this world for the better. I hope one day I can encourage others the way I was motivated by these women engineers. It's important for women to realize other women's achievements so we can know a way to build a better world.





## Zarina Vásquez Zazueta

# Universidad La Salle Noroeste Biomedical Engineering

I'm currently studying Biomedical Engineering at Universidad La Salle Noroeste. I was born in Ciudad Obregon, but I have lived all over the state of Sonora. I'm the oldest of four. All my life I've been the example for my brothers and sister. Due to this, I've always done my best to persevere in school and in extra-curricular activities.

My mom always encouraged me to pursue my goals and to do my best in every activity. I grew up in a big family, but I'm the first woman engineer. My whole life I've been very curious. I always wondered how things worked. I liked the STEM areas but also enjoyed medicine. My greatest supporters are my parents. Without them, I wouldn't be where I am now. They always encouraged me to take on new experiences and be my best. For them, it wasn't a surprise when I chose a STEM related career. They knew about my passion in both science and engineering and my love for math.

All voices are important. What everyone thinks should be heard and respected. My voice should be heard because I'm full of things to contribute to the world.

# Special Thanks to our Partners

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University of Arizona Office of Diversity and Inclusive Excellence: Jesus Trevino, PhD

& Georgine Speranzo

University of Arizona Visitor Center

Women in Science and Engineering Program (WISE):

### About Study Arizona: Short-Term Programs

The Study Arizona: Short-Term Programs team offers a variety of learning experiences in Tucson at the University of Arizona (UA) and abroad for international students, faculty, and professionals, as well as unique programs for UA colleagues.

Ranging from one to ten weeks in duration, our programs are innovative, flexible, and allow participants the opportunity to experience their fields from new perspectives in order to grow academically, professionally, and personally.

The international experiences also provide participants with the tools they need to grow from an intercultural competence perspective.

Experiences vary greatly – from participating in cuttingedge research in nanotechnology and geo-imaging, to projects in entrepreneurship and opera. We not only offer programs at the beautiful UA campus in Tucson, we also travel internationally to conduct programs based on an organization's specific needs. We are committed to providing flexible learning experiences, so participants get exactly what they need in order to advance in their respective fields.

Program design is dynamic. Study Arizona: Short-Term Programs adapts activities to the characteristics of the participants' higher education system, while emphasizing the excellence of the world-renowned academic and research system of the UA.

The intercultural focus, high academic standards, and emphasis on inclusion are outstanding features of our award-winning programs.





#### Our Awards

#### NAFSA's Senator Paul Simon Spotlight Award, 2012

Through its Senator Paul Simon Award for Comprehensive Internationalization, NAFSA: Association of International Educators recognizes institutions for overall excellence in internationalization efforts as evidenced in practices, structures, philosophies, and policies.

#### The Peter W. Likins Inclusive Excellence Award, 2007

This annual award recognizes individuals, teams, and organizations who go beyond their assigned duties to make exemplary contributions to the University of Arizona through recruitment and retention of an excellent and diverse faculty, staff, or student body—fostering equality of opportunity within the campus community, encouraging diverse perspectives on campus, and creating a welcoming and supportive campus climate.

#### ▶ 100K Strong in the Americas Grant

President Obama launched 100,000 Strong in the Americas to increase educational exchanges in the Western Hemisphere and strengthen United States relations with the countries of the Americas through student mobility. Enhancing productive people-to-people ties is a key component of the partnership vision that underlies this policy.

#### Institute of International Education/ Ciência sem Fronteiras Grant

This mobility program aims to plant the seeds of what could revolutionize the higher education research system, exposing Brazilian students and researchers to an environment of high competitiveness and entrepre-

neurship. The model is designed to allow top students and scholars to participate in research at some of the best universities around the world. This program also seeks to create an establishment of solid academic links between key institutions.

#### Designation of a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) by the U.S. Department of Education

The UA is one of three members of the Association of American Universities to earn this designation. The UA met initial eligibility requirements, including at least 25% of our students identifying as Hispanic, in 2016. The UA joins 105 four-year public institutions and only a few from Research I and the Association of American Universities that meet the criteria for eligibility for HSI designation.

#### Inter-institutional Program for Strengthening Scientific Research and Graduate Studies Grant/ Programa Interinstitucional para el Fortalecimiento de la Investigación y el Posgrado Científico

By linking researchers to outstanding students, this program contributes to high-level human resources education, while also strengthening research and increasing graduate prospects for affiliated institutions.

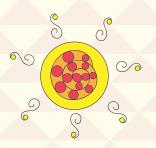
#### 2018 Edith Sayre Auslander Established Visionary Award, Nadia Alvarez Mexia

The University of Arizona (UA) Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) created the Vision Awards Program in 1999 to honor leaders who manage their units in ways that exemplify the vision set out by the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) Commission in 1990. The awards recognize individuals who cultivate diversity and advance the CSW goals relating to 1) Campus

Climate, 2) Career and Professional Development, and 3) Issues of Equity and Inclusion.

#### 2015 Award for Global Excellence, Adrián Arroyo

The Global Excellence Awards recognize individuals or groups who have distinguished themselves locally, regionally, nationally, or globally. The awards recognize those with outstanding commitments to fostering global education and cultural bridge-building. Recipients of this award are selected based on many criteria, including furthering the cause of international education, fostering international exchange through long-term efforts, and substantially assisting international students to enrich their experiences in the United States.





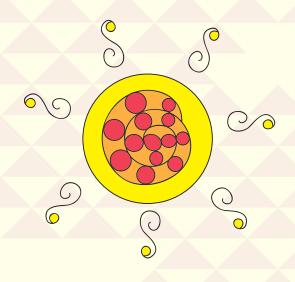
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**STUDY ARIZONA**SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS

