Bits & Bytes Association Newspaper

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Technology needs women!

Women make up 51% of the population in the United States and are responsible for buying 70 to 80% of consumer products. Shouldn't they be part of design teams?

We need women working side-by-side with male counter parts on product design, engineering, coding, and testing. So that the products we use everyday are safer and more inclusive.

Unfortunately, despite the high pay and low unemployment rate women are severely underrepresented in the technology fields. In the United States alone, only 19% of engineering and 18% of computer science graduating classes were composed of women.

Technology is fascinating and exciting because you learn something new every day. Working on things that matter and that can change the world.

Why are women shying away from technology fields?

There were more women in coding when computers were the size of living rooms.

Believe it or not the size of computers shrinking is to blame for having less women in coding. In the 60's and 70's no one had access to computers. Boys and girls had equally no access and were equally unprepared for a career in computer science. Back then was considered an even playing field where both can equally fail.

Families in the 80's started buying computers and putting them into the boys room. Giving them advantages over girls.

In the 90's, partners were much more likely to buy a computer for their boys then their girls. Even if the girls were interested in computers. This translated into a gender gap in knowledge and confidence. Girls started

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losing confidence and avoiding technology fields.

What can we do to close the gap in our communities?

We can host technology events for women. In middle schools we can have technology days where we can teach new technology concepts like Internet of things (IOT). Lack of exposure shouldn't be an obstacle for success. Giving girls a chance to program and make things work instills excitement at a young age. Hoping we can inspire a new generation in women and inspire them to take on a career in technology.

People were asked to think about their child's future and what careers they think they would be interested in

Boys were thought of to pursue careers in computers, science, engineering, and sports. Girls on the other hand were thought of going into health, teaching, art and beauty.

34% of girls would choose computer science on their own. If they're encouraged by a parent than that number goes up to 65%. Parents have a huge influence on what a kid will end up doing.

Gender gaps impacts girls' confidence and get them to give up on technology careers. We need to build up young girls' confidence.

A study by the department of education says that children confidence and belief in their abilities is key to their interest and performance in subjects. Its key to the classes they choose and after school programs they pursue. Don't underestimate the power of a simple effort of encouragement.

National and local organizations are working together to bridge the gap for young girls. Providing them exposure and confidence that is needed to become a technologist.

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Events

<u>Hosted by Manitoba Women in Technology</u>
Pathways to Success in Tech: Achieving Positive Movement in your career
Link:
https://www.meetup.com/Manitoba-Women-In-Tech/events/282548425/
Meetup Group Page:
https://www.meetup.com/Manitoba-Women-In-Tech/