

## OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS

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## Mayor Jacobs Continues Recognition of Women in STEAM

*Knoxville, Tennessee*— Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs is observing Women's History Month throughout March by sharing videos each Wednesday highlighting time spent in different Knox County Schools' Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) classrooms taught by female teachers.

Today's <u>video</u> features a visit with STEM Educator Jessica Everitt who was teaching her second grade Hardin Valley Elementary students about robotics and software engineering with a focus on conditional formatting.

"What really struck me is that this is the same technology that's used on factory floors," said Mayor Jacobs.

Everitt is a 15-year elementary educator who has taught primary grades, gifted and talented classes, and STEM. She is currently pursuing her Education Specialist degree from Carson-Newman University in administrative leadership.

"We know autonomous movement in factories, especially around here in Knoxville, is growing. WE have less of a workforce, so we need students to adapt to the demand in the work field when they graduate," said Everitt.

STEM teacher Jana Yra was also in the classroom, "All the creating and innovative design, especially with this, it's less about the outcome than it is about the process and inquiry work that they day."

Mayor Jacobs said celebrating women in STEAM is important for young girls because it shows them that women can succeed in technical fields—industry typically driven by men.

Last week, the Mayor shared a video of his visit with West Valley Middle science teacher Bethany Saunders.

Later this month, he will share visits with South Doyle High School STEM/Computer Science Teacher Kathleen Devinney, Gibbs Middle School Art Teacher Dorothy Verbick and STEM Teacher Lauren Downs; and Karns Middle School Math Teacher Rebecca Layton.

**Background:** Women's History Month became a national celebration when congress requested President Ronald Reagan to proclaim the week beginning March 7, 1982, as Women's History Week. Petitioned by the National Women's History Project, Congress designated the month of March 1987 as Women's History Month. In 1995, it became an annual recognition.

STEM classes aim to equip students with the skills and knowledge to compete in a global economy across science, technology, engineering, and math disciplines. STEAM classes do the same while also emphasizing soft skills and the arts including humanities, language arts, dance, drama, music, visual art, design, new media, and more. Research shows the number of roles requiring STEM expertise is growing at a rate that exceeds current workforce. Additionally, a 2019 LinkedIn report found that skills like creativity, persuasion, and collaboration are some of the most important to companies seeking prospective employees.