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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 29, 2023

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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 Karns Middle School Math teacher Dr. Rebecca Layton who teaches math in unique ways allowing students to think critically and work together to problem solve.

"It's just wonderful to see someone like her who has an advanced degree but has come back because she realizes the impact she'll have on the lives of young people," said Mayor Jacobs.

Layton taught middle school math for six years before earning a doctorate degree at the University of Tennessee. She taught multiple STEM education courses for teacher candidates during her time as a graduate assistant and clinical professor at UT. She then decided to return to her passion of teaching math to middle school students.

"I missed teaching kids so much that I came back so that's why I'm doing what I'm doing," said Layton. "I love being in middle school helping kids believe in themselves and believe that they can do anything so I'm right where I want to be."

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.

The Mayor has already shared his visits with <u>Gibbs Middle</u> art teacher Dorothy Verbick and STEM teacher Lauren Downs, <u>South Doyle High</u> STEM teacher Kathleen Devinney, <u>Hardin Valley Elementary</u> STEM Educators Jessica Everitt and Jana Yra, and <u>West Valley Middle</u> science teacher Bethany Saunders.

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.