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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**The Society of Women Engineers Inspires Minneapolis Girls to Design, Create and Engineer**

**CHICAGO** – Minneapolis-area middle and high school girls will get a chance to see what being an engineer is like at [Invent it. Build it.](#) during [WE18](#), the largest conference and career fair for women in engineering and technology. At the Minneapolis Convention Center on Saturday, October 20, 2018 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., girls will meet women engineers, participate in hands-on engineering activities and learn how they can pursue a future in engineering.

So many young girls show an interest in STEM, yet only 29 percent of bachelor's degrees in STEM are earned by women. Furthermore, women make up only 12 percent of practicing engineers. Programs like Invent it. Build it. change the perception of what an engineer is and demonstrate to girls that they can make a difference in the world by pursuing their interests in STEM.

All attendees will spend the morning at the STEM EXPO, where they can learn about local engineering clubs, engineering camps, competitions, after-school programs, scholarships and more. In the afternoon, Invent it. Build it. is divided into three parts: the SWE Middle School Girls Program, the Parent/Educator Program (PEP) and the High School Girls Program. Each program is designed to engage the audience in STEM activities and provide them resources that will help them, their students or their children pursue a path in engineering and technology.

As part of the Middle School Girls Program, girls in grades 6-8 participate in hands-on engineering activities with adult engineer members of SWE. At the same time, high school girls get to connect with engineers to learn about selecting the right college, find out about what engineers do and how to be successful. The Parent/Educator Program allows parents and teachers to learn why their influence is so important in engaging girls in STEM, and to find out about local STEM programs, scholarships and engineering careers.

On average, 95 percent of girls who have attended Invent it. Build it. leave with a better understanding of engineering. An independent report conducted by SWE last year found strong evidence that the program:

- Changed girls' attitudes about engineering careers by exposing them to different ways of thinking about engineering,
- Built self-confidence and critical thinking skills as they relate to engineering,
- Helped girls draw connections between their career passions and engineering,
- Developed girls' understanding of what engineers do, and
- Enabled girls to identify the next steps in pursuit of a career in engineering.

"Girls often do not associate engineering as a career path that allows them to help people, and they also lack confidence in STEM skills as compared to their male counterparts. Events like Invent it. Build it. are essential to show girls what an engineer looks like and instill the confidence that they too, can be an engineer," said Randy Freedman, Director of Student Programs at SWE and coordinator of the Invent it. Build it. program.

For more information about Invent it. Build it. and to register, visit [inventitbuildit.swe.org](http://inventitbuildit.swe.org). For media inquiries and to request a complimentary media registration, contact Jenny Balogh at (630) 305-0003 x303, or [jbalogh@davidjamesgroup.com](mailto:jbalogh@davidjamesgroup.com).

For more information about the Society of Women Engineers, visit [swe.org](http://swe.org).

### **About SWE**

The Society of Women Engineers (SWE), founded in 1950, is the world's largest advocate and catalyst for change for women in engineering and technology. The not-for-profit educational and service organization is the driving force that establishes engineering as a highly desirable career aspiration for women. To ensure SWE members reach their full potential as engineers and leaders, the Society offers unique opportunities to network, provides professional development, shapes public policy and provides recognition for the life-changing contributions and achievements of women engineers. As a champion of diversity, SWE empowers women to succeed and advance in their personal and professional lives. For more information about the Society, please visit [www.swe.org](http://www.swe.org) or call 312.596.5223.

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## **Invent It. Build It. FAQs**

### **What is Invent it. Build it.?**

Invent it. Build it. is SWE's program at WE18 dedicated to girls in grades 6-12, high school girls, and their parents and educators. The program, which typically draws hundreds of participants, is a one-day event with the goal to encourage girls to pursue a career in engineering. Invent it. Build it. takes place at the Minneapolis Convention Center on Saturday, October 20, 2018, from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

### **Who should attend?**

There's something in it for everybody at Invent it. Build it. as we offer a program for girls, parents and educators, and an Expo for all attendees.

### **Why should girls come to Invent it. Build it.?**

Research shows that young girls are more likely to not pursue careers in engineering. Invent it. Build it. works throughout the year to reverse these trends by offering educational programs, engaging engineering projects and more.

Girls who attend Invent it. Build it. in Minneapolis will have access to some of the world's top engineers, as they'll learn what it's like firsthand to be an engineer. Participants will also work on engineering challenges, meet new friends, receive swag and other goodies, and enter for a chance to win giveaways.

Design Squad Global's host Deysi Melgar, is also going to be onsite serving as a host for Invent it. Build it. Design Squad is a PBS TV series that empowers young kids with real-life engineering projects.

### **What's in it for parents and educators?**

Parents and educators are encouraged to stay onsite for the entire program as they will be involved in lively panel discussions and learn about engineering programs, scholarships and other resources.

### **What happens at the EXPO?**

All Invent it. Build it. attendees will have a chance to walk through the EXPO where exhibitors will be providing information on engineering clubs, camps, after school programs, activities and freebies.

### **Where can you get information about SWE's Invent it. Build it.?**

To learn more about Invent it. Build it., visit [inventitbuildit.swe.org](http://inventitbuildit.swe.org). You can also search #IIBI to follow along on social media.