



WorkingNation

Closing the skills and gender gap in engineering

By Jaimie Stevens

February 11, 2021



<https://youtu.be/SVX5b3TFc6M>

Today is [International Day of Women and Girls in Science](#).

In the United States, there is a massive shortage of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) teachers, which is impacting student learning and, thus, the STEM workforce of the future.

Between 2003 and 2017, the number of women in science and engineering jobs rose from nearly 1.3 million to almost 2 million. Of STEM teachers in the workforce, women are far less represented than

men. Even though women make up more than half of the total U.S. college-educated workforce, they still only make up [29% of the science and engineering workforce](#).

That's why the actions of Erika Parker, a teacher at Corona High School in Corona, CA, are so important. Originally a sales engineer, Parker found the [EnCorps STEM Teachers Program](#) when she was looking to make a change in her life that accommodated her dream and her family at the same time. EnCorps put her on a path to becoming a teacher, giving her the opportunity to share her knowledge of STEM with children.

The EnCorps STEM Teachers Program has a two-fold mission, according to its founder [Sherry Lansing](#). The program seeks to create a level playing field for every single student in America by providing them with a solid math and science teacher while also offering aging people in STEM careers the opportunity to pass on their experience to students as an EnCorps teacher.

When Parker was studying tech, there was only one female student for every 30 or 40 male students in the class. Since EnCorps has given her the tools she needed to make the transition, she has set out to make changes she wishes to see, by inspiring interest in STEM in young girls.

This is why we are celebrating her story today. Parker is not only working to close the gap between men and women in STEM careers, but she is fighting to close the STEM teachers shortage overall.

<https://youtu.be/SVX5b3TFc6M>