
STEM EDUCATION

Project WISH Summer Internship Tour MDEQ's Lab

Hinds Community College-Utica Campus (HCCUC), Project WISH (*Women Interested in STEM at Hinds*) teamed up with the Office of Community Engagement (OCE) and MDEQ's Lab to introduce high school students to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers.

Project WISH works to provide long-range improvement in science and engineering education at HCCUC and to increase and prepare underrepresented ethnic minorities, particularly women, for scientific and technological careers.



Before the tour started, MDEQ's Lab Director, Erica Scarbrough provided an overview of the lab responsibilities and its benefits to the agency and the State of Mississippi. During the tour, students performed a mock oil and grease analysis in the chemistry lab. This analysis is used for the determination of n-hexane extractable material found in surface and saline water as well as industrial and domestic wastewater. The aqueous samples the students extracted were mock samples that Environmental Scientist, Allison Messimore, made with water and food coloring.

Students also visited the biology lab with Environmental Scientist Will Green. There students learned the processes used to determine water quality in Mississippi's streams and lakes. Students viewed collected samples and looked at living organisms under the microscope that were present in the water to determine the water quality.

Project WISH Director, Mrs. Lori Genous-Smith stated, "We selected MDEQ's lab because our summer internship was on the topic of Water Quality: Problems and Solutions. Touring the lab provided students with a perspective on what happens at the state level regarding monitoring water quality. Also, since students took courses in chemistry and biology during the internship, it was beneficial (and fun!) for them to visit chemistry and biology labs with hands-on activities".

Deep Delta Works Career Fair

The Office of Community Engagement (OCE) and MDEQ's Lab participated in the Sharkey County Aspire Team Deep Delta Works Career Fair on November 6, 2019 in Rolling Fork, MS. High school students interacted with various avenues of employment, training and/or further education in both traditional and non-traditional programs. The goal of the career fair was to introduce the students to different careers around the State of Mississippi.



MDEQ LAB employees demonstrate a mock oil and grease analysis

STEM Girls Rock Symposium

The OCE participated in the STEM Girls Rock Symposium at Hinds Community College, Utica, MS campus for two (2) days in September. OCE staff coordinated the personnel participation and designed the display used to engage approximately 500 11th and 12th girls interested in gaining knowledge about the various STEM positions at MDEQ. Over the course of the two days, a group of ladies who have STEM related positions represented MDEQ by engaging in discussions, provided hands on activities, and written environmental materials to provide insight on various MDEQ departments.

Career Exploration Fair

MDEQ employees participated in the United Way of the Capital Area Career Exploration Fair. The fair allowed local high school students to engage with different careers

