



## STEM Forum Speakers

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### **Tricia Berry, Texas Girls Collaborative, UT Austin**

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**Tricia Berry**, Director of the Texas Girls Collaborative Project and The University of Texas at Austin Women in Engineering Program, connects organizations and individuals working to advance gender equity in science, technology, engineering and math fields and leads Cockrell School efforts to recruit and graduate women. She is a consultant with the Assessing Women and Men in Engineering Project and consults on both program assessment as well as gender-focused STEM strategies and effective STEM marketing and communication. She is a cofounder of 825 Basics, LLC, providing strategies and career thought-provoking processes to enhance workplace and career success. She is the coauthor of two books: *Exceeds Expectations: Take Control of Your Performance Review* and *You Can't Eat Your Degree: Combine Your Passions and Philosophies to Create the Story of Your Future*. Tricia holds a BS in Chemical Engineering and an MBA.

### **Dee Chambliss, THSP**

Program Officer, T-STEM Academies

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**Dee Chambliss** is the T-STEM Academies Program Officer, and is a veteran educator with over twenty years of service in public and private education and state government. Prior to joining THSP, Ms. Chambliss served the state of Mississippi as Assistant Secretary of State for Education and Publications, overseeing the publication and distribution of official state and agency documents and managing educational and training initiatives within the agency and between other state and national organizations. Ms. Chambliss is a graduate of Millsaps College where she received a bachelor's in biology and secondary education, Jackson State University where she received a master's degree in biology, secondary education and administration, and Delta State University where she received specialist degree in educational administration. Ms. Chambliss is currently working towards a doctoral degree and is completing her dissertation.

### **Susan Dawson, E3 Alliance**

Executive Director

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**Susan Dawson** is a Texas entrepreneur, business and civic leader. She founded and leads the E3 Alliance (for Education Equals Economics), a regional collaborative to increase economic outcomes by aligning our education systems to better fulfill the potential of every citizen. E3 Alliance has been recognized across the country as a unique model of objective and ground-breaking work in building systemic change for education. Ms. Dawson has led multiple technology firms and served as Chair of the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce. Her many awards related to her work in education and beyond include being named Austin Under 40 "Austinite of the Year", Hero for Children by the State Board of Education, Austin Profiles in Power "Profile Leader", and the UT McCombs School "Trailblazer Award" for the distinguished woman alumni trailblazer in business and community Ms. Dawson has a BS from Princeton University and an MBA from UT Austin.

**Dr. Vicki Dimock, SEDL (Moderator)**

Chief Program Officer

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**Dr. Vicki Dimock** is SEDL's Chief Program Officer. In this capacity, she oversees SEDL's core programmatic components including the Improving School Performance, Research and Evaluation, Afterschool, Family, and Community, and Disability Research to Practice programs. She supervises the Southeast Comprehensive Center and directs the Texas Comprehensive Center, two large scale technical assistance initiatives through which SEDL works with state and regional education agencies to assist schools and districts that are struggling to meet NCLB performance goals. The Comprehensive Centers address state and local capacity building in key areas, including reading/literacy, mathematics, science, school restructuring, use of scientifically based research, professional development and teacher quality, high school reform, and instructional strategies for specific populations. Dr. Dimock also provides overall leadership for SEDL's Science, Technology, and Mathematics (STM) Program, which houses SEDL's efforts to improve teaching and learning in STM. She has led initiatives addressing math and science instructional reform and the use of technology to improve teaching and learning; these include grants and contracts for research, professional development, evaluation, and development of online tools and resources for educators.

**Cheryl Farmer, UT College of Engineering**

Program Manager, UTeach Engineering

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**Cheryl Farmer** is the founding Program Manager and Project Director of UTeach *Engineering*. Funded Cheryl Farmer is the founding Program Manager and Project Director of UTeach Engineering. Funded through a five-year, \$12.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation, UTeach Engineering offers a well-designed, well-rounded, design-based high school engineering course that can be implemented at low cost in virtually any setting, as well as a variety of professional development programs for pre-service and in-service teachers who want to add engineering to their teaching portfolio. Prior to co-founding UTeach Engineering, Ms. Farmer spent several years managing programs for both the K-12 and higher education markets. Before entering higher education, Ms. Farmer worked as a project manager in the environmental field. Her education includes graduate work in Mathematics and Business Administration a BA in Mathematics and Liberal Arts, with highest honors, from The University of Texas at Austin.

**Dr. Carol Fletcher, Texas Regional Collaborative, UT Austin**

Assistant Director and R&D Coordinator

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**Dr. Carol Fletcher** began her education career as a middle school science teacher in 1989. After serving in numerous leadership roles in her district and being honored by her peers as "Teacher of the Year" she left the classroom in 1995 to pursue her graduate studies full time at the University of Texas where she completed her Master's degree in 1996 and Ph.D. in 1998, both in Science Education. Since that time, she has worked with university professors, instructional specialists, administrators and teachers from across the state to improve P-12 science and mathematics instruction through the Texas Regional Collaboratives for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching (TRC) at UT Austin. As Associate Director for the TRC, Carol manages the day-to-day operations of a statewide professional development program for math and science teachers which serves thousands of educators each year in over 800 school districts throughout the state of Texas.

**Dr. Ruth A. Franks, College of Natural Sciences, UT Austin**

Director, The Center for Inquiry in Mathematics and Sciences

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**Dr. Ruth Franks, Ph.D.** is the founding Director of the Center for Inquiry in Mathematics and Sciences (CIMS). Growing up on a ranch in Southwest Louisiana, Dr. Franks has fond memories of developing a love of science and nature. She received a Bachelor's degree from Louisiana Tech University and a Master's degree from LSU Health Science Center in Cell Biology and Anatomy; and received her Ph.D. from UT-Austin. Her most recent research has

focused on biology and chemistry education initiatives, and elementary science and mathematics professional development models for teachers. Under the leadership of Dr. Franks, CIMS, a program of the UT College of Natural Sciences, is dedicated to research and programs that improve K - 12 and undergraduate science and mathematics education. This includes the rapidly growing Hands-On-Science Program, which provides content development and appropriate inquiry-based teaching methods for both pre-service and in-service elementary science educators. In the summer of 2010, the program partnered with Hays CISD, San Marcos CISD, and Wimberley ISD to form a Texas Science Regional Collaborative for the purpose of joining with K-12 teachers in these districts in the development of a regional professional development program.

**Robbin Gesch, Round Rock ISD**

Director of Student Support Services & College/Career Readiness - RRISD Summer "Kicks" Program

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**Robbin Gesch** currently serves Round Rock ISD as a Director of Student Support Services and College and Career Readiness. During her tenure in RRISD, Robbin has served as the Lead Elementary Language Arts Specialist and Director of Curriculum. She holds a Bachelors of Elementary Education from Texas Tech University and a Masters in Education from Angelo State University. Robbin has taught at the elementary and middle school levels in the areas of language arts and reading and served as an elementary, middle, and high school counselor. Prior to working in Round Rock ISD, Robbin served as the Executive Director of Curriculum, Assessment, and Federal Programs in San Angelo ISD.

**Irma Guerra-Scott, Del Valle ISD**

DVISD Grant Coordinator

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**Irma Guerra-Scott** is an employee with Del Valle ISD. She has taught in the classroom as a bilingual teacher. In her current role as a grant coordinator, she has the opportunity to impact student programs by linking grant opportunities to students' needs.

**Dr. Andrew Kim, Manor ISD**

Superintendent of Schools

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**Dr. Andrew B. Kim** currently serves the Manor Independent School District as the Superintendent. He has served as the Deputy Superintendent of Schools in Manor ISD where he was instrumental in the development and creation of Manor New Tech High School. He has a background in English as a Second Language and Educational Administration. He has been an Assistant Superintendent in Austin ISD, Director of Professional Development in Round Rock ISD in Texas, and principal and teacher for the Dallas ISD. He is finishing his doctoral program in the field of 21st Century Instructional Pedagogy for the Cooperative Superintendency Program at the University of Texas at Austin. He holds a Masters in Educational Administration from the University of Texas at Austin and a Bachelor of Arts in Medieval Studies and Classical Civilization from Fordham University, Bronx, New York.

**Dr. Ellen Lyon, Hays CISD**

STEM/CTE Programming

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**Dr. Ellen Lyon** currently serves Hays CISD as a teacher on special assignment, working in STEM and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming. She developed and oversees Saturn V, a STEM magnet for 4th and 5th graders at two elementary schools in Hays, coordinates the middle school science fair, and shepherds the CTE program at Hays High School and Lehman High School. Ellen holds a Ph.D. in Science Education from the University of Texas at Austin. Ellen's first science teaching job was in Winona, Texas in the fall of 1987. Since then, she has taught many science classes, from 6th grade science through physics, in public schools. Additionally, she has been adjunct faculty at the University of Texas at San Antonio and Portland State University. Some of her notable accomplishments include successfully lobbying to get engineering included in the Oregon State Science Standards, taking students and their projects to the International Science and Engineering Fair, coaching the 2002 Oregon State Champion cheer team, and helping to establish a new Texas Regional Collaborative for elementary science teachers in the Hays, San Marcos, and Wimberley school districts.

**Dr. Michael Marder, UTeach**

Co-Director of UTeach

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**Dr. Michael Marder** is a member of the Center for Nonlinear Dynamics, internationally known for its experiments on chaos and pattern formation, and for the last four years ranked #1 in the nation by US News and World Report. He is involved in a wide variety of theoretical, numerical, and experimental investigations, ranging from studies of plasticity and phase transformations to experiments on sand ripples at the sea bottom. He specializes in the mechanics of solids, particularly the fracture of brittle materials. He has also recently published a graduate text on Condensed Matter Physics. Michael Marder is director of the Special Projects Office in the College of Natural Sciences and co-director of UTeach, the University program for preparation of secondary math and science teachers. He is helping to introduce inquiry techniques into undergraduate teaching, and is helping implement a new series of undergraduate degree plans involving computation.

**Jennifer Stephens, Austin ISD**

Assistant Principal at Allan Elementary

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**Jennifer Stephens** has been an educator in the Austin Independent School District for the past ten years. Currently, she serves as the Assistant Principal of Allan Elementary. During her years of service, Ms. Stephens has taught students at the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade level. She has also served as a Math & Science Curriculum Specialist and principal of the Eastside Memorial STEM Summer Academy. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from Southwest Texas State University and a Masters in Education from Texas State University. Ms. Stephens is a dedicated educator who is committed to life-long learning.

**Lonny Stern, Skillpoint Alliance**

Director of Technology & Education Executive Council

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**Lonny Stern** is the Director of the STEM Council at Skillpoint Alliance, which connects industry & education for workforce development in Central Texas. The STEM Council works with CEOs and Superintendents to build the high-tech workforce pipeline, focusing on project-based learning programs that inspire students to pursue science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers. The STEM Council also promotes volunteer and mentoring opportunities for high-tech sector professionals across the region. Before coming to Skillpoint Alliance, Lonny served as the Outreach Director at the Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP) and Communications & Outreach Director for Hope Street Group, both nonpartisan policy organizations. Lonny earned a Masters in Public Affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at UT-Austin in 2004. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and Communications at Florida State University in 1999.

**Joules Webb, Transformation 2013 T-STEM Center**

STEM Educational Specialist

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**Julianne 'Joules' Webb** has a passion and expertise for STEM Education gained through over twenty years of experience serving in both education and industry. In education, she has served as a Texas high school science teacher and campus instructional technologist, a science teacher instructional coach, and currently as a STEM Educational Specialist with Transformation 2013 Texas STEM (T-STEM) Center. She also served on the Texas Education Agency T-STEM Academy Blueprint design committee. She is concurrently pursuing a PhD in Integrative STEM Education through Virginia Tech. She brings a depth and breadth of STEM education knowledge to the community. As an influential member of the T-STEM Network, she leads STEM professional development design teams, campus instructional coaching programs, and provides STEM technical assistance to district leadership. Prior to her educational career, she was employed as a chemist in industry which affords her the opportunity to bring the workforce perspective to the education workplace.