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**SALLY RIDE SCIENCE**

# Sally Ride Science workshop goal is to keep kids interested in the field

May 12, 2014 (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/sally-ride-science-workshop-goal-is-to-keep-kids-interested-in-the-field/>) by SR Science (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/author/hmiranda/>) · Posted in " [In the Media](https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/category/in-the-media/) " · (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/category/in-the-media/>) "

What does a scientist look like?

That was just one question asked Saturday of 25 local elementary and middle school teachers as part of a workshop by Sally Ride Science to help teachers encourage student interest in the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

"A scientist is not just a crazy old white man," said Leesa Hubbard, teacher in residence with Sally Ride Science, which provided the training. The goal of the exercise was to dispel stereotypes about the job and show students that people of all backgrounds can be scientists.

The training offered hands-on activities for teachers to use with their students to keep them interested in science at a young age.

Five "Ignite Student Interest in STEM" workshops will be held nationwide this year. Sally Ride Science, headquartered in San Diego, partners with the Northrop Grumman Foundation to put on the events.

Hubbard said research shows that all children are interested in science in third grade, but interest declines as they get older, especially in fifth and sixth grades.

“By the time they’re getting to high school, they’re not really interested anymore,” Hubbard said. “That’s why we’ve got to get them young.”

The workshop provided a number of activities for teachers to use with their students, including asking them to draw what a scientist looks like to dispel stereotypes. Special emphasis was placed on encouraging girls to pursue science careers.

The event also focused on tying activities to specific careers, such as climatologist or zoologist, to show that the skills can be used in real life.

“Things like this help enhance the standards,” said Charla Johnson, principal at Belle Ryan Elementary School.

Johnson said it was important to attend the all-day workshop to learn what teachers at Belle Ryan need to succeed when teaching STEM curriculum.

“I just think it’s really important for me as a principal to support my teachers in properly instructing students,” Johnson said. “The best way to do that is sit with them and learn.”

Other activities included “What’s in the mystery box?” in which students would use the scientific method to guess what objects are in a wooden box based on weight and sound.

Elizabeth Bashaw, a fifth-grade teacher at Jackson Elementary, said the workshop especially showed her how to relate science to jobs in the outside world.

“It’s opening students’ eyes that science isn’t just in a lab with some beakers,” Bashaw said. “It’s everywhere. People, especially kids, don’t realize it.”

Jessica Smith, a fifth-grade science teacher at Marrs Magnet Center, said the workshop inspired her to talk more with her students about their future career paths. That makes the curriculum more applicable to everyday life, she said.

“It made me think more about how to keep things exciting and not lose them.”

Contact the writer: Paige Yowell

[paige.yowell@owh.com](mailto:paige.yowell@owh.com) (mailto:paige.yowell@owh.com) | 402-444-1414

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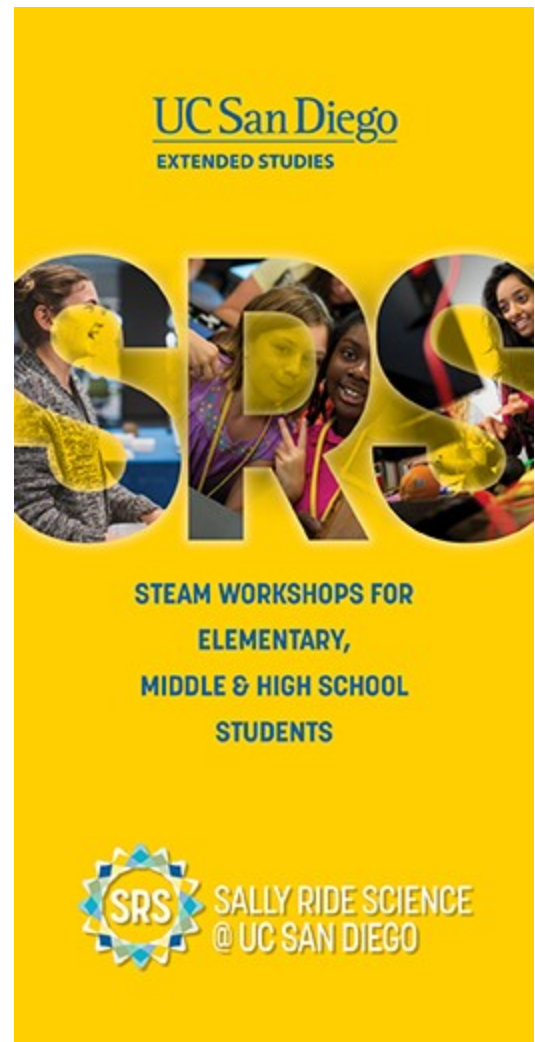
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