

**Governor's Council on Women and Girls
Education and STEAM Subcommittee
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, May 19, 2025, 3:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting Agenda – Microsoft TEAMS**

I. Welcome Remarks + Introductions

II. Presentation: NOMACT presentation by Kelsey Greenleaf

Kelsey Greenleaf, a member of the Board of Directors and Chair of the K-12 Outreach Program at the National Organization of Minority Architects Connecticut (NOMAct), presented an overview of the organization's mission and current K-12 outreach efforts. NOMA supports minorities and women in the architecture field, working to make the profession more equitable. The K-12 Outreach Program is entirely volunteer-led and focuses on building an early interest pipeline by engaging students as young as kindergarten. The organization facilitates exposure to architecture through various initiatives, including the "I Am" Lecture Series, scholarships and grants, and field trips. Notable programs include a full scholarship to the \$3,000 three-week University of Hartford Architecture Summer Institute for female and minority students and grants for students attending the "My Architecture Workshop" summer camp in Stamford for younger students (grades K-6/7). NOMA also organizes visits to local architecture firms and colleges like UHart and Yale, where students receive guided tours and lectures from faculty and professionals.

The organizations newest endeavor is "Project Pipeline", a fully-funded three-day architecture program at Yale University for 20-25 middle school students, designed to walk them through the design process and expose them to the profession. Greenleaf emphasized the need for more volunteers, sponsors, and collaboration to expand awareness beyond students already enrolled in technical high school architecture tracks.

III. Million Women Mentor Update

Colleen Bielitz presented on the new Million Women Mentor website and app launched through the Office of Manufacturing. The app hosts a variety of features including a job posting board, a map with mentors throughout the state of Connecticut, and an events page.

IV. Computing Challenge 2025 Update

Brianna D'Alessio, the STEM Program Manager at ReadyCT, gave an update on the Lt. Governor's Computing Challenge. ReadyCT is in the process of preparing for the recognition event, held on May 30th, 2025 at The School of Computing and Engineering at Quinnipiac University, Hamden Campus. Of the 569 total projects completed this year, 50% came from female participants. The challenge is divided into 3 distinct challenge types in order of difficulty levels: Concept, Prototype, and Development. There was an 8% increase of participation of female students in the Concept challenge submissions and a 5% increase of female participation in the Prototype submissions.

Overall, there was a 27% increase in the number of districts represented across the state that submitted to the challenge.

Additionally, this is the first year of a hands-on coding and robotics initiative through the use of miniature bots called Ozobots. These were delivered to 11 schools across 9 different districts in the state. Each participating teacher was able to receive two Ozobots for their classroom, and ReadyCT ran a coding and robotic 90-minute session with those educators and their students in the classroom.

V. CT Women in Manufacturing Advisory Council Update

Paul Lavoie noted that while he was the initial leader, the CT Women in Manufacturing Advisory Council has shifted to an all-female leadership. The Council's *Manufacturing Shake-Up* podcast, which provides 20-minute "snackable" episodes highlighting women's personal stories, career journeys, and advice for young girls considering manufacturing careers recently reached its 52nd episode.

The next *ElevateHER* Council meeting is scheduled for tomorrow, May 20th, 2025 from 3:00 to 5:00 PM at Slalom in Hartford.

VI. Other Updates + Announcements

Irene Parisi discussed that the Connecticut State Department of Education is currently conducting an artificial intelligence (AI) pilot in six school districts across grades 7–12. This initiative explores how AI-enhanced tools can be effectively integrated into classroom instruction.

In addition, the Department is collaborating with educators and CTE coordinators to revise and update Connecticut's standards for technological and engineering literacy. These revised standards, aligned with national benchmarks, will emphasize creativity, innovation, and hands-on learning. Once finalized, the standards will undergo internal review, presentation to the Commissioner, and ultimately be submitted to the State Board of Education for approval.

VII. Upcoming ED and STEAM Subcommittee meetings

- August 26th, 2025, 3:00 pm
- November 12th, 2025, 3:00pm

VIII. Adjourn

Paul Lavoie ended the meeting at 3:48pm.