

Thank you for this opportunity. I'm Tamara Hudgins from Girlstart. If you haven't heard of us, Girlstart's mission is to increase girls' interest and engagement in STEM.

We believe that by empowering more girls to continue STEM studies, we can help address our region's STEM workforce inequities and positively impact innovation and economic development.

Girlstart delivers programs designed to promote girls' early engagement and academic success in STEM, encourage girls' aspirations and persistence in STEM education and careers, and incubate a talented and diverse STEM workforce.

Founded here in Austin, in 97, Girlstart is the only nonprofit in the nation specifically dedicated to empowering and equipping girls in STEM by providing year-round STEM educational programming. Our programs have been recognized by Change the Equation as 'what works' in STEM education in America.

Last year alone, we reached more than 11,000 girls, teachers, and family members in 10 districts in Central Texas, and in a few other places afield.

Girlstart programs are open to primarily 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls. Last year, of our two core programs, 60% of the girls we served are high need, and more than 55% of the girls we serve are of a non-Caucasian ethnicity.

Girlstart has been a grateful partner of NI for many years. NI has been involved in one of our programs, Girls in STEM, which brings together more than 500 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls for a day of hands-on workshops led by professional women who work in STEM fields.

NI has provided financial support to our organization as a corporation, but in addition, they, as a collective of individuals, have vitally supported Girlstart's mission in many ways.

NI volunteers have contributed to Girlstart in ways that have built our capacity as well as relief to our budget; among the ways that I

can point to NI's impact include our website, which was designed, planned, and built by a NI volunteer who continues to coach and train us so that our website is updated. NI employees help us continually with updates to our building—a former nursing home that we are rehabbing in Wooten Park—that make Girlstart's STEM Center an engaging place for STEM teaching and learning.

Further, NI volunteers help us in our curriculum development and preparation. Like FIRST, we do robotics at Girlstart, and NI's talented team help us think of creative ways to use robots to solve real-world problems.

We see very clearly that National Instruments is not only a great catalyst of economic activity in the region through its direct business activities, but also that the collective impact of National Instruments' skilled and generous employee base are a formidable asset to the region.

It is with the help and support of National Instruments that we have been able to grow in the last three years from reaching about fifteen hundred girls a year to more than eleven thousand. I'm proud to tell you that our Girlstart After School program is the largest program of its kind in the nation, now reaching 40 schools. It's owing to commitment and support from smart and progressive companies like NI that makes an organization like Girlstart possible. We could not do our work without it. Thank you for inviting us to share our thoughts, and your support of NI's proposed expansion in Austin.

+875  
girls  
every  
week.