

@WORK NEXT GEN STEM

One of the top reasons girls don't pursue careers in STEM is because they rarely see people who look like them in the field. Here we show them ten game changers who are paving the way for the next generation.

NICOLE SMALL (FEATURED LEFT)

CEO OF LYDA HILL PHILANTHROPIES AND LH CAPITAL

For Nicole Small, every day is different, but no day lacks inspiration. "One day, I could be looking at a biotech investment that impacts cancer, and the next I'm meeting an NGO that's trying to save the oceans," says the CEO of Dallas-based Lyda Hill Philanthropies and LH Capital, organizations that invest in game-changing advances in science and nature. "The world's a pretty challenging place, but we're constantly inspired by the people we meet who are committed to finding innovative solutions both in the nonprofit and for-profit worlds."

Inspiration. It's what helped Small and an amazing team raise over \$200M to build and open the Perot Museum of Nature and Science in 2012, despite a variety of challenges including the 2008 recession and a few naysayers. It's what kept her motivated when she was diagnosed with breast cancer and had to endure a full course of cancer treatments, all while leading a team and raising a family as a young CEO and mother. It's what led her and Lyda Hill to launch IF/THEN, a new initiative to advance women in STEM as role models for the next generation. Inspiration: It's what the Lyda Hill Philanthropies team is giving girls everywhere.

IF she can see it, THEN she can be it.

DR. RAE WYNN-GRANT

CARNIVORE ECOLOGIST

Dr. Rae Wynn-Grant might just have the coolest job on the planet. As a carnivore ecologist working for National Geographic, she researches how endangered species are impacted by human interaction. Her work currently focuses on grizzly bears in Montana, but has previously taken her around the world—including to Tanzania and Kenya to study lions. Though she says more and more women are breaking into the traditionally male field, Wynn-Grant feels "very isolated in being a black woman" in the space. That's why Wynn-Grant devotes much of her time to mentoring students, especially those of color. "I never had a person of color to guide me, and I'm trying to make sure that other students will."

IF girls are shown a spectrum of possibilities, THEN they can see themselves successfully.



@WORK NEXT GEN STEM EDITION

DHEERJA KAUR CHIEF PRODUCT OFFICER, THE SKIMM

In 2015 Dheerja Kaur left a software product and programming job at ESPN (she's a die-hard soccer fan) for theSkimm. Her journey wasn't always easy. "I battled different forms of imposter syndrome," she says. That's likely because she had almost never encountered a woman in her field. "Everybody who I saw succeed in the career path I was on was a man, or not a person of color." She credits the female-led team at theSkimm in helping her own her confidence.

IF women are empowered to be their authentic selves, THEN we will create a more inclusive environment.



NI'KITA WILSON COSMETIC CHEMIST, FOUNDER AND CEO OF NI'KITA WILSON BEAUTY CHEMIST

Ni'Kita Wilson was always getting into trouble as a kid. "I was just so curious," says the cosmetic chemist. "I was eight-years-old and melting plastic." Now when she's melting materials, it's to make makeup, skincare, and haircare products for black women. But it's about more than just the right shade of foundation: "I want to create a community where black women never forget how dope they are."

IF girls have mentors who look like them, THEN they can be whatever they want.



KJ MILLER CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, MENTED COSMETICS

It all started over the quest for the perfect nude lipstick. "That was our *aha* moment," says KJ Miller, who was enjoying a glass of wine with fellow co-founder Amanda Johnson when they realized they had limited makeup choices to complement their deep skin tone. That's why the duo founded Mented, a cosmetic business geared toward women of color. Mented utilizes consumer data to deliver products their buyers truly want. Why? "Everyone should get to feel celebrated and beautiful," says Miller.

IF you fail along the way, THEN success will be much sweeter.



[PRESENTED BY IF/THEN]

DR. MITU KHANDAKER CEO, GLOW UP GAMES, PROFESSOR, NYU GAME CENTER

Mitu Khandaker loved playing video games growing up, but credits two childhood television shows that had female game developers with sparking her career: "It was one of those moments of, *if she can see it, she can be it*," she says. So, Khandaker became. Along with a team of women of color, she founded Glow Up Games, a company making video games that feature diverse narratives and characters. "I didn't see myself in video games growing up," she says. "It's so important for young girls to be able to see themselves represented in games. My mission is to change the face of what the industry looks like so it gets easier for the women coming up behind us."

IF we highlight female role models, THEN we can inspire young girls.



DAWN SCOTT HIGH PERFORMANCE COACH, U.S. WOMEN'S NATIONAL SOCCER TEAM

If you were one of the 14.3 million Americans to cheer when the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team won the 2019 World Cup, you have Dawn Scott to thank. As the team's High Performance Coach, Scott uses scientific principles to optimize the physical performance of players and minimize injury risk. As one of the top sports scientists in her field, Dawn is truly a leader and innovator in the space. If one of her goals is to make her players the best they can be, the other is to motivate young girls: "If you have an interest in something," she says, "pursue it."

IF you have a dream, THEN chase it.



ANI LIU RESEARCH-BASED ARTIST

Though she studied architecture at Harvard, Ani Liu's career can't be defined by one word. Liu is merging science and art to create multisensory experiences unlike anything you've ever seen in a museum. Take her "human perfume" project, in which she was inspired by the power of genetic engineering to bottle the smell of a loved one in a fragrance. "I'm hoping that this kind of work will expose people to more ethical questions related to technology," she says. "Art is so powerful in terms of telling stories, but it also changes what is possible."

IF there were more female role models in STEM, THEN girls would feel inspired to pursue the impossible.

DAWN SCOTT: BRAD SMITH/ISP/PHOTOS.COM

NEHA SINGH FOUNDER AND CEO, OBSESS

Neha Singh started her career the way most graduates from MIT's prestigious computer science program dream: "I was a software engineer at Google for five years," she says. "But I was really interested in fashion." Her love for both fields intersected flawlessly when she founded her company, Obsess, a mobile ecommerce market that is reimagining the way we shop by creating highly curated, virtual luxury stores. Obsess gives consumers the feeling of walking around a chic brick-and-mortar store without leaving the comfort of their couch. "Our mission is to make shopping fun again," says Singh. "There's magic in what we're building—it's fashion, and it's tech."

IF you can dream it, THEN you can build it.



IF/THEN
DISCOVER MORE AT
IFTHENSHECAN.ORG



DR. BECCA PEIXOTTO ARCHAEOLOGIST, PEROT MUSEUM OF NATURE AND SCIENCE

In 2013, Becca Peixotto found herself wedged between a rock and a hard place. Literally. The then 38-year-old was hand-picked for the Rising Star expedition, a spelunking mission that sent a 4'10" Peixotto and an all-female team down a cave in South Africa to excavate humanoid fossils. The moment wasn't just a monumental one for the scientific community, but for women in the field of archaeology: "There is still gender inequality," she says. "But it's really exciting to see teams of women working together, and women in leadership roles."

IF we want girls and women to succeed in STEM careers, THEN we must work together to support them throughout their journey.