MARCH NEWSLETTER

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WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Women's History Month is a powerful reminder of the countless contributions women have made—and continue to make—in shaping our world, especially in technology. From pioneers like Fei-Fei Li, whose work has advanced artificial intelligence, to innovators like Joy Buolamwini, who shines a light on bias in AI systems, women are driving both innovation and accountability in the tech landscape. Their leadership not only transforms industries but also inspires the next generation to imagine themselves as creators, problem-solvers, and change-makers. In March, we hosted several events to honor and share important women in tech. Please read about many other impressive women in tech on our Trailblazer page this month, and through the year.





The Past We Inherit. The Future We Build.

On March 12, Brenda Wilkerson spoke at our Women's History Month celebration, co-hosted by Vision 1948 and IEEE Women in Engineering. Brenda is CEO of AnitaB.org - the organization that hosts the annual Grace Hopper Celebration (GHC), the world's largest gathering of women in tech. After the event one audience member shared, "Brenda's presentation was thoughtful and inspiring. Her perspectives were genuine and illustrated her real world experiences. Her story-telling made it relatable and engaging on so many levels." Two audience members won a pass to GHC'26 in Anaheim CA. Vision 1948 and IEEE WIE are grateful for the support of our co-sponsors North Central College Engineering, InspiHer Tech, and IEEE Chicago Section.

Trailblazers Show Us the Way



Jane Mack-Crane shared her Women Trailblazers in Tech presentation on March 27, at the invitation of Nokia Naperville's StrongHer women's group. Jane shared the stories of women who have made tremendous contributions to technology since its earliest days, stories that show that women are capable of innovation and discovery, that we belong in the development of tech, and the world needs our dreams and determination to help shape the tools that impact humanity. All enjoyed the opportunity to network after the lunchtime presentation.

Women Trailblazers in Tech at Elmwood Elementary School in Naperville



On March 18 Jane Mack-Crane shared the stories of Women Trailblazers in Tech with students in an assembly at Elmwood Elementary in Naperville. Ada Lovelace and Grace Hopper joined the presentation, with students Teegan and Charlie dressed up to play the parts! 300 students attended the 30-minute presentation, and each student received an Ada Lovelace sticker. For this event, Jane adapted her GHC 2025 Trailblazers in Tech presentation to be understood by the elementary school audience; this is the latest addition to our portfolio of Vision 1948 activities available to schools and STEM events.

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VISION 1948 IN THE COMMUNITY

Youth Academy Open House at College of DuPage



Vision 1948 representatives Daryl Varney, Rose Martin, and Randee Adams participated in the College of DuPage Youth Academy Open House. They engaged with students from elementary through high school on the basics of Artificial Intelligence through hands-on demonstrations using Google's Teachable Machine and facial recognition tools. Students and parents actively participated and learned a great deal while having fun.

Catalyst Maria School Career Day

Vision 1948 participated in Catalyst Maria's Career Day in Chicago. Eileen Gelblat presented to middle schoolers about engineering and media-driven misconceptions, using circuit boards and other hardware (HW) to help scholars visualize the work of an electrical engineer. She also visited three 2nd grade classrooms, discussing engineering applications in their daily lives, and students touched the HW she brought. Jane Mack-Crane spoke with high school juniors and seniors about what a tech career is really like (not the stereotypes!), shared salary data for the top 20 highest-earning bachelor's degrees, and led students in the Tech Helps! game to spark dialogue on using technology to make the world a better place. The scholars were enthusiastic and engaged, making it a great experience for all.

Wilbur Wright College STEM Panel



Jane Mack-Crane and Eileen Gelblat were part of a Women in STEM panel discussion at Wilbur Wright College in Chicago. They were joined by Dr. Patricia Miceli, Professor of Math at the college, answering questions about their experiences as women working in STEM careers, lessons learned, and advice for those just starting out. They spoke about the importance of asking questions, self-advocating, and for allies to be present and pay attention to ways that women's contributions might be undermined. The panel was moderated by Fatimah Musa, a 2nd year student at the college. It was a lively discussion and the students offered thought-provoking questions. Vision 1948 appreciates the opportunity to be part of the vibrant Engineering program at Wilbur Wright / City Colleges of Chicago.

Meadow Glens Elementary School STEM Night



Vision 1948 (Tina Hinch, Randee Adams and Rose Martin) participated as an exhibitor at Naperville's Meadow Glens Elementary School STEM Night—great vibes! Through hands-on AI activities and fun math games, we introduced students and adults to the excitement of technology and how it can solve real-world problems. We even caught the attention of Congressman Bill Foster, a former physicist at Fermilab. Students were curious and eager to learn, reminding us how powerful early exposure to tech can be in sparking imagination, building confidence, and planting seeds for the next generation.

AI Presentation at Naperville Newcomers & Neighbors

Tina Hinch and Jane Mack-Crane presented "AI Explained: The Good, The Bad, and The Guardrails" to the Naperville Newcomers & Neighbors. This multimedia presentation introduced the fundamentals of AI, its transformative benefits, potential risks, and what is needed for mitigation and protection. Participants also engaged in a hands-on session provided by Randee Adams, Eileen Gelblat and Rose Martin, demonstrating how AI can assist with daily tasks. Attendees noted that the session made a complex and often intimidating topic clear, accessible and useful.

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NEWS AND RESOURCE INFO

Friends of IEEE Chicago Section Award



Tina Hinch and Jane Mack-Crane were honored to represent Vision 1948/AAUW Naperville to receive the Friends of IEEE Chicago Section Award on March 24. IEEE is the world's largest technical professional organizations, whose core purpose is to ensure technology serves humanity and improves global conditions. We are proud to have supported the IEEE STEM Spark! summit and also collaborated on our Women's History Month speaker event. We are delighted to partner with an organization whose values so closely align with ours. We look forward to continuing this collaboration - working together to expand access and inspire future innovators.

Scholarship Opportunity from Chicago Regional Section SWE

Applications for Society of Women Engineers Chicago Regional Section scholarships for next school year are open now through April 17! The linked forms below contain general information as well as qualification details.

- 2026 Wendy Landwehr Scholarship Application - Current Engineering Students
- 2026 SWE Chicago Scholarship Application - Graduating Seniors

University of Illinois Hosting 104th Engineering Open House

The Grainger College of Engineering at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign is hosting their 104th Engineering Open House on April 10-11, 2026, *Forging the Future*. This is the nation's largest student organized STEM fair with over 200 exhibits ranging from interactive computer science and AI exhibits, workshops in Python and CAD, to the Dark Matter Disaster quantum tech escape room. Kids and adults of all ages are encouraged to attend. Find out more at EOH Website or download the EOH Visitor's Guide. Of the 29 member EOH student committee, 20 are women!

3M Career Event

On Thursday, April 2nd, (12:00 PT, 2:00 CT) 3M is hosting *Let's Talk Tech: IT and Research & Development Careers at 3M*. 3M is hiring across IT and R&D, from internships to senior-level roles. This is a chance to hear directly from the team, ask questions, and get a better sense of where you might fit. The event is free, although you must register as a member of ANITAB.ORG, which offers a free membership. Register now to save your spot.

Calling All STEM Educators: College of DuPage Hiring for Summer 2026

The College of DuPage is hiring instructors to teach STEAM related classes in the Summer 2026 Youth Academy. The College is looking for educators excited to teach the next generation the wonders of STEAM related content. For details please visit the Summer 2026 Youth Open Positions page. Instructor positions are part-time, paid positions that cover opportunities in grades K-12. The instructors are responsible for course development. For additional information on the Summer 2026 Youth Academy class offerings you can visit the course catalog here.