**What is STEM Scholars?**

2017-2018 was the inaugural year for SWIC’s STEM Scholars program. With funding from the National Science Foundation, students admitted into the program receive financial, academic and social support with the hope that these aids will help them complete bachelor’s degrees in STEM fields.

Science  
Technology  
Engineering  
Mathematics

Contact Joy Branlund or Chris Farmer for more information

**Who are the STEM Scholars?**

Twenty one students (9 freshmen and 13 sophomores) are in the STEM Scholars program, including the two modeling their eclipse masks on the first day of classes.

STEM Scholars represent a range of STEM majors: astronomy, biology, chemistry, engineering, math and physics.

Because they are required to spend time together, the Scholars have become a tight-knit group. Our returning Scholars all took a one-credit special topics class in computer science taught by David Collins in the fall semester, and took a one-credit special topics class in Biology taught by Bob Weck spring 2017. This semester, Scholars are all taking the same Math special topics course, taught by Jennifer Simonton. In addition, they meet together for weekly study sessions in the Success Center.

The Scholars are also forming strong bonds with faculty. Each Scholar is assigned a faculty mentor, and they meet together several times a semester. They also build strong ties with their special topics instructor (who also coordinates the activities and enrichment events for the semester).

**Know a student who likes STEM and needs a speech class?**

In spring 2018, Professor Kristen Ruppert-Leach will teach a special SPCH 151 class geared towards STEM-minded students.
**Hooray for STEM Scholars**

- Summer Wolfe completed a paid summer internship with National Great Rivers Research and Education Center.
- Josh Westenberg and Nancy Sewell volunteered at the Science Olympiad’s regional tournament at Lindenwood University in February.
- Nancy Sewell transferred to SLU to continue her

**Enrichment events**

STEM Scholars are required to attend enrichment events that introduce them to working scientists and engineers in the St. Louis region. During the 2017-2018 school year, the STEM Scholars visited:

- Illinois American Water’s treatment facility in East St. Louis
- The computing technology that drives Enterprise Rent-A-Car’s corporate headquarters in St. Louis
- The robotics lab at SIUE
- Monsanto’s research facility in Chesterfield, MO
- The hellbender breeding facility at the St. Louis zoo
- SIUC’s McNair Scholars Symposia (summer)

This semester, students toured the inner machinery driving the Arch trams and learned more about engineering in a *Dream Big!* screening and panel discussion. They will also visit SIUC.

**Help spread the word!**

Have you met a student who seems excited about STEM but discouraged about pursuing a STEM career? This might be because they don’t know about STEM careers, don’t think they have the background to make it in STEM, don’t think they have the money to pay for years and years of school, don’t know any STEM professionals (or any STEM professionals that look like them), or think they aren’t good enough to be successful. If so, encourage them to apply to our program.

Applications are due March 1.  
[https://www.swic.edu/academics/academic-divisions/math-sciences/stem-scholar-program/](https://www.swic.edu/academics/academic-divisions/math-sciences/stem-scholar-program/)