

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2020-1033

TITLE: Resolution on International Women in Engineering Day

AUTHOR(S): Senator Suzanna Barna

SPONSORS: Senator Zachery Utt, Senator Brianne Seaberg, Senator Rebekah Shields, Senator Elizabeth Hartzog, Senator Zoe Turner, Senator Elizabeth Swiersz, Senator Simon Gee, Senator Yashasvi Bhat, Senator Faith Allen, Chairwoman Feraby Hoffman, Chairwoman Samantha Girschick, Senator Angelo Sciabrassi

WHEREAS, the National Women in Engineering Day was established in 2014 by the Women's Engineering Society (WES) to celebrate the 95th anniversary of the WES in the United Kingdom to raise international awareness for women in engineering and the career path possible in the industry; and,

WHEREAS, International Women in Engineering Day was established in 2017 to celebrate and progress women in engineering globally; and,

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Education reported approximately 35,000 women graduated with an engineering degree compared to about 127,000 men in 2015; and,

WHEREAS, Emily Roebling worked as a project engineer and manager on the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge in New York City when her husband was paralyzed and is acknowledged as one of the early female engineers; and,

WHEREAS, Maryly VanLeer Peck paved the way for women to excel in engineering as the first woman to graduate with an engineering Bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University, as the first female to graduate with a master's degree and Ph.D. from the University of Florida in Chemical Engineering, and as the first woman to lead a Florida community college; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) support women at UF and in the greater Gainesville region to foster success in personal and professional goals through activities such as career guidance, Wise Ups, and mentorship outreach opportunities; and,

WHEREAS, the Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering's Dean is Cammy Abernathy since 2009 and is the first woman dean of the college; and,

WHEREAS, in Fall of 2015, only 28% of undergraduates in the College of Engineering were women; and,

WHEREAS, women in engineering are underrepresented and face direct and indirect discrimination in the engineering industry; and,

WHEREAS, women comprise of 15.7% of the engineering and architectural professional jobs according to the US Bureau of Labor statistics from 2019; and,

WHEREAS, women in developing countries tend to have large roles in the engineering industry, around 30% of the workforce in countries such as Costa Rica, Vietnam, and United Arab Emirates, compared to developed countries according to United Nations Educational, Science, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); and,

WHEREAS, according to Harvard Business Review, subtle workplace gender roles, where women are seen as more professionally apt with soft skills while men are seen as technically capable, influence the perception of women in the Engineering industry by their male counterparts and the businesses themselves; and,

WHEREAS, annually, June 23 is celebrated as International Women in Engineering Day to support and empower women in Engineering; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the contributions women have made in Engineering and that it is imperative to work towards a more inclusive and diverse workforce in Engineering careers.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the importance of encouraging women throughout their education to pursue technical careers such as Engineering and foster confidence in their technical capabilities and skills.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the gender disparity in engineering and urges the support for women who are pursuing engineering degrees through increasing awareness and understanding about workplace biases and how to overcome them in their profession.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to University of Florida President W. Kent Fuchs, Provost Joseph Glover, Chief Diversity Officer Antonio Farias, Dean of Students Heather White, Vice President of Student Affairs D'Andra Mull, College of Engineering Dean Cammy Abernathy, Student Body President Trevor Pope, Student Body Vice President Lauredan Official, Women's Affairs Cabinet Director Hayley Palumbo, UF Panhellenic Council President Alexa Jean Young, President of Women's Student Association Elizabeth Lossada-soto, and the Society of Women Engineers.^[P]_[SEP]

Sources:

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