

2024 CHAMPION OF ENGINEERING EDUCATION AWARD

Lia Wright, P.Eng., B.Ed.



Lia Wright, P.Eng., B.Ed. is a graduate of the University of Manitoba Price Faculty of Engineering (Mechanical Engineering, 2004).

During her time in the faculty, she was inspired to enhance the diversity of the student population and became involved in outreach. She eventually became the Engineering Outreach Coordinator, creating presentations for high school students that were informative, fun, and engaging. Her goals were to make the subject matter less intimidating and more relatable to a wider array of students, as well as to increase female enrolment the following year.

Throughout her career, she volunteered in schools at every opportunity to judge science fairs, participate in S.T.E.M. weeks, develop engaging S.T.E.M.-based games, and coach sports teams. In her spare time, Lia created a S.T.E.M.-loving alter ego named “Nelly Neutron” who toured Manitoba and Alberta. She introduced the ideas of experimentation and observation and showed kids aged four through seven that chemistry and physics are accessible and for them.

This passion led Lia to earn a Bachelor of Education from the University of Manitoba in 2021. Upon graduation, she was awarded the Gold Medal in Education, the Marguerite Wallman Prize for Excellence in S.T.E.M., the Dr. Robert Fletcher Medal and Prize

in Education, and the Truesdale Medal and Prize. She now works as a 7th grade science, math, and design teacher and continues to inspire students of all backgrounds to consider engineering and other S.T.E.M.-based careers.

In her time teaching, Lia’s passion has shone through all that she does. Whether she is organizing a Mars Habitat Design Competition judged by industry engineers, inviting a NASA astronaut to speak to the school, inventing effective S.T.E.M.-based games, enhancing 2SLGBTQI+, cultural minority, and female involvement in S.T.E.M. activities, or coaching sports teams and relating everything back to physics, she approaches everything with a zeal that is unmatched. It is worth noting that upon announcing the winners of the Mars Habitat Competition, Lia’s students were beyond thrilled to find out that the prize was a tour of the Price Faculty of Engineering. Their excitement spoke volumes about the positive messaging they had received about the discipline, and the faculty, along with all practicing engineers, have Lia to thank for that.

In recognition of her dedication to the promotion of S.T.E.M. topics among youth, and her desire to inspire a new and diverse generation of engineers, Engineers Geoscientists Manitoba, together with the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Manitoba, is pleased to present the 2024 Champion of Engineering Education Award to Lia Wright, P.Eng., B.Ed.