

An Open Letter to CEOs

I grew up seeing my grandfather fix everything in and around our house. He taught me how to fix car engines and household appliances. In his eyes, I was just as capable as anyone else.

But in high school, it was a different story. I noticed it was the boys who were encouraged to do the fun things like light the bunsen burners or program the robots. I was often given the "It's because you're a girl" excuse as if I shouldn't get my hands dirty. It was easy to start feeling STEM wasn't for me.

During my junior year in high school, an internship at Abbott changed everything. I got the chance to learn from female engineers excelling in their field. They taught me how much of an impact I could make and solidified my desire to be a mechanical engineer.

High school STEM internship programs like Abbott's are hard to come by. Especially for someone like me. Please do whatever is in your power to create opportunities for more girls to get the support they're lacking.

Women are natural problem solvers, but we don't get the same chances as males. That's one problem we all need to fix.

Sincerely,

Kaliah L., Age 18

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