Wyoming Women in Science

Michele Stark
WSGC Associate Director
What is WIS?

- Day-long conference for 7th-12th graders
- STEM career exploration
- Hands-on workshops
- Female role models
- Info about college
- Experience a college campus
Why WIS?

- Young women lose interest in STEM studies around middle school age
- Very little exposure to STEM fields statewide
  - No science centers/museums, only three planetaria
  - Rural schools tend to lack in STEM curriculum
  - No high-tech industry in the state
  - Economy is: energy extraction, service, agriculture
  - 22% of state residents over age 25 have bachelor’s degree (lower than national average)
- State is trying to change this and will need to start “home growing” students to fill needs
Where is WIS?

- Univ. of Wyoming, Laramie (1999)
  - Mid-May
  - Early-Mid October
Who’s involved in WIS?

- University of Wyoming
- Central Wyoming College
- National Weather Service
- F.E. Warren AFB, ICBM & Heritage Museum
- EPSCoR
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife
- State Veterinary Lab
- Girl Scouts
- UW Science Posse
- School Districts
- Local non-prof. organizations
- Local companies
- Etc…
What happens at WIS?

- Visit a college campus
- Meet college “recruiters” and find out about getting into college
- Two hands-on workshop sessions
- Meet women role models in STEM careers (including a keynote speaker)
WIS Workshops

- 45-50 minute hands-on workshops
- Designed to be “a day in the life of…”
- Span the gamut of STEM fields.
Some Numbers...

- **2008 Laramie:**
  - 320+ students (95% female)
  - 25+ teachers (85% female)
  - 14 schools, from 10 communities

- **Keynote speaker:** Ryan Prouty  
  (ISS Missions Evaluation Room Lead, JSC)

- **29 workshop sessions**

- **The 5 most popular workshops:**
  
  *Got DNA?, Stargazing, Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea, Psychology and Law, How does a Thunderstorm Develop?*