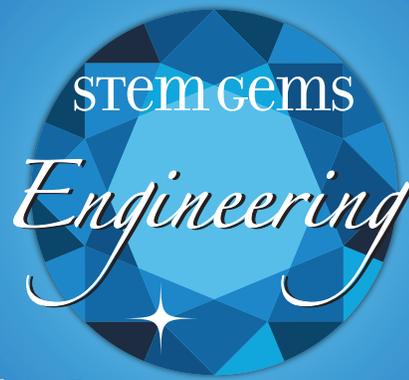


STEM Gem Career:
NUCLEAR ENGINEER

STEM Gem:
SARAH KOVALESKI

“If there is a subject that sparks your curiosity and your imagination, follow it and see where it takes you. There will always be people who think you can’t do something. You don’t have to believe them.”



Is a career in Nuclear Engineering in your future? STEM Gem Sarah Kovaleski manages a team of engineers responsible for maintaining the technical design of a nuclear power plant and ensuring that the plant's operations conform perfectly to all federal regulations. Serious stuff! Read her story and digest. Watch one of her videos. Then, with your STEM Gems Tribe, **discuss, explore, reflect,** and **act.**

DISCUSS

1. How do Nuclear Engineers like Ms. Kovaleski make a difference in the world?
2. What experiences did Ms. Kovaleski have that led to her pursuit of a career as a Nuclear Engineer?
3. What is Ms. Kovaleski's educational background?
4. What are some of the challenges that Ms. Kovaleski faced along her journey?
5. What are some of Ms. Kovaleski's key accomplishments?
6. What inspired you most about Ms. Kovaleski's story?
7. Ms. Kovaleski says: *“If there is a subject that sparks your curiosity and your imagination, follow it and see where it takes you. There will always be people who think you can't do something. You don't have to believe them.”* How did Ms. Kovaleski live this idea in her own life? How does her advice resonate with you?

EXPLORE

1. To pursue a career as a Nuclear Engineer, what college majors should you consider? What colleges and universities have programs in these areas?
2. What companies hire Nuclear Engineers? What is the salary range for a Nuclear Engineer?
3. What classes should you take in middle and high school to prepare for college and a career as a Nuclear Engineer?
4. Name at least two other women Nuclear Engineers. How are they similar to Ms. Kovalski? How are they different?
5. What professional organizations support women in Nuclear Engineering? Do they have programs available for middle and high school students?

REFLECT

Ms. Kovalski says maintaining a sense of balance in life is important: for her that means engaging in hobbies, exercising, and spending time with family. What activities help you to remain balanced?

ACT

It's time to step outside your comfort zone. Name one concrete thing you will do before your next meeting that will have you one step closer to becoming a STEM Gem. Blog about it. Include it in your written or photo journal. Hold yourself accountable.

Work hard. Be brave. Stay curious.

BE A GEM!

Stephanie Espy

P.S. I'd love to hear about your journey. Share on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram and tag @STEMGemsBook #STEMGemsTribe, or email me at tribe@STEMGemsBook.com.