

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**First Lady Frances Wolf Visits Harrisburg University, Highlights Governor Wolf's Investments in STEM Education through PAsmart**  
**Harrisburg, PA** – First Lady Frances Wolf today joined students, educators and members of the [Pennsylvania Commission for Women](#) at Harrisburg University of Science and Technology to highlight a \$20 million investment Governor Wolf is making in STEM and computer science learning through his [PAsmart](#) initiative. The First Lady visited with high school and middle school students who are participating in STEM Summer Exploration Camps focused on various topics including coding, biotechnology and 3D modeling. During the visit, the First Lady emphasized the need to increase participation of girls and young women in STEM education.

“Last year, twice as many boys took computer science courses as girls, yet over the next 10 years, over 70 percent of new jobs will require computer science skills,” the First Lady said. “Harrisburg University is leading the way in not only providing a quality education in science, technology, engineering, math and computer science fields – but also in encouraging more girls and women to enter these educational courses, and eventually careers. PAsmart will help to expand this work by giving even more students the opportunity to earn a quality STEM education.”

“We were pleased to have First Lady Frances Wolf visit Harrisburg University of Science and Technology to discuss the importance of women in STEM and to see our Summer STEM Exploration Camps in action,” said University Provost Dr. Bilita Mattes, who also is a founder and executive director of the STEM-UP Network, a social enterprise dedicated to attracting and supporting women in the STEM fields. “Encouraging women to enter STEM disciplines is crucial to the health of the economy. STEM skills are required for 70 percent of today’s jobs, yet only 24 percent of the STEM workforce is made up of women. Women make up about half of the entire workforce.”

“At a time when there are roughly 3 million more STEM jobs available than workers, and when companies are constantly seeking a competitive edge, women remain notoriously underrepresented in the technology industry,” said Tracey Welson-Rossman, CEO of [TechGirlz](#) and member of the Pennsylvania Commission for Women. “We must engage girls at a young age to help them discover, embrace and advance technology related skills in order to diversify and fill workforce needs. We thank the Governor and First Lady for their dedication to women and girls in STEM through the PAsmart initiative.”

The governor’s PAsmart initiative is a new and innovative \$30 million investment in job training and STEM education to focus on fast-growing, in-demand jobs, including:

- **\$20 million for STEM and computer science education at all levels.** Nearly 300,000 jobs in the commonwealth require skills in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Over the next decade, more than 70 percent of new jobs will require these skills.
- **\$7 million for apprenticeships** with a goal of doubling the number of registered apprentices by 2025. Since Governor Wolf established the commonwealth’s first Apprenticeship and Training Office in 2016, the number of registered apprentices has increased by nearly 20 percent from 13,282 registered apprentices to 15,972 statewide.

- **\$3 million increase for Industry Partnerships** which bring together workers and multiple employers in the same industry in a public-private partnership to provide job training.

The initiative is built on recommendations of the governor's Middle Class Task Force, which included leaders from the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO, Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry, education, and workforce development.

The PA WDB will provide recommendations on the distribution of the \$30 million in PAsmart funding, which will be driven out through a competitive grants process. Organizations that will be eligible to apply include: local education agencies; intermediate units; postsecondary institutions; local workforce development boards; public libraries; employers; labor organizations; chambers of commerce; after-school providers; education, training and workforce providers; nonprofits; community organizations, and others.

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