

GEARS Project

Title: Who is a scientist?

Creator: Adrienne George

Objective: This project is interactive and can be implemented into camps and classrooms. This project will allow students to address the misconceptions of what a scientist is and who is a scientist and also allow me to share my story of becoming a scientist.

Target Group: This project is best suited for elementary to high school students.

Project: Originally when I participated in the COSEE Gears Professional Development Workshop for Early Career Scientists in Honolulu, Hawaii I selected a project that would work with underrepresented students and minorities within the sciences. While working with some of the other participants and mentors, I initially thought I would do presentations about my story of becoming a scientist being an African American woman. I thought this would be a great way to let others know that this is a field that you can go into and be a person of color. As most people know, if you see someone that looks like you doing what you want to do, it makes your dream much more tangible and obtainable. However, once I thought more about my idea I thought it was pretty boring and would end up with me just talking about myself. I also decided that it would be much more effective if my project was interactive and with this new mentality I started to dream up my new project.

My new project will include going into schools and camps and asking who is a scientist and what does the word scientist mean to you. We can have the students come to the board and write one word that they think of when they hear the word scientist. Next, we can ask who is a scientist. I would like to show a series of pictures of different people from different races and nationalities and tell the students there are a certain number of scientists in the group of pictures and ask them to identify who they think the scientists are. After everyone writes down who they think they are, we will go through each picture and

discuss who they think are the scientists. We will also discuss why they think some are scientists. This discussion will be crucial to document because it gives insight to what students identify as to who can be a scientist. For the next portion of the project I will ask the students to tell me if I am a scientist and what makes them determine their conclusion. This activity will lead into my final segment of the project which will be me actually telling my story of becoming a scientist. I will discuss my upbringing in Philadelphia, PA, attending public school for all of my education, and how no one in my family is a scientist or holds any type of doctoral degree. I will also discuss different opportunities and mentoring programs I participated in such as Minorities Striving and Pursuing Higher Degrees of Success in Earth System Science (MS PHD'S).