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EDITOR'S PICK

South Dakota Mines Hosts iNSPiRE by Omnitech to Empower the Next Generation of Women in STEM

Tod Stephens

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A student uses augmented reality to complete a task during the spring 2022 iNSPiRE by Omnitech event held in Sioux Falls.

South Dakota Mines will play host to Omnitech's iNSPiRE event from 8 a.m. to 2p.m. on March 24 in the university's Surbeck Center.

The event gives girls grades 8 to 12 an opportunity to engage in workshops and connect with local professionals in Science, Technology, Engineering and

Mathematics (STEM) fields. iNSPiRE helps young women learn more about the variety of college and career paths available in high-tech industries. Many of the volunteers and student mentors at iNSPiRE are South Dakota Mines alumnae who have careers in local high-tech companies.

iNSPiRE has seen fantastic success in Sioux Falls in recent years, and Omnitech decided to expand the event to Rapid City for 2023. Last year more than 100 students from 20 schools attended the event supported by 20 local organizations and 39 volunteers. This year's Rapid City event filled to capacity in a short time.

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“Although a lot of STEM fields are largely dominated by men, it has been our experience that women who choose these careers are very successful,” said Joe M. Krizan, Omnitech founder, president and CEO. “We started this event to demonstrate opportunities to girls before they make career decisions and possibly iNSPiRE them to pursue STEM.”

Dr. Scyller Borglum, a South Dakota Mines alum who is a leader in the United States energy industry, will offer opening remarks and inspiration. Students will then break into smaller sessions with mentors from various fields.

The keynote speaker at iNSPiRE is Amie Konwinski, the founder and CEO of Smart Gen Society, which is a non-profit focused on informing students, parents and educators around the country about digital safety and awareness. She has



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spent her career in military leadership, computer engineering, executive marketing management and advocating for safe and private digital use.

Omnitech provides custom software solutions to businesses in South Dakota and surrounding states. Omnitech started in Sioux Falls, South Dakota in 1998 with a mission to provide a local option for software engineering solutions.

Opening a Rapid City, South Dakota office in 2018 allowed Omnitech to provide full coverage across the state and increased interaction with students from South Dakota Mines. This close relationship with Mines and other state universities has helped them fine-tune a multi-year internship program and foster strong engineering talent in the state.



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