

Good morning, thank you all for being here today. This is the 3rd Annual Women in STEM Research Symposium and we're very excited for this day to finally be here! This year's symposium is brought to you by Pipeline: Vols for Women in STEM, the Commission for Women, the UT Research Foundation and the Chancellor's Office. Huge thanks to our sponsors and all the volunteers who helped plan this in between classes, research and teaching.

I want to start today off by telling you all a story. I ran into a student earlier this year. He was a new undergraduate who had heard about the symposium, and he asked "Why only women? Isn't that sexist?" I asked him "How so? What do you mean?" He said "Well, if you have an event that's dominated by one gender, aren't you excluding an entire group of people based on some arbitrary quality." I looked at him...waited for it... he said "Ohhh, I get it."

One of my favorite quotes is from one of my favorite people, when asked "When will gender equality be over, when will it be enough" she replied "When we have 9 female supreme court justices." This of course was Ruth Bader Ginsberg. And some people balk when they hear this. How is that equality? Well, we've had 9 men on the court for however many years and no one thought that was weird!

Women make up half the workforce in the U.S. and are leaving high school with equal interest in science, technology, engineering and math fields. Though, as they continue on in the career *pipeline* as it were, the numbers start to diverge. Across the STEM fields, women make up just 24%. And these numbers are even worse for women of color, or women in leadership positions. On average, women are given fewer resources and oftentimes have to prove themselves over and over again just to be listened to and not interrupted during a conversation. Studies have shown that just having a female name on a job application makes you less likely to get the job, the reviewer will view you as less competent, and if you do get the job you'll be offered on average \$4000 less for your starting salary.

Pipeline was formed to identify 1) what are the gender distributions in STEM fields here at UT, 2) where is there inequity, and why is that happening, and 3) what can we do to improve it.

Today, we have over 90 presentations, from 30 different STEM departments here at UT and a few from ORNL as well. Among those we have undergraduate and graduate students, postdocs, faculty, and staff. Some of you spend most of your time on the Ag campus, others up on the hill. Our goal for this symposium was to bring us all together, to help expand the conversation here at UT about women in STEM and highlight the amazing work you all do on a daily basis.

We hope you'll use this as an opportunity to make new connections, practice communicating your work to a broad audience, develop professional skills that will help you each succeed once you leave UT. And we want to use this as an opportunity, to let you all know that Pipeline is here on campus, for every woman, white, black, straight, lesbian, transgender, or bi, no matter your nationality, immigration status, religion, ability, socioeconomic background, or political perspective. We're here for you.