

WIT January 2016 Newsletter

Over the past five or six years, we have participated in dozens of WIT sessions at SQL Saturdays and other tech events. One frequent topic has been encouraging the next generation of young women to consider STEM careers. How do we help young people become interested in how technology works, not just that it does work? How do we combat the negative stereotypes of technical people as portrayed in movies and television? How can we show how much fun technology really is?

Often, members of the WIT session audience express their frustration at wanting to do something to get their daughters interested in tech, but do not know where to start. One company, TechGirlz, has an answer for you! TechGirlz has inspired over 2000 girls with their TechShopz workshops. Their materials are free and include everything you need to host your own three hour workshop. On February 4th, we are hosting a [webinar](#) featuring Sarah Johnson, the Community Outreach Manager for TechGirlz. Please join us to learn how you can host your own event.

Best wishes,

Rie and Kathi

Data Platform MVP Women!

The MVP Summit was held in Redmond the week after PASS Summit last year. Most of the SQL Server sessions were held in the same large room in building 33 on the Microsoft campus. The room held two or three hundred people, I suppose, and it was largely filled with men. Late in the week, someone decided to get all of us women together for a photo. Of course, not everyone made it to campus that day, and not all female MVPs attended the Summit. I don't really know how many female Data Platform MVPs (formerly SQL Server MVPS) there are in the world, but fourteen of us were in the photo.



Once we were gathered together, I mentioned how small the group seemed compared to the rest of the room. Kalen Delaney spoke up and said it used to be so much worse; she was once the only female SQL Server MVP.

What is it that these women have that helped them to get where they are today? Of course, they spend a large amount of their time writing books, speaking, answering questions, volunteering, and teaching, but they have something else that is harder to achieve. The women in this photo are not afraid to acknowledge their accomplishments. In the words of Sheryl Sandberg, these women have decided to sit at the table. I like to think the women in this photo also have a bit of “swagger.” They are not boastful, but against societal pressure to apologize for their accomplishments, these women own them instead. Not everyone can be an MVP, but we all can learn to take credit for our talents and skills.

Great Links

We are always looking for input from our members. Please drop us a line at witvc@sqlpass.org if you have something you would like to share or if you would like to present a webinar. We are looking for any topic that would be interesting to the WIT group and data platform topics presented by women. This is a great way to get experience as a speaker.

This month we would like to recommend Lynn Langit's site [Teaching Kid's Programming](#). Lynn is a pioneer when it comes to teaching kids to code, and she has been a member of the PASS community for years. Thanks, Lynn for your many contributions!

Here is an interesting [article](#) that highlights women who made a difference in World War II by taking on unusual jobs. Thanks, Wendy, for the link!