Hello,

I am the new Outreach Coordinator for the Program for Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE). I am planning the 2015-16 Taking the Road Less Traveled conferences (TRLT) and wanted to reach out to those who have presented at past conferences to say thank you and provide information on presenting at the 2015-16 conference series! Our presenters are invaluable and we appreciate the time and effort that’s put into making this a great day for students.

As you know, after reviewing conference feedback from participants and educators over the past five years, we decided that strategic improvements to TRLT were needed to best meet the needs of today’s student. In order to make these changes to the conference, our WiSE External Advisory Board recommended a temporary suspension of the program for spring 2015. During this time, our Director, Lora Leigh Chrystal, and I have been meeting with key stakeholders and working to accomplish the following changes which were approved by the WiSE advisory board at our spring meeting in May.

1. This fall the TRLT registration system will be completely online and will allow students to individually select sessions while managing room capacity for presenters. We are very excited and pleased to offer this new format for registering for the conference! In addition, WiSE will contract with Iowa State Conference Management Systems to provide conference day logistical support in order to allow WiSE staff time to focus on developing conference content.

2. WiSE will address long waiting lists by focusing the conference on 8th-10th grade students, a critical point in time for career exploration for girls.
   a. Our Student Role Model Program, in which current WiSE students facilitate STEM activities in a variety of settings including classrooms and after school clubs, will serve 6th and 7th grade students.
   b. For 11th and 12th graders, we will continue to develop and expand a new type of experience (SWE University) designed especially for these young adults. SWE University, piloted in March of this year, provides 11th and 12th graders a chance to experience college life first hand while spending 2 days on the Iowa State University campus. Students have the chance to visit college classes, interact with faculty, and stay overnight in the Residence Halls with a current WiSE student.
   c. Please visit our website to learn more about both the Role Model Program and SWE U.

3. Focus the content of TRLT on careers that remain “the road less traveled” to provide awareness to 8-10th grade girls. Visit our website to see a list of these majors.

4. Provide more robust opportunities for teachers and parents to engage in professional development.

5. Restructure the conference day to provide more quality interactions with undergraduate students or “near-peers.” One of the ways we will achieve this is through a new type of informal
session during lunch where current STEM students will be available to answer questions and facilitate discussions with participants about pursuing STEM fields at ISU.

In order to create the schedule for our fall conference series, could you please take a moment to fill out a brief questionnaire at the link below to let me know which dates you will be able to present your session and what your needs will be?

https://iastate.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_dco9t2YlIN9ZYcR&Preview=Survey&Q_CHL=previw&BrandID=iastate

2015-2016 Conference Dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2015</th>
<th>Spring 2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 8 (8th grade)</td>
<td>March 31 (8th grade)</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 22 (8th grade)</td>
<td>April 7 (8th grade)</td>
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<td>October 29 (9th/10th grade)</td>
<td>April 28 (9th/10th grade)</td>
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Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns, and thanks again for helping us accomplish our mission of attracting more girls and women into STEM fields!

Kind regards,

Janice Crow

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