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## **Engineer STEM Program for Girls Comes to Families Forward Learning Center**

PASADENA—February 27, 2020—Sophie Poole, a junior from Westridge School for Girls, has designed and developed a 4-week program to encourage younger girls—particularly those with little access to engineering role models—to think about engineering careers and give them practical experience in engineering design.

Poole’s program will focus on giving fifth and sixth grade girls the opportunity to explore the many career paths in engineering by exposing them to professional women in various fields of engineering, along with hands-on activities highlighting coding.

“I realized the need for my project after I visited the orphanage where I was born and spent the first year of my life before I was adopted (China),” said Poole.

“The biggest issue for the girls left behind my age was boredom. They didn’t often get to go to school and prospects for them after they ‘aged out’ of the system were very grim and limited. My first thought was to continue helping those girls in China but I soon realized that we have many of the same issues here at home.”

Poole, 16, is a 2020 EngineerGirl Ambassador, trained and supported by the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) in collaboration with the Society of Women Engineers (SWE).

“Math is my happy place and the thing that brings me joy and motivation in life,” said Poole. “I believe I can share that passion with other girls in a way that will be fun and exciting.”

Families Forward Learning Center, located at 980 N. Fair Oaks Avenue in Pasadena, and our mission is to prepare families living in isolation and poverty to succeed in school and in life. Families Forward has provided free education and social services to low-income families in Pasadena and Altadena for nearly 60 years.

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