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# The Miseducation of the F&F Industry

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STEM education and careers for women are gaining traction within the F&F industry.

**M**ore women are joining the workforce than ever before, comprising 47% of the U.S. workforce, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, but they are underrepresented in many science and engineering roles. The number of women continuing their career after a certain age is dwindling, particularly in STEM (science, technology, education and mathematics) fields.

As a result, STEM education has caught the attention of a variety of organizations seeking to boost education and employment for women within the F&F and beauty industries.

Under the 2016 L'Oréal USA For Women in Science fellowship, five U.S.-based women will be granted \$60,000 each toward their postdoctoral research. In 2015, the program funded 60 post-doctoral women scientists nearly \$3 million in grants. Recipients hailed from a variety of science-related backgrounds including astrophysics, marine biology, bioengineers, biologists and more.

The fellowship “supports female scientists as they reach a crucial moment in their career, when they are especially likely to leak from the scientific pipeline,” says L'Oréal.

This is an opportunity for growth not only for L'Oréal, but for the industry as a whole. When the program began in 1998, more than 2,250 scientists from over 110 countries earned recognition for their work in science-related fields.

Another supporter of STEM education, The American Association of University Women (AAUW), is one of the largest global funders of women's education. The group has worked with Congresswoman Elizabeth Esty (D-CT), Congresswoman Susan Brooks (R-IN), the International Fragrance Association, North America (IFRA North America) and the American Association of University Women (AAUW) to promote the fragrance industry as a “conduit for STEM careers for young women.”



With youth camps like Tech Trek and Tech Savvy, AAUW is focused on changing the perception of female scientists, who are more likely to forgo science-related fields at a young age.

And the results? According to an AAUW survey, 87% of respondents were introduced to new STEM careers, while 73% of respondents were introduced to STEM careers that they were previously unaware of.

It is clear that STEM education can bring new perspectives to the F&F industry by including more women. By funding educational initiatives from youth to adulthood, the F&F and beauty industries have a unique opportunity to remain at the forefront of R&D breakthroughs.

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