



David Littleproud MP

Federal Member for Maranoa

Media Statement

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Science, technology, engineering and math study pathways specifically for young women in Dalby and Chinchilla available thanks to federal funding: Maranoa MP

FEDERAL Government funding has been announced to encourage young women in the Western Downs to break down barriers and enter into 'traditional blokey' fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), Maranoa MP David Littleproud said today.

"I'm pleased to announce \$55,441 has been offered to Golden West Apprenticeships – specifically in the Dalby and Chinchilla regions – towards its *Engineering Girls on the Downs* program which aims to provide school-based engineering traineeships for young women," Mr Littleproud said.

"Women are currently underrepresented in STEM related studies and professions, with only one in four IT graduates and fewer than one in 10 in engineering. So today's announcement is exciting as it's a step in the right direction in addressing this imbalance.

"STEM fields are often based on innovation so this area's in great need of professionals who bring a different perspective or look at a problem in a new way. That's why a lab or a male-only office is missing out and, as a nation, we can't be left behind and need to encourage and incentivise women to enter into these types of occupations."

Mr Littleproud said Golden West Apprenticeships was one of 24 projects which will receive a share of \$3.9 million in federal funding to encourage girls and women to study and pursue STEM careers.

"This is part of a concerted, national effort to overcome the cultural, institutional and organisational factors that discourage girls and women from studying STEM and choosing careers requiring STEM skills and I congratulate Golden West Apprenticeships for this innovative program," he said.

FACT BOX: *Engineering Girls on the Downs*

- Golden West Apprenticeships aims to provide school-based engineering traineeships to six girls based in the Chinchilla and Dalby regions, with participants to receive a nationally recognised Certificate II in Engineering.
- It's expected this training will lead an engineering apprenticeship or to university, depending on their choices and desires that will emerge during the traineeship. The program will also involve female mentorship sessions run by a mentor who currently works in the industry.

For more information, check out: www.business.gov.au/womenSTEM

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