

SPOTLIGHT: WOMEN IN STEM

○○○○

ALDONA SPIEGEL, MD



John F., Jr. and Carolyn Bookout Chair in Surgical Innovation and Technology, Department of Surgery
Professor of Clinical Plastic Surgery, Academic Institute
Full Clinical Member, Research Institute
Chief, Div. of Surgical Innovation, Department of Surgery
Houston Methodist
Weill Cornell Medical College

What does it take to be successful in a STEM career?

Success in STEM often requires a blend of curiosity, resilience, and a continuous desire to learn and adapt. It's about problem-solving, critical thinking, and the ability to collaborate effectively with others. Staying updated with the latest developments in one's field is also crucial.

How can we get more women and girls involved in science?

To have more women involved in science, early encouragement and exposure are key. This involves providing young girls with role models in science, encouraging their interests from a young age, and creating supportive learning environments that challenge gender stereotypes.

For women at the start of their careers in STEM, what skills should they have to help them on their journey?

Essential skills include strong analytical and problem-solving abilities, effective communication, teamwork, adaptability, and resilience. Being open to learning and willing to take on challenges is also crucial.

Did you ever feel you needed to prove yourself as a woman repeatedly? If so, how did you overcome that?

There have been instances where I felt the need to prove myself more due to being a woman. Overcoming this involved focusing on my competence, maintaining confidence in my abilities, and letting my work speak for itself.

What motivates you, and how do you stay motivated throughout challenges and setbacks?

What motivates me is the passion for my work and the impact it can have. Staying motivated through challenges involves a strong support network, maintaining a positive outlook, and viewing setbacks as opportunities to learn and grow.

