**NEWS ARTICLE**

AECOM professionals lead the way in empowering women in STEM

**10 February 2025:** The International Day of Women and Girls in Science, observed annually on 11 February, highlights the vital contributions of women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). As we mark the 10th anniversary of this important initiative, globally trusted infrastructure consulting firm [AECOM](http://www.aecom.com) proudly showcases three remarkable professionals who are shaping the future of engineering.

**Naledi Ramorobi: Civil Engineering Technologist and Wellbeing Ambassador**

Working in AECOM’s infrastructure design team, Naledi thrives on solving complex engineering problems. With a background at eThekwini Municipality, she joined AECOM two years ago, seeking greater professional stimulation and growth.

Her approach to civil engineering is deeply rooted in its societal impact. “Civil engineering saves more lives than healthcare because, without infrastructure, essential services would not function. That realisation was a lightbulb moment for me,” she shares.

Ramorobi is also a strong advocate for STEM education. Having attended a non-profit STEM-focused weekend school in Pietermaritzburg, she understands the transformative power of early exposure to engineering. At AECOM, she actively supports job shadowing initiatives for high school girls, inspiring them to pursue careers in engineering. “Seeing their excitement and knowing that in five years, some of them might be working alongside us is incredibly rewarding,” she says.

**Marique Grobbelaar: Building a Career in Quantity Surveying**

A professional Quantity Surveyor (QS) in AECOM’s PCC team, Marique brings over a decade of experience in South Africa’s construction industry. Having transitioned to AECOM 11 months ago, she embraces the challenge of working with international standards while managing project finances to ensure efficiency and value.

Coming from a civil engineering family, Grobbelaar developed a passion for combining finance with construction. “Managing the financial side is critical to the success of any project, making my role very dynamic,” she explains. Her work involves balancing budgets, value engineering and securing the best project value, an essential yet often underappreciated aspect of engineering projects.

Grobbelaar is particularly proud to be part of a predominantly female QS team at AECOM. “It is a big accomplishment for the industry, which has traditionally been male dominated. The more women become involved, the greater the opportunities to rise into management positions,” she notes. She encourages young women to pursue STEM careers, stressing the importance of passion as a driving force for success.

**Erika Braune: Engineering Sustainable Stormwater Solutions**

A stormwater engineer at AECOM’s Cape Town office, Erika specialises in flood and drought management. Having completed a Master’s degree and worked with multiple engineering consultancies, she now applies her expertise to international and local projects.

Erika’s passion for water engineering was ignited by her father, also a stormwater engineer. Initially working in drought management in the Western Cape, she later transitioned to flood control. “I went from dealing with water scarcity to managing excess water, which has been an interesting shift,” she says.

Given the increasing global and local challenges of water management, stormwater engineering is a critical field. “AECOM’s deep expertise in water engineering provides an incredible environment to grow and make a real impact,” notes Braune.

**Encouraging the Next Generation of Women in STEM**

All three professionals agree that fostering early interest in STEM careers is essential. Naledi highlights the need for accessible STEM programmes in schools, while Marique points to the importance of representation and mentorship. “If young women see more of us in these roles, they will believe they can achieve it too,” she states.

Erika adds that companies like AECOM play a crucial role in supporting gender diversity in STEM fields. “Creating opportunities for young women to explore engineering careers through mentorship, job shadowing and inclusive work environments makes all the difference,” she concludes.

As we celebrate the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, AECOM remains committed to fostering an inclusive and empowering space for women in engineering. Through the achievements of these three exceptional women, we see firsthand the invaluable contributions of women in STEM and the promising future that lies ahead.

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**Notes to the editor**

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