

The NDT Technician



Vol. 17, No. 1

FOCUS

Student Outreach: Technicians Spread the Word about NDT in Girl Scout STEM Program

by Jill Ross, *Materials Evaluation* Editor

FEATURE ARTICLES NEEDED

Are you interested in writing for *The NDT Technician (TNT)*? Content for *TNT* is focused for NDT practitioners engaged in field applications of NDT. Typical themes include interpretation skills, methodology, problem-solving procedures for everyday challenges, practical application of NDT with data and results, and technology trends. Contributors to *TNT* earn three ASNT renewal points per published paper (min. 1000 words). If you have a topic you'd like to see published in *TNT*, contact the editor: Haley Cowans; (800) 222-2768 X245; hcowans@asnt.org.

On 5–7 October, ASNT members and NDT technicians Candice Major and Allison Wright, along with ASNT staff, participated in the Hall of Experiences at the 54th National Convention of Girl Scouts, also known as G.I.R.L. 2017 (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker,

Leader), in Columbus, Ohio. The Hall of Experiences offered more than 100 exhibitors and hands-on activities focused on Girl Scouts' national program pillars of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), entrepreneurship, life skills, and the outdoors. This was the first time the



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An estimated 800 people visited ASNT's booth in G.I.R.L. 2017's dedicated STEM pavilion.



Allison Wright speaks with G.I.R.L. 2017 attendees about nondestructive testing methods.



Candice Major demonstrates magnetic particle testing for booth visitors.

Girl Scouts included a dedicated STEM area at their triennial national event.

And with G.I.R.L. 2017 being just the type of dynamic opportunity that supports ASNT's ongoing mission to engage in community outreach and public awareness, it presented a natural opportunity for ASNT to participate, giving Major and Wright the chance to connect with young women that could become the next generation of NDT technicians.

Major, a former Girl Scout and veteran, made the trip from Michigan to Ohio with one goal in mind: wanting to help young people see themselves in NDT, especially women. "It's a career path for everyone," she said. "Women shouldn't discount it just because it's a traditionally male-dominated field."

It's a career path that Major herself almost missed. "As a high school student, I never considered that I had the 'brain' for science," she said. "I just wanted to get out of the cornfields of Indiana, so I joined the Air Force."

When she enlisted, she was required to complete a jobs "wish list."

"Having an interest in art, I really wanted to be a photographer, so I put that first," she said. Her second choice was nondestructive inspection (NDI)—something she really didn't know anything about but her recruiter suggested.

"I actually got the photography assignment, but then that position was eliminated," she said. And so began Major's "accidental" start in the NDT industry. She's now a quality control manager working in the automotive and aerospace industries, with a career she describes as "amazing."

It's a message that both Major and Wright were eager to share with the estimated 800 visitors to ASNT's booth, which was located in the STEM pavilion alongside similar technical organizations, including the Society for Women Engineers, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and the American Petroleum Institute. In between

hands-on demonstrations of ultrasonic testing and magnetic particle testing, Major, Wright, and ASNT staff members took the opportunity to talk to girls about the importance of NDT, its impact on their lives, and the potential they'll have choosing a career in NDT.

"I really wish more people knew about NDT," Major said. "We were asked repeatedly, 'What is NDT?' Then, after we told them, they would say, 'Why didn't I know that this exists?'"

Wright echoes the sentiment. "Most people coming to the booth hadn't heard of NDT before, but when they found out

what it was, they all said 'Thank you so much for doing this,'" she said.

Wright has been a registered Girl Scout for 27 years. As an adult Girl Scout, she led a robotics troop in Wichita, Kansas, before she moved to California. Although she currently lives on the other side of the country, she did not hesitate to answer ASNT's call. "I love Girl Scouts, and I love NDT, and when I heard about these two things colliding, I thought, 'I have to be there!'"

Wright, an NDI consultant, obtained her degree in engineering from Iowa State. That is where she first heard about NDT, as her

school offered a minor in nondestructive testing and evaluation. "I just kind of fell into it," she said.

"But now that all these girls know about this field, maybe they will remember this day and someday choose an awesome career in NDT. We need more women." ●

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ASNT wishes to thank Corporate Partner Mistras for the loan of the UT equipment used to demonstrate to G.I.R.L. 2017 attendees.