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Burns & McDonnell Reaches a Milestone Hiring its First Alumna from The Battle of the Brains K-12 STEM Competition

Olivia Haney is interning with the firm as an environmental scientist

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (July 18, 2018) – Burns & McDonnell has hired its first alumna from the [Burns & McDonnell Battle of the Brains](#), a K-12 competition promoting science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). [Olivia Haney](#) is now interning at Burns & McDonnell as an environmental scientist. The Olathe North High School graduate was part of two grand prize-winning Battle of the Brains teams.

“Burns & McDonnell helped me transform my interest in STEM into a career path,” says Olivia Haney, environmental scientist intern, Burns & McDonnell. “The time we spent with the STEM professionals at Burns & McDonnell and Science City helped me discover my interest in environmental science. Now, I’ve had the opportunity to work side by side with the STEM professionals who inspired me as a high schooler. It’s been an awesome experience!”

Launched in 2011, the Burns & McDonnell Battle of the Brains is a K-12 STEM competition where students compete for a chance to win grant money and the opportunity to work with STEM professionals to build a \$1 million exhibit at Science City.

Haney’s Olathe North High School team won the inaugural competition producing the first Battle of the Brains exhibit at Science City, [Science of Energy: Unplugged](#). She was also on the winning Olathe North team in 2014 that designed the water-focused exhibit, [Every Last Drop](#).

“Having a student who participated in the Battle of the Brains program come to work as a STEM professional at Burns & McDonnell is the ultimate dream,” says [Julee Koncak, Burns & McDonnell Foundation director](#). “There are simply more STEM jobs than there are people to fill them. Our mission is to introduce kids to STEM and the many types of careers available within this industry. We show them how they can make an incredible impact on our world — touching everything from technology to infrastructure.”

Koncak says Haney is one of 18,000 students who have participated in Battle of the Brains over the past seven years. Now, the Kansas State University senior, double-majoring in Chemistry and Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, is supporting future STEM leaders through her continued involvement with Battle of the Brains. Haney recently met with the current winners of the Battle of the Brains, students at Grandview’s FOCUS program at the Center for Alternative Instructional Resources (CAIR). The fifth through seventh graders are working with STEM professionals now to bring their

winning proposal about the brain to life at Science City. This will be the fifth Battle of the Brains exhibit set to open at Science City in early 2019. Haney hopes to be there once again to cheer on the newest Battle of the Brain class, that may include the next Burns & McDonnell employee.

To learn more about how to get involved with Burns & McDonnell Battle of the Brains, as well as additional facts about the program, click [here](#).

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About Burns & McDonnell

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