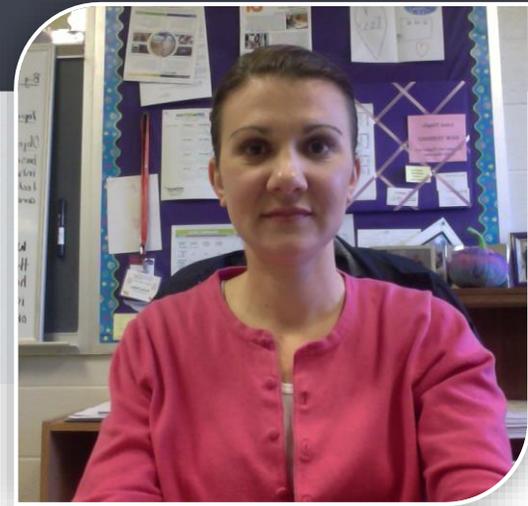


# STEM SPOTLIGHT

**Christa M. Phillips**

Teacher, Houston High School  
Germantown Municipal School District

B.S. in Biochemistry  
Master's in Education, STEM Certified  
University of Memphis



**Q How did you select your college major?**

**A** A prolonged interest in science, specifically biology and chemistry, drove me to my major very early in my college career. As for education, I stumbled upon it accidentally. It turned out to be the best choice I could have made.

**Q What was the biggest influence in your selection of major/ career?**

**A** I have always loved science, so a career in science was inevitable. I love all facets of science, I love working with people (specifically youth) and I hate monotony, so education seemed like a viable career option. I had an opportunity to work with high school students when I was working in the private sector, and really enjoyed it (more so than what I was doing at the time). I then decided that I would go back to school to get a degree in education.

**Q If you could go back to high school and select any elective course to take that would have better prepared you for college, what would it be?**



**A** I would have taken more AP and Dual Enrollment science courses. College science courses were really tough compared to the average high school science class. I feel that more rigorous science courses in high school would have better prepared me for what was ahead. If STEM classes were an option then, I would have loved those as well.

**Q What is your favorite aspect of your job?**

**A** I love working with young people, and showing them the awesomeness that is the scientific world.

**Q** How do you/your company make a positive impact on society/our community?

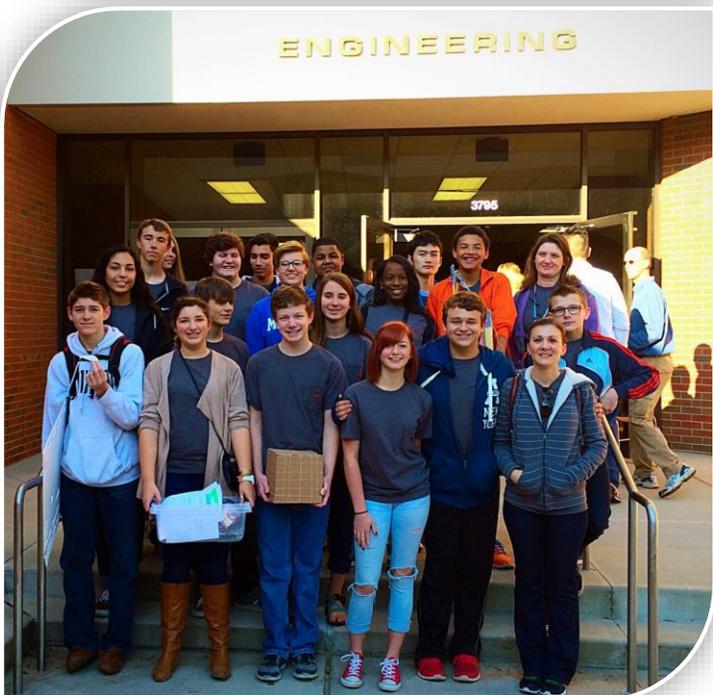
**A** I am teaching today's youth how to think critically and problem solve their way through some of our society's most important and controversial scientific issues. Our world has learned so much scientifically, but there is still much to learn and discover. Empowering future generations to be independent scientific thinkers is one of the best things we can do to ensure a successful future for our world.

**Q** What's the most interesting thing you have been able to do in your professional career?

**A** Being able to teach science, math, engineering, technology, English and the arts (as well as history and other non-science subject areas) using a holistic approach has been so engaging to my students, as well as for myself. It allows students to see the importance of every content area, and provides a clearer understanding as to the overall importance of literacy in all areas.

**Q** What makes you get up each morning excited about your profession?

**A** I teach science using a very hands on, STEM based approach. In my opinion it is the way science is meant to be experienced...*doing* science, not just *talking* about science. This makes it fun and engaging for everyone. When my students and I are having fun, it feels more like playing all day rather than working.



**Q** What advice would you share with K-12 students who are considering your profession?

**A** Go out and seek experiences in education, like observing classrooms and teachers of all ages, tutoring, or being a teacher's assistant. It is a very challenging yet rewarding occupation that requires a passion for knowledge and people.