

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## AV Gives Announces 2023 STEM Initiative Partnership with Rosie Riveters

*Led by two female AV industry professionals, AV Gives works with national non-profit organization to inspire and engage young girls through STEM projects – and close the gender gap for the next generation of AV professionals*

**ATLANTA, March 8, 2023** — In celebration of International Women’s Day, AV Gives today launches its 2023 fundraising campaign and networking initiatives in support of Rosie Riveters, a non-profit organization that empowers young girls by building personal confidence, critical thinking and problem-solving skills through hands-on, community-based STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programs.

Under the direction of co-founders and AV industry professionals Erica Carroll and Jennifer Goodyer, AV Gives’ 2023 goals share a common purpose of engaging and inspiring girls through STEM projects while showcasing the professional AV industry as a rewarding career path. Erica and Jennifer last year banded with The AVIXA Women’s Council and Brittany Greer, Executive Director and Founder of Rosie Riveters, to raise money and support STEM programs for Rosie Riveters through the AV industry. Their combined efforts far exceeded expectations.

“We quickly surpassed an initial 2022 fundraising goal of providing \$5000 for STEM kits,” said Carroll, also Senior Manager, Product Training and Adoption for Mersive. “We were soon challenged to set a more aggressive goal of \$30,000, and in the end raised nearly \$35,000. We have challenged ourselves this year to meet an initial \$30,000 goal and have established a stretch goal of \$50,000.”

Erica said that volunteers built 1,500 binary coding kits with last year’s funds. The kits include all parts and materials required to teach computer language to third-grade children, which were primarily girls though all children are invited to participate. Erica and Jennifer connected with Women’s Council Local Leaders in Atlanta, Dallas, Southern California and Mid-Atlantic areas to schedule “packing parties,” where adult volunteers create the coding kits for distribution to local schools. This year’s networking initiatives will extend that blueprint to new cities while driving re-engagement with last year’s participants. “We want to maintain these efforts with young students year after year and on through high school and even college,” said Carroll.

Brittany Greer adds that the two organizations are looking to Computer Science Education Week in early December as one potentially exciting growth opportunity. The impact of delivering binary code kits during Computer Science Education Week is potentially far reaching, not only introducing students to the world of coding but also fostering stronger relationships with the schools served. “With upcoming STEM days and curriculum integration, we are excited to continue collaborating with our partner schools, opening up new opportunities for students to engage with STEM and creating a pipeline for future innovators,” she said.

## **A Path to ProAV**

While supporting Rosie Riveters through corporate sponsorships and individual contributions is the top priority for AV Gives, Erica and Jennifer treasure the opportunity to educate young girls about all the AV industry offers.

“The STEM program, and our involvement through these binary coding kits, lays the groundwork for a career path to the AV industry,” said Goodyer, also Sales Manager at manufacturer’s representative RTSales. “We include a brochure in these kits that showcases women and the careers they have in the AV industry. We want to communicate that women have a place in the AV industry, and continue to close the gender gap as the next generation of professionals enter AV.”

Jennifer adds that third grade is an important starting point, as girls often lose confidence at the age of seven. “We want to intervene and show them that success comes from struggle, and that we all learn through failure,” she said. “This is one reason why we love Rosie Riveters. Every STEM kit is built on a productive struggle, and they help young girls build confidence one STEM kit a time.”

That productive struggle includes working from finished examples versus specific instructions, which helps young participants develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills as they reassess failures along the journey to successful completion.

“Women make up only 28 percent of the STEM workforce, and Rosie Riveters works to increase that statistic through an emphasis on productive struggle and confidence building,” said Greer. “We are excited to work with Erica, Jennifer and the incredible ProAV community through AV Gives. By opening young girls eyes to the possibilities in ProAV, we can help share a more diverse and innovative future for the industry.”

AV Gives, which now operates autonomously though continues to work with The AVIXA Women’s Council, outlines several ways for organizations and contributors to get involved on its website at <https://www.avgives.com/participate>. Women in AV-IT (WAVIT), whose founding board members include Jennifer, will also support AV Gives and its 2023 initiatives.

## **About AV Gives**

AV Gives works on a continued STEM initiative partnering with Rosie Riveters, a 501-3c, to fund free STEM programming to school-aged girls. Through this program, we’re making STEM education accessible and providing a place to learn about Pro AV as a possible career path. Visit [www.avgives.com](http://www.avgives.com) and click "Donate" or "Get Involved" to see how you can help make a difference with this initiative.

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