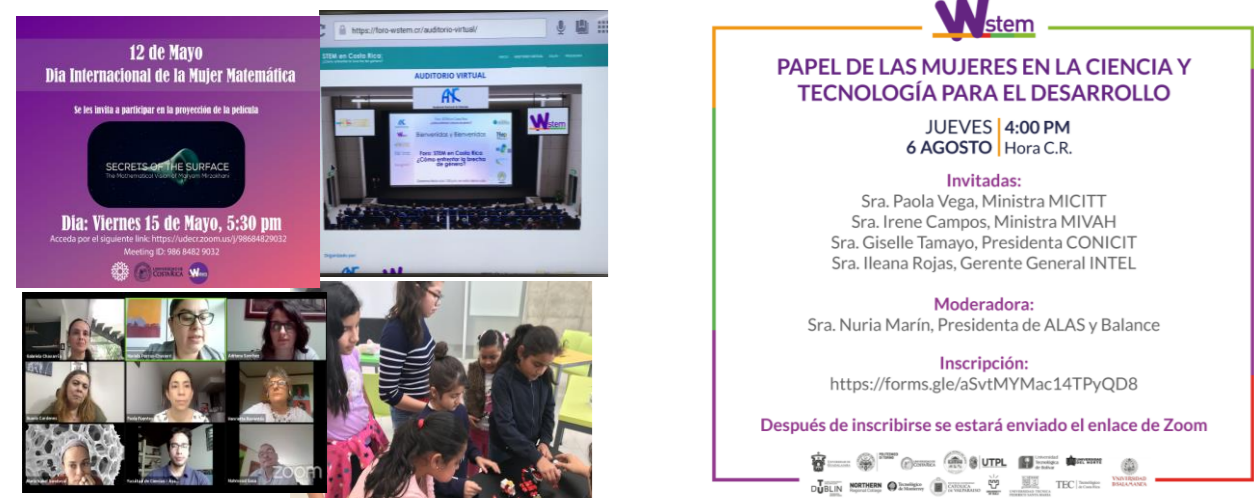


# Attracting Women to STEM at UCR

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## IMPACT ON ATTRACTION AND ADMISSION PROCESSES

The University of Costa Rica carries out an admission process every year that attracts around 60,000 High School students from all over the country. The first stage consists of attracting and disseminating the possibilities of study at the University. Approximately 25% of the available career entry quotas are for STEM careers. An important part of the campaigns to attract and access to the University is carried out in conjunction with the other public universities in the Country, in such a way that each year a high percentage of schools throughout the Country are visited (>95%). During these visits, orientation is given on the admission process, study alternatives, possibilities of socioeconomic scholarship, etc. As part of the project activities, we have achieved an important approach with the entities in charge of these activities, to seek awareness about the approach that should be given, to increase the participation of women in STEM careers. One of the most important results was during the vocational fair, an open event with massive participation of high school students: we managed to incorporate the gender perspective in the presentation of the different STEM careers, female Physics professor and Mathematics student gave a talk about their field of study. Likewise, in Engineering careers, a greater participation of female students was motivated in this process of career promotion.



Attraction

Access

Guidance

Retention

- Vocational-Occupational Guidance Center (COVO)

- Registry and Information Office
- Scholarship Office
- Financial Administration Office (OAF)

- Student Advisory Centre (CASE)

- Student Advisory Centre (CASE)
- University Children's House (CIU)
- Vocational-Occupational Guidance Center (COVO)

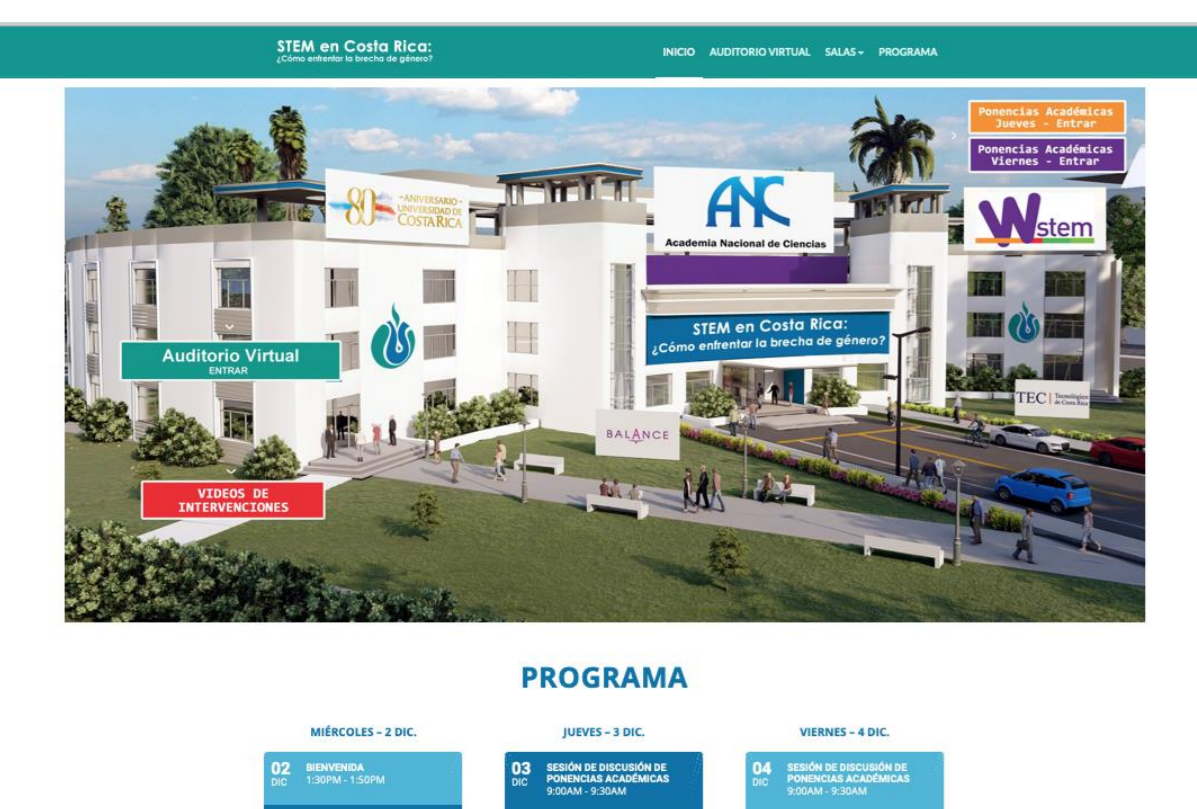
## IMPACT ON GUIDANCE AND RETENTION PROCESSES

Guidance events for the female newcomer students at the Faculty of Sciences and the Faculty of Engineering were developed. Besides, we contacted different offices in charge of guidance and retention activities at the University with the idea of joining efforts.

## POSITIONING OF THE PROBLEM AT INSTITUTIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL

Multiple meetings have been held with different sectors that develop similar initiatives to ours and we participate in different forums and activities related to the subject.

We also organized a national forum: *STEM en Costa Rica, ¿Cómo disminuir la brecha de género?* (STEM in Costa Rica, How to decrease the gender gap?) together with the National Academy of Sciences and other entities. A total of 404 people registered for the virtual Foro that last 3 days. Because of all the activities we performed for the Foro, the gender gap problem was on the front page together on the newspaper with the largest circulation and visibility in the Country.



## CONCLUSIONS

In Costa Rica, there are currently many initiatives for reducing the gender gap in STEM, however it is necessary to strengthen, systematize and link them so that the desired effect can be achieved. Admission processes at our University are complex and require the participation of different instances. However, we have found a lot of willingness and desire to collaborate with the WSTEM project. It is vitally important to position this issue in the media, for this it is necessary to establish a communication strategy that includes the visibility of the work carried out by scientists and technologists in our country and the region.



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