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**Discovering the Barriers to Rural Women in STEM** JENNIFER KREFT PEARCE, SARA MCCASLIN, LEANN MORGAN, The University of Texas at Tyler — This study investigates the attitudes women and girls from the East Texas region have towards engineering and physics. We use an online survey and interviews to determine what influences women to choose their career paths. Surprisingly, we find that women have more positive attitudes about physics and engineering than their male counterparts. For the group of students interviewed, self assessment of ability, lack of role models, and confusion about work/life balance issues were some of the determining factors in their choice not to pursue a career in a STEM field.

Jennifer Kreft Pearce  
The University of Texas at Tyler

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