

## **Girls School Visit Report, 'Women in STEM Roadshow 2018: By US Alumna Dr. Sabiha Parveen, Aligarh'**

It's my privilege to write a report on 'Women in STEM Roadshow 2018' (WSR) as an US alumna. It's been said that getting an opportunity to work for your passion fills you with a more powerful feeling of enthusiasm, the same happened with me too when I was associated with WSR. Working for the noble cause of education and research for women from minorities and disadvantaged groups gives a feeling of satisfaction and performing my duty towards society. I got the opportunity to visit AMU-Girls high School through the WSR program. We had a long and detailed interaction, after the interaction I experienced that there is up surging need of such encouraging interactions to motivate them to opt STEM and pursue career in STEM disciplines. In India women in STEM fields lag far behind their male counterparts, the problem is acute for women from minorities and disadvantaged groups. The probable reasons of this could be regressive socioeconomic and cultural factors. The young girls are discouraged and discriminated against in favor of males from similar backgrounds and lack support of family and society in their advancement due to the stereotypical mindset that women are to sit at home and take care of domestic affairs.

The girl students showed deep interest in knowing about STEM and career opportunities in STEM in India as well as abroad. They asked several questions and seemed inspired from Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams. As an US alumna when I told them about higher education opportunities in the United States and about the visit of eight STEM fellows to US through collaboration between OSU and AMU, they were extremely enthusiastic and confident to believe that when students of their own university can go to US then they can also aspire to study in US. They inquired about upcoming STEM programs so that they can participate in them and committed to be part of such programs. I asked a question to them "how many of you do not like studying STEM subjects?" or "Is there anyone who finds studying STEM subjects boring or tough?" and to my surprise there was none who lack interest or finds STEM boring which reflects that they have liking to pursue STEM, we just need to provide a spark to them. Organizing workshops, conferences and seminars about importance of STEM could boost their interest exponentially. I am providing few pictures of our interaction below.

