

# STEM clubs host poster-making event for women in science

**Alex Andahazy**

The SJU Biology Club and SJU Women in Physics club held a poster-making event March 18 in Doyle Banquet Hall North to honor women who have made important contributions to science as a part of Women's History Month.

The event marked the first collaboration between the two clubs and highlighted women scientists who have often been overlooked in the field.

About 30 attendees created 16 posters over the course of three hours. The clubs provided a sample list of scientists to choose from, but attendees were also encouraged to choose and research their own.

Charlie Skonieczny '25, co-president of the SJU Biology Club, said she felt having attendees directly involved in creating the posters made the experience more rewarding.

"We were thinking of doing a presentation-type event where we present the important people, but we decided to do more of a hands-on approach where we're creating the posters," Skonieczny said. "I think it's more fun and more enticing to come to, and you also gain more out of the experience by working on it yourself and doing your own research."

Shayna Sit '25, founder of SJU Women in Physics, said the goal of the event was to bring attention to lesser-known women in science.

"The primary mission is to promote and support women physicists and to try to get women physicists' names more well known besides the few most common ones, like Marie Skłodowska-Curie," Sit said.

Skłodowska-Curie discovered radium and polonium in 1898.

Attendees were encouraged to research scientists like Idelisa Bonnelly, Chien-Shiung Wu and Lise Meitner, who have all made significant contributions to the fields of marine biology, particle physics and physics, respectively.

SJU Biology Club Co-Vice President John Axtman '24 said many women who have made contributions to science do not get the recognition given to many of their male peers. He said by giving these women proper credit for their achievements, they can be role models for aspiring scientists.

"As college students, we might not be idolizing these scientists the way we would have as kids, but we can still have people to look up to, and all these women that we're making posters for are definitely people to follow," Axtman said.



Haley McMenamin '27, Jenna Wagner '27, Gianna Muhaw '27 attended the Women in Physics session during a Women's History Month event in Doyle North Banquet Hall. PHOTO: Courtesy of Shayna Sit.

Beyond just recognizing and honoring past figures, Sit said she hoped the event would help current students who might feel out of place in the science program.

“I think a lot of things can be more subtle, like seeing who your professors are, who the people that are contributing these laws or concepts that we’re learning in our physics classes,” Sit said. “Ninety percent of the time, they are white men, and that can be hard sometimes.”

According to the American Physical Society, around 25% of bachelor’s degrees in physics were earned by women in 2020.

Sit said being able to see important women in science can help students feel more comfortable in their field.

“When you actually start to see the stories of people who are like you, in a sense, you can find it more relatable, and then you can see yourself pursuing the same things that they have done,” Sit said.