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## Schoolgirls encouraged to pursue STEM

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STUDENTS from across the Hunter Valley have been encouraged to pursue a career in the resources and energy sector as part of the Bright Futures STEM program on March 29 and 30.

Run by the Australian Resources and Energy Group (AMMA), Bright Futures is a national program focused on engaging nine to 12 year old girls and boys in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) careers.

With a focus on encouraging girls to join the energy and resources sector, representatives from BHP and Thiess shared their career journeys with students at King Street Public School in Singleton.

General manager of Mt Arthur Coal, Adam Lancey, said female leaders from the mine spoke to students about a career in mining.

"We want to attract more women into mining," he

said. "We know from our own data that inclusive and diverse teams are safer, more productive and have a better culture."

Activities focused on robotics, programming, coding, engineering and trying on virtual reality headsets.

AMMA director of operations Tara Diamond said the program aimed to pique the interest of children before they reached high school.

"Research shows that

STEM industry engagement is too often focused on high school students - a point at which it may be too late as they've already made decisions about the subjects they enjoy," Ms Diamond said. "In particular, the female industry STEM role models from BHP and Thiess are critical to help breakdown gender stereotypes and encourage young girls to follow a passion for STEM."

— MATHEW PERRY



**STEM:** Students at King Street Public School in Singleton taking part in the Bright Futures STEM program alongside mentors from BHP and Thiess. **Picture: Supplied**