Lisa Ward,

Program Manager, Product Development Engineering

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1. Tell us about yourself and your role at AMD.

I am Dr Lisa Ward, and I work at AMD as a program manager. At AMD, we design and manufacture semiconductor devices for high-performance computing. I work in a business unit responsible for testing and optimizing those semiconductor devices.

2. When did you know you wanted to go into STEM and what inspired you?

All the stars in the universe are fueled by reactions involving sub-atomic particles too small to see. At nine years old, I was fascinated by that connection between the tiny and the enormous, and I started asking questions, lots of questions. This view of STEM as a quest to answer unanswered questions where I could find out new things that no one else knew inspired my interest.

3. What does engineering mean to you?

To me, engineering is about building new technologies and making sure that they safely meet people's needs. I find it rewarding when I see someone playing a game or working on a device that I know I helped to make.

4. What do you like about working in semiconductors?

Semiconductor are composed of billions of transistors connected by up to a kilometer of interconnect all integrated into a chip smaller than a quarter. I enjoy seeing the continuing evolution of smaller, faster, more powerful devices as well as seeing the new materials and device structures that enable that evolution.

5. What advice would you like to give students who want to pursue a career in STEM?

My advice to students is two-fold: ask questions and make mistakes. Finding out new things is what makes STEM fun, and questions are the key to finding out whether learning from others, doing research, or inventing something new. Mistakes are inevitable; so, learn from them and build from them, but do not give up.