

# I AM STEM

## Drs. Jennifer & Jessica Macklin

*Twin sisters, Drs. Jennifer and Jessica Macklin co-founded and operate the nonprofit **Hands-on Health**, where they work to encourage and strengthen communities to live at their highest potential through health education. Through Hands-On Health's **Health Science Labs**, the sisters are committed to motivating students of color to pursue careers in STEM related fields.*

**"IT'S ALWAYS NICE TO KEEP AN OPEN MIND BECAUSE EVEN THOUGH YOU MAY START WITH AN IDEA, WHO KNOWS WHERE YOUR LIFE WILL TAKE YOU."**

### Can you please explain your background?

We are Cleveland Heights natives and first generation college graduates both earning a BS in Molecular and Cellular Biology from Kent State University and a Doctor of Pharmacy Degree from Chicago State University College of Pharmacy. The both of us have first-hand knowledge and experiences of generational health and education inequalities so we feel it is our purpose and obligation to share our knowledge as well as our journey through STEM in underrepresented communities in a non-traditional approach through Hands-On Health.

### How did you discover this field and know that you wanted to do this?

Our high school had a vocational program for pharmacy tech. We explored the opportunity because we were both interested in medicine, wanted to specialize in preventative care and also had a strong desire to be hands-on in the communities we would serve. We realized if we gained the knowledge of multiple diseases and how to treat them, while being easily accessible, we could work with other healthcare teams to provide improved overall care for our patients and the communities that we serve. Considering in the U.S. less than 5% of pharmacists are Black, there is a dire need of increased representation in this field. Having a career in pharmacy provides those opportunities and more!

### What does STEM mean to you?

STEM means everything. You can look at everything around you from cooking, sports, cellphones, health, etc can be traced back to some form of STEM. STEM just means endless possibilities.



The NeoSTEM Ecosystem is a collaboration of organizations throughout Northeast Ohio who partner to improve STEM educational opportunities for all students. Formed in 2014, the NeoSTEM Ecosystem's goals are to improve meaningful STEM learning opportunities for all students in the Northeast Ohio region. As one of 94 ecosystems operating as a part of the STEM Learning Ecosystems Community of Practice, the NeoSTEM Ecosystem holds regular virtual and in-person meetings to learn about what community educational needs are and to develop solutions for those needs. For more information, please contact us at [info@neostem.org](mailto:info@neostem.org).

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