

Name: Dr. Anna Marie LaChance

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

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Bio: Anna Marie is a chemical engineer and graduate student at the University of Connecticut. For her PhD research, she studied thin-film polymer nanocomposites, which can be used to make food packaging stronger and more resistant to food spoilage. As a transgender woman and local activist, she is passionate about the connections between STEM and social justice.

Spoiler-Free Job Description (Answer: a graduate researcher!)

- I work in a lab making dozens of plastic film samples
- I take biodegradable plastic and mix it together with clay to make it stronger
- Then I use lots of scientific instruments to see how thick the film is, and to make sure the clay I added does its job.
- The clay is supposed to block out oxygen from getting through the plastic, which by itself doesn't block out oxygen very well.
- If I can make it so that the clay blocks out oxygen, that means that if you wrap your fruits and vegetables from the grocery store in my special plastic, that food won't go bad as quickly!
- I also mentor lots of young women, and I even teach classes to college students.
- And I'm in charge of making sure everyone else in my lab is being safe!
- (I may add more about my work with student orgs like CHEGSA & JLLA!)

Two Truths and a Lie

- I had six whole projects as part of my dissertation (true)
- I once did a project where I made food packaging out of shellfish shells (this is false, but I can talk about how my lab mate worked with chitosan, which is a polymer that actually comes from shellfish!)
- I once did a project with the company who packages Nabisco products, so I got sent a bunch of free Oreos and Ritz Crackers (true)

Two Truths and a Lie (alternative)

- I got a C in organic chemistry (true)
- I got a C in my first chemical engineering course (true)
- I got a C in my first gender studies course (false)