

Designing Her Future



STEPS4GROWTH – At just sixteen years old, Sema Oz is proving that the clean energy and technology workforce of the future isn't limited by age. A student at Triad Math and Science Academy, Oz joined the STEPS4GROWTH program, where she works under the guidance of instructor Dr. Issa, focusing on 3D design and virtual reality applications.

"I was pretty amazed that someone like me could get into such a prestigious program," Oz said. But her mentors, teachers, parents, and friends quickly remind her that she's right where she belongs.

In the program, Oz works with Blender, a professional 3D design software, to create assets for a VR map. Her current project is developing an immersive environment where students can explore human body systems in virtual reality. “Right now, I’m making a VR room where you can observe a human body system in 3D,” she explained. “I just made the setting for it, so it gives more immersion.” For Oz, this opportunity is the perfect combination of her two passions—science and art.

She has always gravitated toward science, especially biology, which she describes as her strongest subject. Looking ahead, Oz envisions a career in medicine, possibly anesthesiology. “My goal is to become a doctor, maybe anesthesiology—something with minimal human contact,” she said with a laugh. Still, she sees a direct connection between her current STEM work and her long-term goals. “There’s growing biotechnology where they’re 3D printing human organs. Maybe one day, I could design something like a heart or blood vessel to help replace a non-functioning one.”

Outside the classroom, Oz is a dedicated gamer who enjoys Roblox and dreams of playing games like *The Sims*. Her passion for gaming fuels her excitement for 3D modeling. “When I heard about the 3D modeling part of the program, I thought, ‘Oh my gosh, I need to do this.’ I love art as well, so it’s the perfect mix.”

Although she envisions pursuing medicine as her main career path, Oz hopes to one day return to her creative interests. “I’d love to pursue video game design as a passion, maybe after retiring from medicine,” she said. For now, she is focused on making the most of every opportunity the program offers. “I feel pretty happy about what I’m doing,” she reflected. “It’s exciting to create something immersive and see how science and technology can come together.”

Oz's journey shows how STEPS4GROWTH is helping students at every level discover new skills, build confidence, and prepare for careers in North Carolina's growing clean energy and technology workforce.