**FOR RELEASE**

## 22 Women Receive MCWT Foundation Scholarships to Pursue Technology Path
*Program has benefited 104 students during last 10 years*

**DETROIT, May 22, 2015 —** The Michigan Council of Women in Technology Foundation celebrated a decade of providing scholarships to technology-oriented women at its annual Scholarship Recognition and Partner Awards event on May 21. The nonprofit awarded a record 22 women with scholarships and laptops this year. The evening was made possible by a strong network of partner companies who support a diverse IT industry in Michigan.

MCWT Foundation has contributed $725,000 to further the educational pursuits of 104 students throughout the past 10 years.

Given the importance mentoring plays in inspiring and growing women in IT, MCWT has paired seasoned IT leaders from its advisory board with this year's scholarship winners for ongoing guidance throughout the recipients' college education. The matchups demonstrate the organization's lifecycle strategy.

"Role models and mentors are a critical factor in attracting and advancing female IT talent," said MCWT President Cindy Warner. "Our advisory board, members, board and sponsors and their staff voluntarily give their time and guidance to ensure these future technology leaders remain motivated by the many rewards and possibilities an IT career brings."

2015 recipients include:
- Friends of MCWT Foundation High School Senior $20,000 Scholarship: Chelsea Carter
- MCWT GET-IT $20,000 Scholarship: Emily Morningstar
- MCWT Presidents' Undergraduate $15,000 Scholarship: Arooba Javed
- MCWT Presidents' Graduate $15,000 Scholarship: Tonya V. Thomas

Alexandria Chisholm, a student at Michigan State University studying computer science, said she was introduced to technology through participation in MCWT's annual website design competition for high school girls.

"Thanks to MCWT I have found my passion, which is technology," Chisholm said.

The FCA Foundation doubled its support this year, committing $30,000 to support undergraduates who study science, technology, engineering and mathematics. MCWT awarded $3,000 scholarships to each of the following 10 winners:
- Jasmine Abbasov
- Kathleen D'Souza
- Kathryn Foss
- Anna Gray
- Tanalynn Johnson
- Melinda Kothbauer
- Olivia Miller
- Victoria Spiegel
- Keyaria Walker
- Marissa Walther

"I view technology as a path to changing the world," said scholarship recipient Neha Gupta. "It's continuously altering our way of life, and I've realized that I want to be in the middle of the action."

CMS Energy donated $15,000 to support these five women pursuing technology educations:
- Alexandria Chisholm
- Neha Gupta
- Rafia Haq
- Victoria Martin
- Shera Miciek

The following women received laptops from sponsors Dell and Code42:

- Shivaani Annadurai
- Nabiha Biviji
- Nicole Yarroch

Victoria Martin has participated in MCWT's GET-IT program for the past two years and said it made her realize how she could have an impact on the world through robotics.

"MCWT has allowed me to explore my interest in technology and has helped prepare me to pursue my college dreams," said Martin.

MCWT's efforts to inspire and grow women in technology in Michigan are fueled in part by 72 corporate sponsors who provide scholarships, event support and Foundation programming throughout the year. Diamond, emerald, platinum, gold and bronze partners include: FCA U.S. LLC, Ford Motor Company, General Motors, AT&T, Cisco, Epitec Inc., IBM, ANXeBusiness, Covisint, Code42, Mercedes Benz Financial Services, Netlink, Plantronics, VMWare, Acro Services, Airfoil, Capgemini, Fast Switch Ltd, KLA Laboratories, Microsoft, Oracle, STG, Symantec, University of Detroit-Mercy, University of Michigan-Dearborn, Lawrence Technological University, We Build Character, Wayne State University, Accenture, Ally, APPDynamics, Blue Care Network, CA Technologies, Comcast, Comerica, CMS Energy, Dynatrace, HP, Information Builders, JDM System Consultants, NetApp, OnStar, OpTech, Pegasystems, Quicken Loans, Stefanini, TEKsystems, V2Soft Inc., VisionIT, WWT, LESA, Ricoh, Apptio, Davenport University, Imperva, Michigan Millers, NITS Solutions, Red Hat, Re-Source Partners, Midwest Technology Leaders, and Secure-24.

MCWT supporters also contribute to scholarships through Friends of MCWT.

The Michigan Council of Women in Technology Foundation strives to inspire and grow women in technology fields, with an aspirational vision to make Michigan the No. 1 state for women in technology. The organization supports Michigan's female IT workforce, students, corporate partners, schools and the overall community with programming, scholarships, networking, learning, mentoring, and technology experiences. Find more information at www.mcwt.org and connect via LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and www.mcwtblog.org.

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**Editor's Note: All scholarship and laptop award recipient bios are found on pages 3 through 5.**

**Nicole Yarroch** (hometown: Hancock)
Nicole studies computer science at Michigan Technological University. She is a volunteer programming instructor for middle and high school students, and has also taught Houghton High School students how to program during the 2014 Hour of Code week. Nicole's creativity, fine arts degree, and technology aptitude helped her in the development of an iPad drawing app called Gigil Faces, available on the app store.

**Nabiha Biviji** (hometown: Novi)
Nabiha is a student at Northville High School. She was a state finalist in the DECA business competition organization. Nabiha learned to use computer-aided design to produce 3D laser-etched products at Tech-Shop in Allen Park. She also has taken programming language and web design classes. She was robotics caption throughout middle school, competing at the state finalist level.

**Shivaani Annadurai** (hometown: Troy)
Shivaani plans to study computer science when she graduates. She participated in "Girls Encoded", a program hosted by University of Michigan. She also attended the Bioengineering Biomedical Science Program last summer at William Beaumont Oakland University. She is taking computer graphics and AP computer science. She is a member of her school's math club and is employed by Mathnasium, teaching math to students.

*MCWT $3,000 Scholarship Sponsored by FCA Foundation*

**Kathleen D'Souza** (hometown: Portage)
Kathleen is a recipient of the National Center for Women in Technology National Aspirations Award and earned 3rd place in Michigan's Brain Bee for Neuroscience Awareness. She volunteers with Girls Investing Science and Math Opportunities. She attended a Women in Computer Science summer camp and is part of the Engineering Scholars Program. She has placed in several programming competitions and built a motor and sensor for the U of M-Dearborn Robotics Competition.

**Kathryn Foss** (hometown: Farmington Hills)
Kathryn studies computer science at Michigan State. She is an iMath tutor at Information Technology Empowerment Center, tutoring elementary school students in math and leading mobile app design classes. She also serves as a research assistant at the National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory. Kathryn has long had a passion for technology, teaching herself various software programs at a young age.

**Anna Gray** (hometown: Clarkston)
Anna is studying computer science at U of M and ranks in the top 5 percent of her College of Engineering class. She received the Arthur B. Singleton Class Prize, the highest honor awarded to one of 900 U of M engineering freshmen. She also is one of seven 2014 inductees of the Engineering Class of 1931E Scholar Society. Anna gives back to the community and has volunteered 250 hours of annual community service. She is program board leader for the Women in Science and Engineering residential program; a webmaster for Delta Sigma Pi; and has held various technology internships.

**Melinda Kothbauer** (hometown: Midland)
Melinda studies computer science and chemical engineering at U of M. She received the MCWT Chrysler Foundation scholarship last year and won the Lindsey-Schiel Outstanding Female Scientist Award. She ranked 8th out of 225 people participating in the Saginaw Valley State University Math Olympics. She participated in MHacks, is a member of the BLUElab engineering design team, and competes in programming contests around the state through the Computer Programming Club.

**Olivia Miller** (hometown: Bloomfield Hills)
Olivia studies computer science at Michigan State. She was designated both the Engineering Technology Student of the Year and Business Technology Student of the Year. Olivia also was a Michigan Math Prize Competition finalist and camper at Google Computer Science Summer Institute. She is an MHacks participant, team captain for FIRST Robotics, and a counselor for robotics and physics camps. She is interning at FCA LLC this summer.

**Jasmine Abbasov** (hometown: Farmington)
Jasmine is a student at Farmington High School. She earned first place in the Fundamentals of Web Design at the Business Professionals of America Regionals 2015 and strives to leverage her creativity in her technological pursuits. Jasmine wants to be part of a movement that creates new role models for young women.

**Tanalynn Johnson** (hometown: Southfield)
Tanalynn hopes to study cybersecurity after she graduates from University High School. She has programmed robots and has an interest in one day working for the National Security Agency protecting the country from terrorist attacks and security breaches. Tanalynn gives back to her community and was recognized at the annual Youth Recognition Breakfast in 2014. She has also received the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Service Award.





**Victoria Spiegel** (hometown: Ada)
Victoria plans to study computer science when she graduates. She is an AP National Scholar and National Merit Semifinalist. She is team captain for Science Olympiad and coaches the Middle School Science Olympiad. She was the first woman to join her school's Computer Science Club and enjoyed coding and programming so much that she became co-organizer, inviting her friends to join. Victoria interned at Ideomed, a startup that developed an app helping patients monitor illnesses.

**Keyaria Walker** (hometown: Eastpointe)
Keyaria plans to study computer science when she graduates. She is a three-time participant of MCWT's annual Website Design Competition, and has earned recognitions of finalist, honorable mention and third-place. She enjoys programming and has learned HTML, CSS, JavaScript and JQuery.





**Marissa Walther** (hometown: Wixom)
Marissa plans to study computer science when she graduates. She is a member of her school's GET-IT club. She takes several computer classes and is presented with challenges enabling her to see behind the scenes of different kinds of technology, leading to an appreciation for coding and problem solving.

*MCWT $3,000 Scholarship Sponsored by CMS Energy*

**Alexandria Chisholm** (hometown: St. Clair Shores)
Alexandria studies computer science at Michigan State. She was a runner-up in the MCWT Website Design Competition and won an MCWT Chrysler Foundation scholarship in 2014. She is a member of the MSU web design club, assisting companies and other university programs with updating or creating their websites.





**Shera Miciek** (hometown: Brighton)
Shera will study computer information systems when she graduates. She participated in a robotics club and gives back to the community throughout the year through organizations such as Gleaner's Food Bank. Most of Shera's computer knowledge is self-taught and she has a "never-ending" interest in technology.



**Rafia Haq** (hometown: Farmington Hills)
Rafia plans to study computer science after she graduates. She was a finalist in MCWT's Website Design Competition. Rafia has achieved 150-plus hours of community service and is involved in several extracurricular activities such as Model United Nations. She is a member of the National Honors Society.

**Neha Gupta** (hometown: Midland)
Neha studies computer science at MSU. She is treasurer of MSU's Women in Computing; serves as teaching assistant for a programming course; and was a student IT assistant for MSU's International Studies and Programs. She also was an applications development intern for Delta Dental. Neha was selected to be part of a pilot for a virtual mentoring program called Google Jump where she learned how to make web apps and use SDKs and APIs. She will intern at Google this summer.

**Victoria Martin** (hometown: Eastpointe)
Victoria plans to study computer engineering when she graduates. She has received the Science Department Award and Math Department Award, and is a member of the National Honors Society. She also serves as captain of her GET-IT club and spends time building, programming and testing robots. Victoria learned programming through code.org.

*Friends of MCWT High School Senior $20,000 Scholarship*

**Chelsea Carter** (hometown: Farmington Hills)
Chelsea plans to attend Kettering University next year to study computer engineering. She serves as student ambassador to Focus: HOPE Digital Connectors. Since the fourth grade, she has been a member of the Detroit Area Pre-College Engineering Program and the NASA Science Engineering Mathematics Aerospace Academy. She competes in Science Olympiad and participates in the Kettering University Academically Interested Minds Summer Program. She is a member of 20 clubs, is the recipient of 30 awards, and has volunteered 685 hours of service in the community.

*MCWT GET-IT $20,000 Scholarship*

**Emily Morningstar** (hometown: Canton)
Emily plans to study computer science when she graduates. She founded her school's GET-IT club, served as its president, and participated throughout all four years of high school. She was a finalist in MCWT's Website Design Competition and a Robofest State Qualifier. She also was recognized as the national runner-up in the National Council of Women in Technology Award for Aspirations in Computing. She served as a summer IT co-op for Mercedes Benz Financial Services.

*MCWT Presidents' Undergraduate $15,000 Scholarship*

**Arooba Javed** (hometown: Canton)
Arooba studies computer science at Wayne State University. She was a Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science three-time travel scholarship winner representing minority women scientists at an annual national STEM conference. She founded and leads Compassion Action, a Wayne State volunteer student organization serving Detroit area hospitals. She is a student member of the Society of Women Engineers.

*MCWT Presidents' Graduate $15,000 Scholarship*

**Tonya V. Thomas** (hometown: Fraser)
Tonya graduated from Walden University with a Bachelor of Science in instructional design and plans to attend University of Michigan-Dearborn to study education technology. Tonya is a long-time MCWT Foundation volunteer helping to advance the K-12 programs that help inspire young women to pursue technology education. She was training day instructor for the nonprofit's Website Design Competition and a Camp Infinity summer technology camp instructor. She is author of the blog Learning Leader.