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**For Release**

**MCWT Website Design Contest Attracts 51 Student Teams**  
***Nonprofit's Signature Gala Raises \$206,000 to Fund Such Programs***

**DETROIT, Jan. 5, 2012** – The [Michigan Council of Women in Technology](#) Foundation's [website design competition](#) drew 51 teams of high school students to vie for cash prizes. For its sixth year running, women from metro Detroit high schools learned creative development and technology principles during the two-month-long program. It is one of the initiatives benefiting from the nonprofit's Signature Gala fundraiser that raised \$206,000 in net proceeds last month for programs aimed at encouraging, advancing and retaining women in Michigan's IT community.

Students competed for the top award of \$750 in the advanced track, clinched by Annie Fu and Rachel Xiang of Canton High School. The team of Jacqueline Buffa and Brooke Dombrow from Lake Shore High School in St. Clair Shores took the top prize of \$400 in the beginners track. The finalists presented their [sites](#) on Dec. 3 — the same day as the fundraising gala — to a panel of seasoned IT professionals and area CIOs who evaluated them on communication, clarity, functionality, graphic appeal, user-friendly navigation and innovation.

“Our Foundation seeks to inspire more young women to consider technology fields, and fun, hands-on experiences like this have proven to be successful,” said Charlotte Decker, CIO of Auto Club Group and VP of Foundation programs for MCWT. “Not only do participants learn about HTML coding and design, but they also have the opportunity to meet senior IT leaders during their presentations.”

MCWT awarded \$2,775 total in prizes for first, second and third places, and honorable mentions, at both the advanced and beginners level. [Winners](#) and their websites are listed on MCWT's website.

Tasha Candela, a Lake Shore High School teacher who also is a former MCWT Foundation scholarship recipient, encouraged her students to participate. Six of them won.

“I cannot begin to count how many students have said that this experience has changed their lives and helped them believe in their own abilities,” said Candela.

MCWT offered an optional free training session in October at Davenport University where participants learned about usability, design and creating a website using the freeware Kompozer.

“We cannot put on programs like this without the help of our corporate and community partners—many of whom attended our annual fundraising event,” said Donna Cheesebrough, process information officer for General Motors and MCWT president. “Our supporters understand the need for a diverse workforce to strengthen Michigan's technology industry, and the web design competition is one of our many initiatives that help us on our mission.”

The gala, co-hosted by Cheesebrough and Ford Motor Co. CIO Nick Smither, brought together more than 500 IT leaders from around the state. The evening's CIO auction was a popular fundraiser; individuals bid on an opportunity to have lunch with CIOs from Ford, GM, Chrysler, Consumers Energy, Kellogg, Quicken Loans, Visteon, TD Auto Finance, and DTE.

Gala sponsors included Fujitsu, HP, Tata, Accenture, Compuware, IBM, Cisco, Acro, AT&T, GM, Comerica, Ernst & Young, HCL, Microsoft, STG, Oracle, PWC, Trizetto and T Systems. The [partner page](#) of the MCWT website lists all MCWT supporters whose contributions help fuel programs like the website design competition, mentoring, scholarships, summer IT camps and robotics grants throughout the year.

**About MCWT**

The Michigan Council of Women in Technology promotes opportunity for women and girls within Michigan's technology community. The organization supports Michigan's female IT workforce, students, corporate partners, schools and the overall community with networking, corporate IT leadership development, mentoring, technology experiences for professionals and students, and funding for technology-oriented education. Its nonprofit foundation is dedicated to correcting the growing trend of gender disparity in the IT field by providing programs that support the education and orientation of young women throughout school and fostering women in various stages of their professional lives. Find more information at [www.mcwt.org](http://www.mcwt.org) and connect via [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [www.mcwtblog.org](http://www.mcwtblog.org).

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## 2011 Winners of the MCWT Foundation Web Design Contest Advanced Category



\$750 1st place:  
Annie Fu & Rachel Xiang  
Canton High School

[See the site](#)



\$500 2nd place:  
Eva Smith  
Lake Shore High School

[See the site](#)



\$300 3rd place:  
Christina Denomme  
Lake Shore High School

[See the site](#)



\$75 Honorable Mention:  
Kandra Hutchison  
New Boston Huron HS

[See the site](#)



\$75 Honorable Mention:  
Sophia Li  
International Academy East

[See the site](#)



\$75 Honorable Mention:  
Lisa Nye  
Lake Shore High School

[See the site](#)

## 2011 Winners of the MCWT Foundation Web Design Contest Beginner Category



\$400 1st place:  
Jacqueline Buffa & Brooke  
Dombrow  
Lake Shore

[See the site](#)



\$250 2nd place:  
Mallory Burr  
Lake Shore

[See the site](#)



\$200 3rd place:  
Caitlin Duffy  
Utica Henry Ford II

[See the site](#)



\$50 Honorable Mention:  
Kailyn VanLandingham  
New Boston Huron

[See the site](#)



\$50 Honorable Mention:  
Lauren Smith  
Utica Henry Ford II

[See the site](#)



\$50 Honorable Mention:  
Rachel Lazzara  
Utica Henry Ford II

[See the site](#)