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## 2020 NCWIT CONVERSATIONS FOR CHANGE

NCWIT is holding “Conversations for Change: an online thought leadership series” throughout May 4-22, 2020. During this series of events, nearly 1,000 change leaders—representing educators, entrepreneurs, corporate executives, social scientists, and others—will fully immerse themselves in research-based recommendations and peer-to-peer discussions to further individual and organizational efforts to increase girls’ and women’s meaningful and influential participation in computing.

All events are free and open to the public. Zoom registrations are available for each event, and all webinars will cross-stream at the Conversations for Change website.

The speaker lineup of renowned experts and special guests includes: **Ruzena Bajcsy**, NEC Chair and Professor, Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, College of Engineering, University of California, Berkeley; **Ruha Benjamin**, Professor, African American Studies, Princeton University; **Temple Grandin**, Philosophical Leader; **Tommy Orange**, Author; and **Lucy Sanders**, CEO and Co-founder, CEO.

Additional headlining presenters include: **Brenda J. Allen**, Professor Emerita, University of Colorado; **Jannie Fernandez**, Director K-12 Alliance and TECHNOLOchicas, NCWIT; **Colleen Lewis**, McGregor-Girand Assistant Professor, Computer Science, Harvey Mudd College; **Paul L. Marciano**, Author; **Kyla McMullen**, Assistant Professor, Computer and Information Sciences and Engineering Department, University of Florida; **Eshika Saxena**, Student, 2020 NCWIT Collegiate Award Winner, Harvard University; **Cheryl Swanier**, PhD, Associate Professor, Computer Science, Claflin University; **Janine Vanderburg**, Co-founder, Colorado Encore Network; **JeffriAnne Wilder**, PhD, Senior Research Scientist, NCWIT; and **Darryl Yong**, Professor of Mathematics, Harvey Mudd College.



NCWIT Conversations also offers several on-demand activities:

- » **A custom eCard**, powered by NCWIT, allows individuals to thank someone—a peer, an educator, a supervisor—who has inspired them throughout their educational journey or career pathway. In just a few minutes, they can brighten someone's day: [ncwit.org/thankyou!](https://ncwit.org/thankyou!)
- » **An NCWIT-themed Zoom virtual background** allows supporters to show their NCWIT spirit. Every meeting (or virtual hangout) can be an opportunity to raise awareness about the need for inclusion in tech. This digital swag is the latest edition to the NCWIT Messaging Toolkit for Members: [ncwit.org/listen](https://ncwit.org/listen).
- » **The #NCWITConversations Book Club** lists books by several series presenters and encourages participants to share their thoughts online: [ncwit.org/BookClub](https://ncwit.org/BookClub).

Additionally, NCWIT Aspirations in Computing (AiC) is leveraging Conversations for Change as a virtual educational opportunity for the AiC Community. Through the AiC Change Leaders Scholar (CLS) program, 30 collegiate students were provided with the substantial experience of learning from experts in the realm of research on women in technology and then bringing NCWIT research-backed tips and tools back to their academic institutions as a means to steward change and train future change leaders. Scholars participate in each Conversations for Change event, which is then followed by post-discussions tailored to their college-level interests and goals—all hosted by NCWIT staff. A bonus session invites AiC Community members with disabilities to participate in a panel discussion after Temple Grandin's session.

*2020-21 NCWIT Summit sponsors include Anchor Point Foundation, Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), Bloomberg, Facebook, PNC, and Walmart.*

[ncwit.org/conversations](https://ncwit.org/conversations)



## NCWIT COVID-19 UPDATES

In an email communication to the immediate NCWIT community, CEO and Co-founder Lucy Sanders states, “Together we are facing a crisis that is affecting all of our families, our communities, our places of work, and our way of life. At NCWIT, the health and well-being of our members and staff is our highest priority while we do all that we can to remain focused on our shared mission.” Here are several ways in which NCWIT has remained diligent:

- » “Now, as we hunker down in social distancing, it is important to recognize that the norms associated with both our workplace cultures and society at large are changing. In our research at NCWIT, we define culture as a shared set of norms and values. Culture is, if nothing else, dynamic. Our experience of culture is a conversation between ourselves and the larger community we belong to. And, that conversation is rapidly evolving. If we are alert and attend to the differences noted above, this can be an opportunity for our cultural norms and values to respond for the better...towards creating more inclusive cultures, now and in the future.” NCWIT suggests how individuals and organizations/leaders can ‘build more inclusive cultures at work while we’re at home.’ // [ncwit.org/WhileAtHomeBlog](https://ncwit.org/WhileAtHomeBlog)
- » “As COVID-19 has led schools across the country to transition to at-home learning, educators, parents, and caregivers are on the lookout for accessible activities to keep kids’ minds active and engaged. Luckily, there are many ways to translate computing education from the classroom to the home setting. NCWIT compiled a sampling of ways that adults — regardless of skill level — can help K-12 students continue to explore pathways to tech careers and grow computational skills.” // [ncwit.org/HomeActivities](https://ncwit.org/HomeActivities)

- » On April 3, 2020 the National Science Foundation issued a “Dear Colleague Letter” to the scientific community seeking “proposals to conduct non-medical, non-clinical-care research that can be used immediately to explore how” — among other things — “to encourage the development of processes and actions to address this global challenge.” In response to this call, NCWIT teamed up with AnitaB.org and the STARS alliance on a proposal to gather data on the immediate and near-term (1 year) impact of the COVID-19 pandemic across the computing community ecosystem. The partnership leverages the strengths of these three organizations, including each of their large national networks and their research teams. // [ncwit.org/NSF\\_CallForCOVID19](https://ncwit.org/NSF_CallForCOVID19)
- » Today’s social distancing requirements are underscoring the importance of online opportunities for students, who may otherwise rely heavily on in-person community connections, organizations, and programs. To that end, NCWIT has recently signed an “Open Letter to the Computing Community,” asking that corporations consider their 2020 summer interns during their COVID-19 planning processes. // [ncwit.org/OpenLetter\\_InternsCOVID19](https://ncwit.org/OpenLetter_InternsCOVID19)
- » NCWIT is also contributing to the community at large through NCWIT CEO and Co-founder Lucy Sanders’ participation in Colorado Governor Jared Polis’ Emergency Council/Innovation Response Team, which is bringing together public and private sector resources and innovations to offer services to those under isolation or quarantine. // [ncwit.org/COTaskForceCOVID19](https://ncwit.org/COTaskForceCOVID19)

## NCWIT HONORS 20 MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY

NCWIT awards celebrate outstanding contributions and encourage persistence. A summary of 2020 award recipients is as follows:

- » The **2020 NCWIT Academic Alliance (AA) Seed Fund Award** recipients are Stony Brook University-State University of New York, the University of California-Riverside, Wake Forest University, and Willamette University.

The AA Seed Fund, sponsored by Microsoft Research, awards AA members with startup funds to develop and implement initiatives for recruiting or retaining women in computing. // [ncwit.org/Spring20SeedFundRecipients](https://ncwit.org/Spring20SeedFundRecipients)

- » The **2020 NCWIT Aspirations in Computing (AiC) National Educator Award** winner is Catherine Tabor; a Math, Science, and Computer Science teacher in Canutillo Independent School District in El Paso, Texas. Over her five years of teaching there, Computer Science education has expanded from zero classes to multiple courses, two clubs and an Honor Society. Since receiving her dual credit certification, she also teaches college level, credit bearing CS courses to her majority non-white and predominantly Latinx high school students.

The National AiC Educator Award, sponsored by AT&T, honors educators for their efforts to promote gender equity in computing. // [aspirations.org/20NationalEdAward](https://aspirations.org/20NationalEdAward)

- » The **2020 NCWIT Collegiate Award** winners are Tiffanie Edwards, Fatemehsadat Mireshghallah, Kelley Paskov, Naba Rizvi, Eshika Saxena, and Ariana Isabel Sokolov.

The Collegiate Award, sponsored by Qualcomm and Amazon, with additional support from Palo Alto Networks, honors the outstanding computing accomplishments of undergraduates and graduates who self-identify as women, genderqueer, or non-binary from academic institutions nationwide. Conferred annually, the award recognizes technical contributions to projects that demonstrate a high level of innovation and potential impact. // [aspirations.org/20CollegiateRecipients](https://aspirations.org/20CollegiateRecipients)



- » The **2020 NCWIT Harrold and Notkin Research and Graduate Mentoring Award** recipient is Mary Lou Soffa.

The Harrold and Notkin Award, sponsored by the NCWIT Board of Directors, is given in memory of Mary Jean Harrold and David Notkin, in honor of their outstanding research, graduate mentoring, and diversity contributions. // [ncwit.org/harroldnotkin](https://ncwit.org/harroldnotkin)

- » The **2020 NCWIT Extension Services Transformation (NEXT) Award** recipients are Grand Prize Recipient the University of Pennsylvania, Department of Computer and Information Science; Second Place Recipient New York University Tandon School of Engineering, Department of Computer Science and Engineering; and Honorable Mention Michigan Technological University, Department of Computer Science.

The NEXT Awards celebrate past and present ES clients for excellence in recruiting and retaining women in computing education. The awards reflect and reward practices that NCWIT recognizes as having the most significant impact on the long-term goal of increasing the number of women in information technology and other computing-related fields. Departments receiving a NEXT Award show significant positive outcomes in women's enrollment and graduation rates, and have excellent potential for building on these gains. // [ncwit.org/2020NEXTAwardRecipients](https://ncwit.org/2020NEXTAwardRecipients)

- » The **2020 NCWIT Pioneer in Tech Award** recipient is Ruzena Bajcsy. Ruzena has spent much of her career at the intersection of human and machine ways of interpreting the world, with research interests that include Artificial Intelligence; Biosystems and Computational Biology; Control, Intelligent Systems, and Robotics; Human-Computer Interaction; and “Bridging Information Technology to Humanities and Social Sciences.”

The recipients of the Pioneer in Tech Award, sponsored by Facebook, are role models whose legacies continue to inspire generations of young women to pursue computing and make history in their own right. // [ncwit.org/pioneeraward](https://ncwit.org/pioneeraward)



- » The **2020 NCWIT Undergraduate Research Mentoring (URM) Award** recipients are Dr. Donghee Yvette Wohn, Assistant Professor of Informatics, New Jersey Institute of Technology; Dr. Susan Rodger, Professor of Practice in the Computer Science Department, Duke University; Dr. Dave Levin, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, University of Maryland; and Dr. Lenore Cowen, Professor in the Computer Science Department, Tufts University.

The URM Award, sponsored by AT&T, recognizes faculty at AA member institutions for their outstanding mentorship, high-quality research opportunities, recruitment of women and minority students, and efforts to encourage and advance undergraduates in computing-related fields. // [ncwit.org/2020URMAwardRecipients](https://ncwit.org/2020URMAwardRecipients)

## NEW NCWIT RESOURCES

- » **By the Numbers [2020 Update]** // [ncwit.org/bythenumbers](https://ncwit.org/bythenumbers)  
Check out the most compelling statistics on women's participation in computing on a single page.
- » **Moving Beyond Computer Literacy: Why Schools Should Teach Computer Science [2020 Update]** // [ncwit.org/schools](https://ncwit.org/schools)  
Computer Science (CS) — not computer literacy — underlies most innovation today, from biotechnology to geoscience to national security. CS teaches students design, logical reasoning, and problem solving — all valuable well beyond the CS classroom. This resource provides information about the value of CS curriculum for students, educators, local and national economies, as well as global society. It offers steps schools can take to successfully incorporate CS education.

- » **NCWIT Scorecard: The Status of Women in Computing [2020 Update] // [ncwit.org/scorecard](https://ncwit.org/scorecard)**  
The “NCWIT Scorecard” shows trends in girls’ and women’s participation in computing in the U.S. over time, providing a benchmark for measuring progress and identifying areas for improvement.
- » **Tech Culture Interrupted // [ncwit.org/TechCulturePodcast](https://ncwit.org/TechCulturePodcast)**  
“Tech Culture Interrupted” is an engaging and provocative conversation between NCWIT social scientists (Dr. Catherine Ashcraft and Dr. Brad McLain) and a variety of special guests from the tech industry’s top leaders and innovators. The podcast explores ground-breaking research and ground-truth stories about how to build more inclusive and more innovative workplace cultures through new perspectives on leadership, community, and engagement. In its inaugural episode, Catherine and Brad sit down with Kim Vorrath, Vice President of OS Programs, Apple.
- » **The Color of Our Future: An Online Conversation Series on the Empowerment and Inclusion of Black Women & Girls in Tech // [ncwit.org/thecolorofourfuture](https://ncwit.org/thecolorofourfuture)**  
In honor of Black History Month (February 2020) and Women’s History Month (March 2020), NCWIT celebrates the contributions of black women and girls in computing by hosting a three-part virtual chat: “The Color of Our Future: An Online Conversation Series on the Empowerment and Inclusion of Black Women & Girls in Tech.” The series explores black girls in K-12, black women in postsecondary computing education, and black women in the tech workforce.
- » **Top 10 Ways to Recruit Underrepresented Students to Your Undergraduate Computing Program // [ncwit.org/top10recruitundergrad](https://ncwit.org/top10recruitundergrad)**  
Recruit strategically to attract a diverse range of students to your undergraduate computing program.
- » **Which computing pathway is right for me? [2020 Update] // [ncwit.org/pace](https://ncwit.org/pace)**  
This resource, co-branded by the six founding PACE (Partnership for Advancing Computing Education) organizations, explains how computing interests and talents line up with different undergraduate courses of study and the careers that follow.



## NCWIT IN THE NEWS

### NCWIT Aspirations in Computing (AiC): Where Are They Now?

- » “It’s really interesting to think about how we understand language... How is it that computers have such a hard time understanding what we find so easy?” During her time at MIT, AiC Community Member Christine Soh combined her interests in linguistics and Computer Science to develop tools to help diagnose childhood speech impairments.
- » AiC Community Member Karina Popovich founded Makers for COVID-19 to help connect individuals with 3D printers to those in need of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other items, while sharing plans, ideas, and resources with each other.
- » AiC Community Member Joy Njuguna was nominated by Nobel Laureate Dr. Mario Capecchi to represent Texas at this summer’s Congress of Future Medical Leaders. The nomination is based on a student’s “academic achievement, leadership potential and determination to serve humanity in the field of medicine.”
- » AiC Community Member Vaneeza Rupani has the honor of naming the NASA helicopter that will be the first craft to attempt powered flight on another planet. In her winning essay, she explained why the name “Ingenuity” expresses the spirit of space exploration.

Get monthly updates on AiC Community members and more at [aspirations.org/news](https://aspirations.org/news).

## 2020 4K 4Charity Fun Run

NCWIT has been selected as a beneficiary of the 2020 4K 4Charity Fun Run. Organizers for the annual run/walk have announced that it will now take place virtually, with registration and donations now open until June 1. Donations will support AspireIT and TECHNOLOchicas, two NCWIT programs that inspire K-12 girls to make their mark with technological innovation. // [4K4Charity.com/nab](https://4K4Charity.com/nab)

## Denver7 “Women Leading the Way in Tech: Spotlighting Colorado’s Female Leaders”

On March 6, 2020, the Denver ABC News affiliate, ABC-7, shared a piece on women in technology that featured NCWIT AspireIT Program Coordinator Tanner Bergamo and NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Community Member and AspireIT Program Leader Maya Hunter. Maya shared how her program, Huskie Technopreneurs, is getting girls excited about coding, and Tanner explained why it’s important to let kids from underrepresented groups know that a wide range of computing careers are available to them. // [ncwit.org/Denver7\\_March2020](https://ncwit.org/Denver7_March2020)

## Four Hundred U.S. High School Women Are Recognized for Technological Achievements

NCWIT proudly announced the 2020 NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing (AiC) national recipients, honoring four hundred high school women from 48 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and all U.S. overseas military bases.

Each year, U.S. high school students in grades 9 through 12 who self-identify as women, genderqueer, or non-binary are eligible to receive recognition for their aptitude and aspirations in technology and computing, as demonstrated by their computing experience, computing-related activities, leadership experience, tenacity in the face of barriers to access, and plans for post-secondary education. This year, 40 winners and 360 honorable mentions were selected from more than 4,700 amazing, talented young applicants. // [aspirations.org/20HSrecipients\\_Announced](https://aspirations.org/20HSrecipients_Announced)

## Interview with NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Senior Regional Affiliate Manager John Kelly and AspireIT Program Leader Maya Hunter

On January 12, 2020, NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Senior Regional Affiliate Manager John Kelly and NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Community Member and AspireIT Program Leader Maya Hunter were featured on the FOX31 Denver morning news. They spoke about Maya’s coding bootcamp, Huskie Technopreneurs, and why it’s important to address issues of underrepresentation in computing. // [ncwit.org/FOX31\\_January2020](https://ncwit.org/FOX31_January2020)



## Missteps and Myths About Diversity in the Technology Industry

“Part of the problem is that the side business of diversity and inclusion is mired with misapprehensions and myths about how to solve, or even define, the challenge of women’s underrepresentation. Let social science shine some much needed light on the issue, replacing deceptive nonsense with research-based approaches and tips. This is how to set the stage for success, and sustain it, for years to come.” // Read the full article, written by NCWIT Research Scientist Brad McLain, at [ncwit.org/MediaPlanet-March20](https://ncwit.org/MediaPlanet-March20).

## NCWIT Announces Digital Skills Training Opportunities for Women in Michigan

NCWIT announced new digital skills training opportunities available to girls and women across Michigan. Detroit is the second location added to NCWIT Regional Digital Skills Initiatives, an effort made possible by a \$4.1 million grant from Cognizant U.S. Foundation. The announcement was made on Monday, March 2, at a special event gathering employers, education institutions, policy makers, and community organizations, hosted by Microsoft in downtown Detroit. // [ncwit.org/DigitalSkills\\_MichiganAnnouncement](https://ncwit.org/DigitalSkills_MichiganAnnouncement)

### And More

NCWIT research, programs, and commentary were included in a number of national and regional media outlets and blogs, including Analytics Insight, Boulder Daily Camera, Forbes, Keysight Technologies Blogs, MultiBriefs, Refinery29, Sioux Falls Business, Synced, The San Diego Union-Tribune, and Washington Square News; as well as community and trade publications and announcements (the University of Colorado Denver Business School Newsroom, the University of Maryland Department of Computer Science, and the University of Richmond Newsroom).



[ncwit.org/InTheNews](https://ncwit.org/InTheNews)

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