

# K-12 ALLIANCE

FALL NEWSLETTER

ncwit.org



## Welcome Back to NCWIT's K-12 Alliance!

Hello,

Are you familiar with the phrase “Be who you needed”? It’s a simple set of words packed with meaning, and it can elicit powerful stories as individuals reflect on who they needed in the course of their lives. **Does this resonate with you?** At NCWIT, we know research shows that [adult influencers play a vital role in encouraging and guiding students](#) in their education and career aspirations.

I have vivid memories of key instances in my life where lack of support and encouragement led to dead ends in high school courses, in certain career aspirations, and ultimately with jobs that were typically understood to be male-dominated spaces. So I’ve kept that charge in mind – be who you needed – to guide my work, as a classroom educator, when creating afterschool programs, and now with my work at the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) as the new K-12 Alliance and Initiatives Manager.

We have been part of a lot of changes individually and collectively since the start of the pandemic, and we are here to support you through every aspect of that journey as we work together to make K-12 computing education more equitable and inclusive for everyone. We’re excited to reconnect with you in our K-12 Alliance and recommit together to the mission of correcting underrepresentation in computing and IT.

To that end - there have been a number of changes to NCWIT’s K12 Alliance and I’d like to use this time to reintroduce our team.

Our NCWIT K-12 Alliance Core Team members are:



**Brittney Anderson-Martin**  
K-12 Alliance &  
Regional Initiatives Project Manager



**June Teisan, Ph.D.**  
K-12 Alliance & Initiatives Manager



**Stephanie Weber**  
K-12 Alliance &  
Regional Initiatives Director



**JeffriAnne Wilder, Ph.D.**  
Senior Research Scientist & Director of  
Strategic Initiatives for Women & Girls of  
Color

You won't want to miss our first Fall Huddle coming **November 16 at 12:30p MT/2:30p ET**. [Click here](#) to register to join the conversation!

Finally, we pause to celebrate [Hispanic Heritage Month](#) (September 15-October 15) together with you - honoring the rich and diverse culture and influence of individuals of the American Latino community. Thank you to generations of Hispanic Americans, our world is a better place because of your contributions!

Here's to a great year ahead!

**June Teisan, Ph.D.**

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## Aspirations in Computing (AiC) Awards close 10/27!

NCWIT Aspirations in Computing (AiC) offers awards that honor aspirations, abilities, technical accomplishments, and influential guidance. **Applications for both the Aspirations in Computing Educator Award and the Aspirations in Computing Award for high school women, genderqueer, and non-binary students opened September 1st.** To date, NCWIT's AiC program has recognized nearly 20,000 young aspirants and their commitment to diversifying the technology and computing community. **This year's application closes on Thursday, October 27, 2022 (extended deadline).** [Spread the word about the award](#) using our simple sharing packing to encourage the young technologists in your network to apply!

**CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS:** In addition to encouraging students to apply for the award, NCWIT is calling for volunteers to help review the award applications and select the winners. Each year thousands of applicants submit to receive the Aspirations in Computing award. Learn more and sign up [here](#).

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## NCWIT's Conversations for Change featuring Dr. Maya Israel

If we do not explicitly work towards inclusion of students with dis/Abilities in K-12 CS education, we are excluding them. October is [National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#) and we'd be remiss if we didn't take this moment to thank those who contribute their time, energy, and passion to NCWIT while simultaneously navigating life with a disability.

We'd like to reflect back on our most recent Conversation for Change featuring [Dr. Maya Israel](#). NCWIT's Conversations for Change is a virtual thought-leadership series designed to bring together changemakers from across the country to discuss barriers to broadening participation in computing. In the session, Dr. Israel explores the current landscape of K-12 CS education for students with dis/Abilities and approaches to CS education systems change. Dr. Israel shared findings from a recently completed project that focused on barriers and pathways to CS education in K-12 settings and ways that utilizing a universal design framework can increase inclusion in the classroom. Educators and practitioners working with students who have dis/Abilities can check out [Creative Technology Research Lab \(CTRL\)](#) - an educational research lab housed at the University of Florida as well as [Universal Design for Learning for Computer Science \(UDL4CS\)](#) - which offers professional development resources aimed to help educators include K-8 students with dis/Abilities.

Be on the lookout for the next issue of NCWIT's [re:think magazine](#) which will focus on dis/Ability and access in CS spaces.

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## Promising Practices: Bridging the Encouragement Gap for K12 Students

There is consensus among researchers that [encouragement matters](#) and plays a critical role in engaging more young women and girls in computing. This is especially true for aspiring technologists in K-12 spaces. Research has shown time and again that [most students enter the primary education system with a natural interest in STEM related subjects and activities](#). Student's interests begin to diverge around 3rd grade and by the time they reach secondary school less than 50% of girls are even considering STEM related careers. NCWIT has produced several resources to aid K-12 educators in identifying simple ways to integrate encouragement into their curriculum and interactions with girls to increase their participation in computing and STEM. Encouragement is a natural confidence booster as it increases one's belief in their ability to successfully perform a task (also known as self-efficacy.)

If you're working with K-12 girls, [take a moment to learn more about the ways establishing encouragement as a practice can help to inspire the young technologists in your network.](#)

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## Celebrate NCWIT's TECHNOLOchicas

Since 2015, NCWIT's [TECHNOLOchicas](#) initiative has raised awareness for young Latinas and their families about opportunities and careers in technology. By using the powerful stories of Latina's from diverse backgrounds working in computing and technology industries, TECHNOLOchicas seeks to inspire the next generation to be part of the future of technology. [NCWIT's intersectional approach](#) to diversifying the computing ecosystem serves as an exemplar of the role that nonprofits, educational systems, and corporations play in addressing the underrepresentation of Latinas in computing. TECHNOLOchicas Ambassadors around the country hold events, virtually and in person, to expose girls to coding and other aspects of computing careers. For upcoming events, follow us on social media (@technolochicas), including this month's celebration of our most recent campaign, TECHNOLOchicas 5.0, which includes new profiles of real-life Latina role models.

The success of NCWIT's TECHNOLOchicas initiative sparked an expansion of NCWIT's work to influence the participation of women and girls of color from other under-represented backgrounds (including Black and Native American) in computing. NCWIT's [Color of our Future](#) initiative anchors NCWIT programs, initiatives, and research-based resources focused on broadening the meaningful

participation of underrepresented women and girls of color to drive game-changing and sustainable inclusion of Latina women in computing.

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## K12 Alliance Member Spotlight: Congressional App Challenge

The Congressional App Challenge is the official student coding competition of the House of Representatives. Created in 2013, the Congressional App Challenge invites Members of Congress to host annual district-by-district computer science, or “app,” competitions for middle and high school students to create and submit original apps. Each challenge is district-specific and in 2022, over 75% of Congress hosts App Challenges. Like NCWIT, the App Challenge is uniquely positioned to impact a diverse range of students.

In fact, when compared to Silicon Valley - home to many startups and global technology companies - the app developers who participate in the Congressional App Challenge are:

2X	4X	5X
as likely to identify as	as likely to identify as	as likely to identify as
Women	Black	LatinX

This year's contest deadline is November 1st, and apps coded in the last eleven months are eligible for submission. Students can submit apps on **any topic**, for **any platform**, using **any coding language**. Educators, parents, and community leaders can [click here](#) to learn more about the Congressional App Challenge and how to get involved.

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## Celebrate NCWIT's AspireIT Impact Award Winners

NCWIT is excited to announce the recipients of the [2022 AspireIT Impact Award](#)! NCWIT's AspireIT Impact Award honors Aspirations in Computing (AiC) Community members and TECHNOLOchicas for their incredible work to encourage girls, women, genderqueer, and non-binary people of all ages to contribute their unique perspectives and ideas to future innovations.

Learn about all of the 2022 NCWIT AspireIT Impact Award recipients [here](#) and take a moment to explore the amazing work being done by these technologists.

Be on the lookout for our announcement of the next award cycle so you can encourage the young technologists you know to apply.

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### **PD Opportunity: School Counselors are Key Advocates for Access and Equity in Computing**

On Tuesday, October 25 at 6:30PM ET, NCWIT's [Counselors for Computing](#) will collaborate with the [National Center for Computer Science Education \(NCCSE\)](#) to offer a virtual professional development workshop for K12 teachers, school counselors, and education administrators.

Take advantage of this opportunity by [registering today!](#)

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### **Join NCWIT's Network of Changemakers in Computing**

NCWIT is always looking to connect with innovative and diverse talent excited to increase women's meaningful and influential participation in computing. We have a number of opportunities to consider both [paid](#) and volunteer.

Check out [ncwit.org](http://ncwit.org) to learn more about how you can get involved and join the NCWIT community!

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