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FOR RELEASE

MCWT Recognizes Future Women Leaders in Michigan, Honors Partners

Michigan tech-savvy women win scholarships and laptops to help them pursue careers in IT

DETROIT, May 20, 2014 — The Michigan Council of Women in Technology hosted the ninth annual Scholarship Recognition and Partner Awards event at the Birmingham Country Club on May 15. The organization awarded the future generation of women leaders in the technology industry with scholarships and laptops. The evening was made possible by a strong network of partner companies who support a diverse IT industry in Michigan.

“A record number of our partner companies attended the celebration this year,” said MCWT President Maru Flores. “Thanks to their support and our strong volunteer base, we continue to encourage women at all stages of their lives to consider IT careers.”

2014 recipients include:

- MCWT Founders’ High School Senior \$20,000 Scholarship: Andrea Salamay (hometown: Westland)
- MCWT Founders’ High School Senior \$20,000 Scholarship: Sierre Wolfkoston (hometown: Ann Arbor)
- MCWT GET IT \$20,000 Scholarship: Sierris Smith (hometown: Ferndale)
- MCWT Presidents’ Undergraduate \$15,000 Scholarship: Zilphia Martin IV (hometown: Southfield)
- MCWT Presidents’ Graduate \$15,000 Scholarship: Barbara Tegart: (hometown: Clarkston)

Additionally, The Chrysler Foundation committed \$15,000 to support undergraduates who study science, technology, engineering and mathematics. MCWT awarded \$3,000 scholarships to each of the following winners:

- Alexandria Chisholm (hometown: St. Clair Shores)
- Rachel Polus (hometown: Portage)
- Olivia Miller (hometown: Bloomfield Hills)
- Melinda Kothbauer (hometown: Midland)
- Rebecca Wolanin (hometown: Waterford)

“The directions my career can go are virtually endless,” said Kothbauer, a 2014 graduate of Midland High School who will be majoring in computer science at University of Michigan. “I want to make a difference in Michigan and our country.”

The following women received laptops from sponsors Dell and Microsoft:

- Lauren Rinkus (hometown: Oak Park)
- Hannah Kochendoerfer (hometown: Lambertville)
- Savannah Ruby (hometown: Lansing)

MCWT’s efforts to inspire and grow women in technology in Michigan are fueled in part by 56 corporate sponsors who provide scholarships, event support and Foundation programming throughout the year. They include: ANXeBusiness, Chrysler Group LLC, Ford Motor Co., General Motors, Hewlett Packard, WWT, Accenture, Altair, AT&T, Cisco, Consumers Energy, Covisint, CSC, Epitec Inc., Fast Switch LTD, IBM, Oracle, Plantronics, PwC, STG, TCS, Blue Care Network, Fujitsu, KLA Laboratories, Mercedes Benz Financial Services, Microsoft, Quicken Loans, Symantec, We Build Character, V2Soft, Acro Services, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Capgemini, Cognizant, Comerica, Compuware, Dell, Delphi, Ernst & Young, Information Builders, JDM System Consultants, Lawrence Technological University, NetApp, OnStar, OpTech, Ricoh, University of Detroit Mercy, VMware, AMI Strategies, CA Technologies, CSI Leasing, Michigan Millers, NITS Solutions, Red Hat, Secure-24, and SunTel Services.

About MCWT

The Michigan Council of Women in Technology 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 networking, learning, mentoring, and technology experiences for professionals and students. Its nonprofit Foundation provides programs and funds supporting 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 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 page 2 and 3.

MCWT Laptop Grants Sponsored by Dell with software from Microsoft

Lauren Rinkus

Lauren graduates from Fitzgerald High School in Warren with a 4.3 GPA. She will attend Eastern Michigan University in the fall. Lauren is a two-year MCWT Website Design Competition winner, earning first place in 2013 after a third place finish in 2012. A National Honor Society member, Lauren enjoys volunteer work such as Adopt-A Road. She has been dual-enrolled at Oakland Community College.



Hannah Kochendoerfer

Hannah is entering The University of Toledo to study computer science. She is a 2014 graduate of Bedford High School in Monroe County, where she ranks fourth in a class of 394. Hannah recently updated a website for the Bedford Dance Academy. She enjoys competition of all kinds and believes that overcoming challenges builds character. She is conversant in German.

Savannah Ruby

Savannah graduates in 2014 from Waverly High School in Lansing. She will enter Michigan State University to study computer science. She is passionate about helping others, through both volunteer work and mentoring. Savannah collaborated with MSU undergraduates to build a Java mobile app.



MCWT \$3,000 Scholarship Sponsored by Chrysler Foundation



Alexandria Chisholm

With a 3.9 GPA, Alexandria is headed to Michigan State to study computer science. She earned an honorable mention in the MCWT 2013 Website Design Competition. Alexandria has raised thousands of dollars for cancer research by her 5-year participation in Relay For Life.

Rachel Polus

Rachel is a 2014 graduate of Central High School in Portage, where she earned more than 550 hours of service as a National Honor Society member. She will enter Michigan State University, majoring in computer science. Rachel scored 34 on her ACT and earned college credits while dual-enrolled at WMU. Additionally, she is an award-winning science researcher.



Olivia Miller

Olivia graduates in June from Birmingham Seaholm High School with a 4.37 weighted GPA. She will attend Michigan State University, where she will major in computer science or software engineering. She is captain of the Robotics team and volunteers as a counselor at summer camps for elementary students.

Melinda Kothbauer

Melinda is a 2014 graduate of Midland High School, finishing with a 3.98 unweighted GPA. She will enter the University of Michigan, majoring in computer science. Melinda participates in Robotics, Computer Programming Club, and completed a Microsoft XNA game development course. She hopes to enter the energy industry after graduation, using technology to create solutions for non-traditional energy sources.



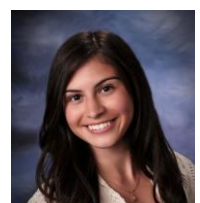
Rebecca Wolanin

Rebecca is a 2014 graduate of Our Lady of the Lakes in Waterford with a 3.92 GPA. She is looking forward to studying computer engineering at Kettering University and admires the automotive industry. Her robotics team, of which she is captain, is a multi-year MCWT grant winner. She enjoys tutoring the middle school robotics teams.

MCWT Founders' High School Senior \$20,000 Scholarship

Andrea Salamay

Andrea is a 2014 graduate of Livonia Franklin High School, dual enrolled at the Livonia Career and Technical Academy. Her GPA is 4.1. She won second place in MCWT's Website Design Competition. Andrea heads to Lawrence Tech this fall where she will study interaction design and computer science. Andrea revamped the Westland Figure Skating Club website.





Sierra Wolfkoston

Sierra is a 2014 graduate of Pioneer High School in Ann Arbor, where she carries a 4.0 GPA. She developed a website to provide technology and resources to schools in South Sudan. Her ideal job would be in cyber security.

MCWT GET IT \$20,000 Scholarship

Sierris Smith

Sierris is a 2014 graduate of University High School in Ferndale. Sierris perfectly illustrates the lifecycle influence of MCWT. She is a 4-year GET IT club member, participated in the Website Design Competition, placed first in Robofest Districts several times, and works at MCWT's Camp Infinity each summer as a counselor. Sierris is headed to Ferris State to study computer programming.



MCWT Presidents' Undergraduate \$15,000 Scholarship



Zilphia Martin

Zilphia is currently studying penetration testing at UDM, also known as "ethical hacking," a 5-year BS/MS combination degree. She grew up in Berkley, Michigan. She participates in the Red Hat Hacker Challenge and is active in her church.

MCWT Presidents' Graduate \$15,000 Scholarship

Barbara Tegart

Barbara attends Oakland University, studying for her M.S. in IT management. She grew up in Pontiac and graduated second in her high school class of 600. She writes a blog, redesigned the Bloomfield Hills Schools website, and creates pro bono websites for nonprofit companies including Olive Branch Ministries and KeemoKraftz (for children with cancer). She is also a certified C-Print Captionist for the National Technical Institute for the Deaf.

