NCWIT Aspirations in Computing is a talent development pipeline initiative of the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT). This program is designed to increase female participation in technology careers by providing encouragement, visibility, community, leadership opportunities, scholarships, and internships to high-potential, technically inclined young women. Since 2007, NCWIT has inducted more than 2,200 young women into the Aspirations in Computing community and helped usher them into careers in technology. Find out more: www.aspirations.org or aspirations@ncwit.org.

NCWIT Aspirations in Computing provides structured, long-term engagement and support for young women in technology, from middle school through high school and from college into the workforce.

NCWIT Aspirations in Computing includes the following programs:
- Award for Aspirations in Computing
- Aspirations in Computing community
- AspireIT, a middle school outreach program
- Aspirations in Computing Educator Award
Evaluation and anecdotal data show that participants consistently report greater confidence in their technical abilities, increased enthusiasm about computing, and greater awareness of the career opportunities available to them.

**IT WORKS**

- 2,200 young women from 2007 to 2013 have been recognized for their aspirations and achievements in computing and technology.
- 1,000 of these young women were inducted into the program in 2013 alone.
- 11,000 young women self-identified as interested in computing and technology.
- 1,400 reviewers from academia, non-profit organizations, and corporations have participated.
- >50% of applicants in 2013 were non-white or of mixed race; 14% of applicants attended Title 1 (federally funded) schools.
- 50 states, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands participate with Aspirations in Computing.
- 41 scholarship opportunities were offered to Award for Aspirations in Computing recipients in 2013.
- 71% of participants now in college report a major or minor in traditionally male-dominated STEM fields.
- >1,000 young women are members of the Aspirations in Computing Facebook group, with more participating in local meet-ups around the country.
- 800 girls will receive 25,000 hours of programming through NCWIT AspireIT in its 2013-2014 pilot round.
- >100 educators have been awarded with a professional development stipend as recognition for their active encouragement of women in computing.
NCWIT AWARD FOR ASPIRATIONS IN COMPUTING

The NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing recognizes young women at the high-school level for their outstanding aptitude in computing. In addition to their interests and capacity in technology, Award recipients are selected for their proven leadership ability, academic performance, and plans for post-secondary education. Each recipient receives two engraved awards — one for her and one for her school. Recipients also receive educational and employment opportunities from NCWIT member organizations, including scholarships, internships, and research experiences.

The Award offers national and local Affiliate competitions. A team of NCWIT Alliance members from academic institutions, non-profits, startups, and corporations manage each Affiliate Award competition. These individuals come together as a powerful network to build support and generate visibility for young women interested in computing.

“Because of this Award and the scholarship opportunities tied to it, I can afford to go to the college I want to. This Award is really a springboard; it empowers you to apply yourself and try for bigger and better things.”

~ Aspirations Award Recipient
The NCWIT Aspirations in Computing community provides participants with resources, connections to peers and supportive adults, visibility, opportunities for speaking engagements, and more. More than 2,200 young women in the community are invited to engage in real-time reunions, meet-ups, and gatherings around the country, in addition to virtual support such as webinars, early access to internship and job opportunities, and technical projects. The community includes access to an exclusive online portal just for technical young women.

“...This program exists through multiple online portals — Facebook, email, etc. It is intensely gratifying to be in constant communication with people who have a deep understanding of the field that I was trying so hard to break into and could offer me advice on how to survive my testosterone-filled classes. Through these conversations, I built strong relationships and ultimately found the internship of my dreams.

~ Aspirations Award Recipient

HELP SUPPORT THE ASPIRATIONS IN COMPUTING PROGRAM!

- Sponsor the program
- Volunteer with an Affiliate Award
- Offer internships or scholarships
- Review applications
The NCWIT AspireIT middle school outreach program addresses the lack of women in technology by actively engaging middle school girls with computing. NCWIT AspireIT pairs NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Award recipients with participating local colleges and K-12 education non-profits from NCWIT’s Academic or K-12 Alliances to create and run technology outreach programs for middle school girls. Programs include summer camps, after-school programs, clubs, and weekend workshops. Inspired by the desire of Aspirations in Computing participants to “pay it forward,” NCWIT AspireIT employs a “near-peer” approach that gives middle school girls a hands-on, inspiring introduction to technology from young women just a few years ahead of them in the pipeline.

In its 2013-2014 pilot year, NCWIT AspireIT will grant more than $100,000 to 24 programs and provide more than 25,000 instruction hours to over 800 girls in 15 states. At full scale, NCWIT AspireIT is on track to serve more than 8,000 middle school girls per year, providing high-quality, inspiring, computing education and outreach with long-term impact.

“Now that I know how to make apps, websites, animations, and robots, I can make them in the future by myself. There’s so much I can do... I’m bubbling with ideas... I don’t think I’ll be bored again this summer.

~ Participant, IT for Girls Camp!
The NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Educator Award identifies outstanding educators who play a pivotal role in encouraging young women to explore their interest in computing and technology. The Educator Award also recognizes these individuals for their efforts to promote gender equity in computing. Over the past three years, more than 100 educators have been recognized and have received more than $100,000 in professional development funding to improve their computing education skills.

As a result of having won the NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Educator Award, I spent a week at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. For this Puerto Rican teacher — barely five feet tall, the daughter of poor people, and the only one in my family to finish a college degree — it was overwhelming. [With] every day that goes by, the NASA experience seems more special. I am very excited to start the new school year and share these experiences with my students.

~ Educator Award Recipient