

# 2014 NCWIT Summit – Award for Aspirations in Computing Southern California Affiliate Ceremony

[upbeat music]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Last year I got a Ruthe Farmer slide. It's a bummer. [audience laughs] So, welcome everyone to the Southern California Awards for Aspirations in Computing. It's so much fun when we get to do one of these awards at the summit because we set some pretty high expectations for the next year. Good evening and welcome. Before we get started, I would like to thank all of the NCWIT Alliance members in this room that have supported Aspirations in Computing this year. Would you all please stand? [applauding] Together, as community, we recognize in person close to 1,400 young women at 58 events and launched 46 outreach programs that will serve 1,500 middle school girls through to 2014. Here to help us present the Southern California Aspirations Awards are Ambassador Khalia Braswell, Affiliate Coordinator and Doctor Debra Richardson from University of California Irvine and Rane Johnson-Stempson from Microsoft Research. Can you come on up? And Andrea, would you join me in recognizing these young women? [applauding] So, this is for the girls. On behalf of the entire NCWIT community, we're honored to congratulate each one of you and recognize your achievements and aspirations in technology at this wonderful event. Unlike most competitions where the award is the culmination of your work and you work for months and months and we give you an award and say goodbye, this is the beginning of your relationship with NCWIT. We look forward to welcoming you into a community, and we will

do everything we can to help you achieve your dreams in computing and IT. The entire NCWIT membership, this entire room of people and thousands of other people around the nation. over 500 institutions, companies and nonprofits, are really eager to see you succeed. We encourage you to continue exploring your interest in technology. So, we just hope it's not lost on you that nobody is throwing you a banquet to get you to major in history right now. [audience laughs] Pay attention to this. You should be extremely proud of this accomplishment. We received over 2,300 application nationally this year. As an Aspirations Award recipient, you represent the most promising technology talent in the nation, and we are very proud of you. So now onto the awards. [applauding] You go first.

**ANDREA JUNG:** Okay. The first award goes to Ashwarya Srinivas. She comes from Oak Park High School in Oak Park, California. Ashwarya has been interested in computers since taking a web design course in middle school. She knows Alice and GameMaker and is part of her school's robotics team. She's the youngest girl in California and the third youngest girl in the world to have achieve the Microsoft Office Master Certification. [applauding] She would like to pursue a career in biotechnology or bioinformatics. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Next we have Carolina Menjivar from the Foshay Learning Center in Los Angeles. Unfortunately she wasn't able to be here today.

**ANDREA JUNG:** Next we have Helen Kim. She's from Brea Olinda High School in Brea, California. Helen's first year of high school, she planned a summer computer workshop and took the curriculum to Girls Inc and Project Access, a daycare for children from low-income families. She's got a strong interest in getting more children, especially girls, into computing and technology careers, and she hopes to attend a four-year university and

study computer science. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Janice Lee is from Gretchen Whitney High School in Cerritos, California, and she wasn't able to be here unfortunately. I'm not winning here. [audience laughs]

**ANDREA JUNG:** I'll lend you some. Jasmine Zhang. She's from Diamond Bar High School in Diamond Bar California. Jasmine's biggest contribution to computing and technology has been participating in first robotics as her team's electrical engineering lead. In her advanced architecture and engineering classes, she's doing research on the design of a prosthetic hand and drawing with it. Wow. She will be attending, excuse me, Drexel University, majoring in biomedical engineering, focusing on electrical engineering. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Next we have Justice Bufford from Julian Charter School in Menifee, California. Justice likes video games and think it would be really cool to go into the gaming industry. She's also interested in the medical aspects of technology and would love to create more non-invasive surgical methods. She will be attending Susquehanna University as an honor student and BioStem grant recipient, will double major in creative writing and biology with an emphasis in neuroscience. That's not very ambitious, is it?

**ANDREA JUNG:** No. [applauding] Karenina Juarez from Harvard-Westlake School of Studio City, California is also a recipient. Unfortunately, she couldn't be here.

**RUTHE FARMER:** Lauren Schweitzer from Vistamar School Online School for Girls in El Segundo, California. Lauren takes AP Computer Science, is an active participant on the robotics team, is a member of the tech crew. She started a computer science club which provides student to student instruction. She's keen on schools with an emphasis on liberal arts, and her plan is to

pursue engineering at the master's level. She hopes to send the first man or woman to Mars. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Marina Hovhannisyan from Burbank High School in Burbank California. She has maintained academic excellence and, as a junior, received the Harvard Prize Book, award to a student who displays excellence in scholarship and character. Marina has used her technology skills, including mastering Java and Python to build program websites in her volunteering and work outside of school. She will attend UC Berkeley and will double major in computer science and engineering and neurobiology. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Pooreum Seo from Los Angeles Senior High School in Los Angeles, California and is not available today. We congratulate her.

**ANDREA JUNG:** Yes. Yoojin Jung from Los Angeles Senior High School, also not available to be here, but congratulations to Yoojin.

**RUTHE FARMER:** So let's give all the runners up a proud round of applause. [applauding] For those of you that are gonna be still in high school next year, we expect to see you again up here on the stage. And let's go forward with the winners. I'm first, sorry. Ana Hernandez from Foshay Learning Center in Los Angeles, California. [applauding] Ana is a junior at Foshay and a proud member of the school's Technology Academy of Robotics Team. As a public speaker and STEM enthusiast, she hopes to spread the word that STEM is the new cool, and that anyone can be an engineer. She plans to study civil engineering or interactive media and animation in college. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Anna Resnick, Gretchen Whitney High School in Cerritos, California. Anna is teaching herself Java and is the head programmer of her VEX Robotics team. She was selected for the Edge Engineering Workshop at Union College where she built a

robotics learning tool for child with Down syndrome. Anna would like to major in computer engineering, hoping to combine that with her love of art and philanthropy. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Many of you may have already met Calla Carter from Pilgrim School in Los Angeles. Her binary baptism occurred in the form of a sluggish netbook which she claims begged her to triple boot its SSD using conflicting boot loaders. She applied her skills to website bugs and audio problems, translated computer diagnostic questions to human English and formulated a technological solution library for Huffpost Live. Calla hopes to intertwine technology and creativity in college, and she's going off to Bryn Mawr in the fall so she could finally have women in her computer science classes. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Camila Katz, Harvard-Westlake School in Studio City, couldn't be with us today, but congratulations, Camila.

**RUTHE FARMER:** Camille Nibungco, Bishop Amat Memorial High School in La Puente, California. When Camille discovered the strange but wonderful language of coding, she decided she wanted to learn and began watching tutorials on YouTube and borrowing books from the library to learn Python. She taught herself HTML and CSS using online resources. She's interested in computer science, including human-computer interaction, user experience and design. She hopes to get involved in a startup space and space technology industries. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Claire Huang from Diamond Bar High School in Diamond Bar, California. Clair is the state treasurer of the Technology Student Association and vice president of her school chapter. She's vice president of Brahma Tech, a technology-based school program. And she founded her school's robotics team. She's interned at UCLA's Reed Neurological Research Center where she learned math lab and assisted with the study. She plans to

study neuroscience in college because of her interest in the interdisciplinary fields of neurology and computer science. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Diana Serrano from the Foshay Learning Center in Los Angeles. Two years ago, Diana tried being an armature photographer and learned to edit photos using Photoshop. Amazed by the technology, she jumped at the chance to join the Technology Academy. Her first project was an English Grammar Game for 10th and 11th graders to prepare for the SAT. Diana plans to study business management with an emphasis in computer science. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Divya Siddarth from Harvard-Westlake School in Studio City is unable to be here, but congratulations to Divya.

**RUTHE FARMER:** Jasmine Talavera from Benjamin Franklin High School in Los Angeles. Jasmine, commonly known as JT, fell in love with mathematics and physics early in high school. This adoration led her to study computer programming in Java. The fact that JT was able to comprehend this information allowed her to take AP Computer Science exam without taking a class. Thanks to late night coding and practice drills, she was able to pass the exam with a four. Congratulations. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Karen Her from Brea Olinda High School in Brea, California. Karen's interest in technology stemmed from taking a video production course in junior high. She further pursued this interest by enrolling in her high school's global IT academy. There she learned to program in Visual Basic, HTML, JavaScript, Flash and Java, and completed projects like making her own version of Pac- Man in the future. She helps to pursue a career in computer science and business. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Karina Carvajal, Foshay Learning Center, Los Angeles, California. Karin's interest in STEM field has grown

quickly and robustly kind of like her school's garden where she volunteers. Through Iridescent's Technovation Challenge, she worked with other students and created a mobile application for environmental issues relating to the garden. She learned HTML and CSS to create a website using Adobe Dreamweaver. [applauding] And she was a national winner this year, one of 35 out of the entire nation. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Lara Bagdasarian from Harvard-Westlake School in Studio City, California. She is the founder and president of her school's Technology and Entrepreneurship club and the senior student help desk technician. She's taking AP Computer Science online. She taught herself C programming. She was a Technovation fellow for Iridescent Learning where she critiqued the program's website and launched the Southern California Student Ambassador program. She's interested in the application of computer science for real world problems. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Lily Kate Diaz, Foshay Learning Center, Los Angeles, California. Lily is part of Foshay's Technology Academy. She hopes to become a computer scientist and programmer and use those skills to continue her never-ending love affair with music. Lily Kate learned from Scratch and HTML at Smash Academy, a rigorous program where teens learn about computer science. One of Lily Kates greatest accomplishments is receiving her technicians license as an armature radio operator. Lily Kate wants to study computer science [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Megha Srivastava from Harvard-Westlake School in Studio City. Megha's experience with computing and technology spans a wide range of fields. Linguistics, cryptography, machine learning, nano technology, chemistry, music, and community service. She loves the interdisciplinary opportunities computer science entails, such as computational chemistry, artificial intelligence and image analysis. She definitely wants to pursue

computer science and computer engineering research in her future. In her spare time, she loves playing the piano, photography, and swimming. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Melanie Krassel, Harvard-Westlake School, Studio City, California. What sparked Melanie's interest in computer science was a seventh grade introduction to Scratch and Sketchpad. She worked with Adobe InDesign and Photoshop and learned she really liked graphic design. She volunteers at Coder Dojo, a program that teaches children basics of programming. She will attend Stanford's Artificial Intelligence Program this summer and is planning to pursue a degree in computer science. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Michelle Tjoa from Brea Olinda High School in Brea, California. Michelle taught herself HTML, HTML5 and Flash. She entered a STEM fair and worked with PHP and Javascript on a project that helps those with dementia or Alzheimer's disease. Michele received a designing internship at Melrose and used her knowledge of web design to maintain the company's website. Her career goal is to work with computers and create new programs that benefit daily life. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Also a national winner, Molly Cinnamon from Harvard-Westlake School in Studio City. Molly completed a computational biology internship at the Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. She was a high school scholar at the Center for Embedded Networking Sensing at UCLA. A short film that Molly created for the NCWIT video contest is spelling the stereotypes of women in technology has been broadcast as a PSA on television and the internet. And Molly hopes to continue to impact society by bringing people together through technology. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Nichole Chen from Diamond Bar High School in



Diamond Bar, California. As a member and officer of Bramha Tech Academy, Nichole has had the opportunity to explore computing and technology, as well as foster the growth of STEM education in her school community. She's the captain of her Cyber Patriot Team. She knew her career goal when she completed computer systems class freshman year was to code and be a software engineer. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Octavia Smith from USC Cinematic Arts and Engineering Magnet School in Los Angeles. Congratulations to her, but she was not able to be here today.

**ANDREA JUNG:** Proud Heng from the Gretchen Whitney High School, Cerritos, California. In second grade, tired of playing with the same toys, prowled, really, through her father's hold programming books. And although the programming she did was just copying the books and customizing its code, she was captivated by the idea of creating her own toys. She has dabbled in everything software-related she can find. She has been involved with robotics as competition team member, mentor, captain, instructor, and president. She hopes to work in the field of artificial intelligence. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Suhyeon Ellen Lee from Troy High School in Fullerton, California. A a part of Troy's tech program, Ellen has challenged herself with almost every class offered. She's practiced her coding skills using CodingBat and participated in numerous contests. She plans to further study theoretical math. Ellen hopes to contribute to the advancement of minority groups in STEM fields, especially at the doctorate level by mentoring underrepresented young students. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Victoria Chu, El Segundo High School in El Segundo, California. Victoria has been an active participant in robotics, cyber security competitions and other technology-related

activities since middle school. She knows how to program using Mindstorms, Alice, Popfly, Firebug, Scratch, LabVIEW, C, HTML5, and Python. She taught herself Java by reading a book. She's learning Javascript on Codecademy and really enjoys teaching new team members. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** Victoria Hernandez from Benjamin Franklin High School in Los Angeles. Victoria feels her best decision so far has been joining Cyber Ops. At first she didn't know anything about computers and now she's able to help others with their computer problems. She creates random websites for fun, notice how to install a web server and is teaching herself Javascript. Victoria knows she wants to pursue a career in technology. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** Alice Jin, Diamond Bar High School in Diamond Bar, California. Alice's passion for technology grew exponentially after interning at the Boeing Company. Powered by her hope to introduce the wonders of STEM to more students and her vision to unite these enthusiasts, she started the first chapter of the Technology Student Association in California. Alice will be studying electrical engineering and computer science with the focus on artificial intelligence next year. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** So, that was all of them. And I wanna say congratulations to a very impressive group of young ladies. [applauding] So we're not done yet. Behind every great student is a great educator. The Aspirations in Computing Educator Award recognizes outstanding educators for their efforts to promote gender equity in computing. These educators play a pivotal role in helping encourage the young women to continue exploring their interest, which was just demonstrated by Google in their study, and keep them in technology. Each awardee receives \$1,000 to spend on professional development in computing and a laptop. I'd like to invite Tommy Simpson from AT&T to join us on stage to

recognize the 2014 Southern California Educator. [applauding]

**ANDREA JUNG:** In 2003, Leslie Aaronson left her job with Nickelodeon as the production manager for Blues Clues International. It was time to head home to Los Angeles to start something new. Lucky for her students that she made that decision. Nine years later, Leslie was named teacher of the year by the LA Unified School District for her work as the lead teacher and coordinator at Foshay Learning Center's Technology Academy. Leslie's job, although most would say it's her life, includes a teaching a group of 180 students how to interact and prepare for future jobs. Foshey's inner city status does not slow Leslie and the students flourish under her capable hands. Her computer lab is a place for innovation and exploration. Leslie. [applauding]

**RUTHE FARMER:** So, each time we do this Educator Award, we ask some of their students for a few words and I'm... I'm gonna cry. So, you might hear word Foshay several times there, and there's a reason why Leslie got this award. We asked her students what their teachers mean to them, and these are some of the things that they said. Ms. Aaronson takes the time to help our students answer questions and create a fun learning environment for everyone. I don't feel any less of a student because I'm not as fast as the others. I like how she uses algorithms to teach you about computer science and about the real world. She has opened my eyes to how exciting the world of technology is, and she works hard to make sure that we girls feel supported and intelligent. She makes me feel like I can do whatever I set my mind to. So, congratulations, Leslie. [applauding] So, in closing, I almost lose it during the teacher award. We would like to thank all the educators, the parents, and the families that are in this room today. Thank you for supporting and encouraging technical young women, your daughters, your students, and your friends. Clearly, you are doing something

right. A special thank you to Andrea for helping me celebrate this amazing group of young women. It has been an honor to share the stage with you, and your words were wonderful. And we would like to thank all of the sponsors that support this program, and there are countless others. There are 350 organizations locally participating in this program. Nationwide, you saw these boxes earlier. And I would like to welcome to the stage for a very special exciting announcement Carrie van Heyst and Andrea Guendelman. [applauding]

Vimeo ID 95927430