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AAUW-OML awards scholarships to local students

Submitted by Mary Ann McLeod

AAUW-OML recently held a Celebration of Excellence event, highlighting STEM programs and college scholarships, and awarding a total of 36 scholarships to middle school girls, graduating high school seniors, and Saint Mary's College students.

Cara Wolfe was the featured speaker. A graduating senior at UC Berkeley, she is studying computer science and Asian American studies. Wolfe participated in all OML branch STEM programs, and when she graduated from Acalanes High School in 2017, she received a college scholarship from the branch for her community service. While sharing her experiences participating in the branch's Tech Trek and STEM Conferences, Wolfe highlighted the importance of young women working equitably and comfortably in the STEM field.

A total of 18 Lamorinda eighth-grade girls will attend virtual Tech Trek camp this summer. In normal times, Tech Trek is a weeklong STEM immersion program held at Stanford Camp Curry, but last year's camp was canceled because of COVID-19. This year, although the girls will not be on campus, they will have a unique opportunity to participate in the hands-on activities in the morning and afternoon STEM workshops, hear from inspirational women working in STEM, and interact with each other in breakout rooms. They will learn the video software Flipgrid and will share their creations on Friday. And there will be optional evening sessions as well. The opportunity to participate in this year's program was offered to last year's awardees, and they accepted.

The following middle school girls to attend virtual Tech Trek camp are:

Stanley Middle School: 2020, Camille Bradley, Beatrice Dean, Helena Linnen; 2021, Arianna Bustamente, Isabelle Culinco, Abigail Hui. Joaquin Moraga Intermediate: 2020, Sophia Gomes, Giorgia Stankus, Vivian Tolajian; 2021 Maryam Kermani, Audrey Spears, Rebecca Tanner. Orinda Intermediate: 2020, Deya Murthy, Emma Wong; 2021, Sophia Bitton, Claire Casado, Christophe Davis, Kodie Zundel.

The selection criteria for the high school and college scholarships are academic excellence, community service and leadership. All recipients are excellent students and have demonstrated a desire to help others for the good of their communities.

Local graduating high school seniors and Saint Mary's College students received scholarships, including Acalanes High School's Emilia Gutman and Sophie Krayna; Campolindo High School's Jacqueline Artiaga and Helen Kaidantzis; and Miramonte High School's Chaya Tong. The Saint Mary's College students from the High Potential Program received scholarships, including Daniela Catubig, Maleena Guido, and Maya Patel. Additionally, nine Saint Mary's students received scholarships to AAUW's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders. This virtual conference offers two days of leadership training, inspiration and networking; empowering students to gain the skills and confidence to pursue their goals.

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