App Girls INTRODUCES MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS TO TECHNOLOGY
Local program run by Cache Valley women teaches girls to create cell phone applications.

Logan, UT (June, 2014) – App Girls is inspiring more young women to pursue technology by teaching 21 young girls computing concepts with fun, interactive activities through NCWIT AspireIT – a technology outreach program for girls at the middle school level supported by Intel, Northrop Grumman, and Google.

App Girls is a week long program which introduces girls to problem solving and career possibilities in technology. The participants will learn programming skills as they create meaningful cell phone apps. Andrea Castillo, an NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Award recipient, will lead the App Girls, which she designed in partnership with Utah State University’s Vicki Allan and Linda DuHadway.

Recent data show that girls comprise 56% of all Advanced Placement (AP) test-takers and 46% of all AP Calculus test-takers, but only 19% of all AP CS test-takers. At the college level, women earn just 18% of all computer and information sciences bachelor’s degrees. The “near-peer” approach of enlisting high school students to teach younger peers can be an effective way to encourage girls to consider a field they might not have otherwise pursued.

Our young people get very little computer science education. This is disturbing because of the great demand for people with those skills. Nationally, American women have earned only 18% of the degrees in computer science, but in Utah, the figures are even lower. According to the Utah Women and Education Initiative, in 2012 only 13% of the degrees in technology went to women. According to Vicki Allan, one of the partners in App Girls, “Computer Science is an amazing field for young women. Jobs are dynamic and exciting. Salaries are good. Job opportunities are plentiful. I am always surprised at how many women pick professions in which salaries are low and job opportunities miniscule. I hope this camp will help to get the word out, Computer Science is for women!”

App Girls is one of 46 programs nationwide to receive grant funding from the second grant cycle of NCWIT AspireIT, an initiative of the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT). In 2014, NCWIT granted $123,500 to 46 programs, expecting to provide over 50,000 instruction hours in computing and technology to over 1,300 middle school girls in 19 states.

Our Staff:

Andrea Castillo: Andrea is a Senior at Logan High and a recent Aspirations Award Winner (Utah, 2013). She is an energetic, articulate, and bright individual. Andrea has been involved in a variety of leadership positions: leading team in building a website, serving as a role model and advisor for individuals pursuing the Aspirations Award, and mentoring through the school

Linda DuHadway, a senior lecturer at USU and PhD student at the University of Utah, will be involved as a leader. As a professional educator, Linda has focused her efforts on improving the learning experience in her classroom. She has an interest in developing educational materials and processes that can be implemented by others. Early in her career at Utah State University, she taught the introductory computer science course. She designed, developed, and implemented an approach to teaching CS1 that includes a concept-first method. Ms. DuHadway was instrumental in the design and promotion of a new introductory curriculum for the Computer Science Department at Utah State University. This curriculum is widely accepted by the faculty, resulting in an improved undergraduate program. Linda is currently involved in implementing discovery based, guided
learning in the classroom. In one course, she is combining that approach with tiered learning in an effort to address the variety of interest and experiences among the students in a general education course. In her personal time, Ms. DuHadway has been involved in a variety of community and religious organizations. Specifically, she has worked with many women's groups that provide activities and instruction on improving personal well-being. She has also worked with youth groups that strive to provide guidelines and experience for young women to develop and improve their physical, educational, and social potential.

Dr. Vicki H. Allan has been active in computer science outreach and education. Dr. Allan has received numerous awards for service, teaching, and advising. She has published over 60 articles and served on numerous department, college, university, and international committees. In addition, Vicki has been active in outreach activities. She has served as the chair of the Utah Aspirations Awards for the past two years. She has visited area schools to work with computer science and technology students. Her NSF CPATH grant produced a website to facilitate explaining computer science principles to K-16. She has served as the campus advisor to ACMW for many years. She has important contacts with area educators, state technology leaders, and national programs.

NCWIT AspireIT is a component of NCWIT Aspirations in Computing, a talent development initiative designed to increase female participation in technology by providing structured, long-term engagement and support from middle school through high school and from college into the workforce. Find out more about NCWIT at www.ncwit.org.

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