



Scholarship Recipients

Advancing Young Women in STEM 2020

This year, the New Mexico Out-of-School Time Network is pleased to award Advancing Young Women in STEM scholarships to 12 incredible women. Their pictures and bios are below in alphabetical order.

Congratulations to our awardees!!



Mari Aoki was born in Bozeman, Montana and is currently an undergraduate student at the University of New Mexico pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science with a minor in Japanese. At UNM, she is also a member of the Women's Swimming & Diving team and is one of the committee chairs for the Society of Women Engineers (SWE). Her current career interests include software engineering and mobile application development and she hopes to someday work in the space industry. She plans to use this scholarship to help pay for housing while at school. Between classes, clubs, athletics, and studying, she likes spending time

talking with friends and learning or practicing programming skills.

Niveditha Bala is a senior at Mandela International Magnet School in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She is a proud first-generation Indian-American. In college, she hopes to work towards a career in neurosurgery and hopes to use her career to help address disparities in healthcare and education; she is also deeply interested in programming and computer science. Through an amazing opportunity with the National Center for Genome Resources, or NCGR, she learned about prions and hopes to study them intensively throughout her educational and medical career. Some of her favorite things include reading, spending time with family, volunteering at her church's nursery, and learning new things.



Sydney Billingsley is a senior at the University of New Mexico. Her concentration is in Opto-electronics in the Electrical Engineering department. Recently, she has been entertaining the idea of applying for graduate school in Florida to further her knowledge and explore her passion in material science. Along with school, she enjoys running in the Sandias or the Bosque and participating in 5-10k city runs. Running is the perfect destresser after an extensive day of studying. She is extremely excited and grateful to receive this scholarship, it gives her some extra motivation for this upcoming semester.

Jolene Fernandez is a recent transfer student to ASU from San Juan College. She is currently a senior studying Mathematics with a minor in American Indian Studies. Jolene is Elem Pomo from Northern California and Navajo from New Mexico. Her clans are Southeastern Pomo nishli doo Ma'iideeshgeezhnii bashishchiin. Her year of traveling national and international to 17 states and 9 countries with a program called Up with People left her with numerous culturally engaged experiences and new insight into her identity as a Native person. While traveling Jolene aimed to dispel negative stereotypes and uplift Native American representatives. Jolene's goal after attaining her bachelor's degree is to lead her career path into the STEM fields. When Jolene is not studying for classes you can find her dancing at a powwow, volunteering, or spending time with family.



Anwi Fomukong was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, but raised in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. She is a graduate of Rio Rancho High School and will attend the University of New Mexico in the fall. While in high school, she was a part of many clubs and extracurricular activities from Key Club and the National Society of Black Engineers, to the Associated Student Council, varsity track and field, and the Master Dance Company. She also played a prominent role in organizing her school's Black Student Union and was a Youth Group and Handbell Choir member at her church. At UNM, she will study Mechanical Engineering with the end goal of

working in the renewable energy industry or the space industry. Her interest in renewable energy came from her senior science project in which she built a model underwater river turbine to produce power in the Rio Grande River. She knows it would be extremely beneficial to others and to the planet, and would create an exciting lifestyle for her to travel around the world and implement these turbines, or other forms of renewable power, for people who do not have access to power. In 7th grade, she attended a space camp where she had to build a five foot tall rocket with a team. Long story short, her team's rocket was the only one that crashed because the parachute did not deploy and

she has sought redemption ever since. That same camp revealed to her that the space industry is not just about rockets, but powerful telescopes, satellites, and more, that also caught her attention. Whatever she dedicates her life's work to, it will be toward assisting others in need and advancing humans as a whole.

Jessica Ganley is a sophomore in Mechanical Engineering at Texas A&M University. She graduated from Sandia High School in Albuquerque in 2019. She is very passionate about giving back to the community and is in several organizations focused on STEM outreach programs, especially programs targeted towards girls! She is also on an all-female project team sponsored through her school's Women in Engineering program which has taught her a ton of technical skills and grown her confidence a lot! In the future, she hopes to use her engineering degree to pursue a career in the renewable energy field.



Bethany Gruenig is pursuing a future in STEM at the Institute of Mining and Technology in Socorro, New Mexico. She has always had a passion for robotics and was a part of R4 Robotics, and finished her last season on the team as a back to back Regional Champion. Bethany enjoys training other students in STEM subjects and spending any bit of her free-time on a laser engraver to make unique pieces for others and sometimes herself. She is grateful to receive this scholarship and will use it well to continue her education this Fall semester.

Shayla Hillis is 17 years old, She has lived in Las Vegas, New Mexico her entire life and attended Robertson High School. She loves to play sports in her free time and her hobbies include art and weight lifting. She plans to attend the United World College Dilijan this fall to get her International Baccalaureate with focuses in biology, chemistry, and mathematics before coming back home and attending university. She appreciates this award and is very thankful to NMOST for providing the young women of New Mexico this wonderful opportunity.



Natalie Martinez was born and raised in Belen, New Mexico and is currently a senior at Belen High School. She developed a passion for all STEM subjects at a young age. Specifically those that relate to the medical field. Along with her interest in STEM subjects, she is involved in multiple extracurricular activities. She plays basketball and runs cross country and track for her high school. After graduating high school she plans to pursue a career in physical therapy. Natalie is looking forward to starting the next chapter in her life and she can't wait to see what the future holds.

Jordan Mathews is currently a senior at Goddard High School in Roswell, New Mexico. Her experiences in Science Olympiad, NM MESA and the Tech Trek NM summer camp introduced her to the basics of engineering and her love of working with her hands. Tech Trek NM also connected her with intelligent and powerful women role models in the STEM community, as well as like-minded peers, and this has fueled her to continue to educate herself about what STEM has to offer. She plans on using this scholarship to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering.



Allison Rewalt graduated from Centennial High School in 2019 and spent her freshman year of college as a cheerleader for New Mexico State University. She is now going into her sophomore year of Mechanical Engineering. Allison is thrilled to pursue an education in STEM and is grateful that NMOST has given her more opportunities to move mountains for women!

Atlanta Taylor-Campagna is completing her senior year of highschool at Bosque School. She is looking forward to starting college in the Fall of 2021 and pursuing a degree in the scientific field. She has been invested in STEM from a very young age and has always been drawn towards the sciences. She has completed 5 science courses in the last 3 years, participated in Science Olympiad for 4 years, competed in robotics across the country, and been a member of the Greater Albuquerque chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers since age 13. Outside of the sphere of academia, she rock climbs and fights for social change.