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AAUW Celebrates Young Women's Achievements

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Jessica Coleman, Breanne Benedict, Dr. Kris Kulp, Mehrnaz Ahrar, and Courtney Whyte Photo provided
Sister program. Coleman plans to pursue a major in psychology.

Courtney Whyte (Campolindo) shows exceptional leadership in sports, community service, and maintains a strong academic record. She is a four-year member and captain of the varsity swim team and works with the Special Olympics Swim team. Whyte has volunteered at the Sports Medicine Center for Adolescents at Children's Hospital. She will attend Notre Dame University for pediatrics and sports medicine.

St. Mary's College has a mission that teaches the students to "Enter to learn, leave to serve." This lesson is exemplified by scholarship recipient Breanne Benedict (St. Mary's College). As a student in the school of psychology, Benedict has assisted patients with Alzheimer's and people suffering from domestic violence and elder abuse. During a summer work program, she taught in an inner city boys' school where her goal was to show the boys the importance of completing school. Breanne has been accepted into the fall 2011 Ph.D. program at the Pacific Graduate School of Psychology in Palo Alto.

Since 1998, the OML AAUW branch has provided 40 7th grade girls with scholarships to Tech Trek camp. This year, five Lamorinda girls will be attending the Grace Hopper Tech Trek camp at Stanford University. The winners were asked to read their essay from their scholarship application. These girls are outstanding students with a passion for science and math.

Caiseen Kelley (OIS) said, "My interest in technology is evident in my everyday life. After finishing homework, I normally read my favorite tech websites, including CNET, Engadget, and CNN tech."

Sophia Settle (JM) explained, "I am hoping to go into either marine biology or architecture."

Molly Faller (JM) mentioned her interest in CSI: "I enjoy hands-on science and science reports. I've always been interested in solving crimes, so I have a particular interest in the branch of science known as forensics."

Emma Connolly (Stanley) said: "I want to go to college and study math and science. Then I think I will get a job studying wildcats in their natural environment and help find ways to prevent them from being endangered."

Tess Olsson (Stanley) said, "My hopes and dreams for my future career are for me to go to medical school and become a radiologist. I love the way Tech Trek is trying to show girls that we can do anything we want and become anyone we want to become."

Keynote speaker Dr. Kris Kulp from LLNL explained how scientists and engineers from many fields work together to solve today's complex biological research problems. Melinda Moir, co-director of the Grace Hopper camp, described camp life for us. Both speakers donated their honoraria to the Grace Hopper Tech Trek camp at Stanford University.

It is the vision of American Association of University Women (AAUW) to make a positive impact on local and global communities by promoting education, empowering women and girls, and supporting personal and professional growth. On April 12, Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette (OML) AAUW gathered members, parents, and friends to celebrate and present nine remarkable young women from the Lamorinda area with college scholarships and Tech Trek camp scholarships.

Three high school seniors and one college senior received the 2011 AAUW College Scholarship Awards. At the meeting, these four winners described their accomplishments and career goals.

Mehrnaz Ahrar (Acalanes) is a top academic student in her rigorous study program. She has volunteered more than 800 hours at Kaiser Permanente, serves food to the homeless, is a peer tutor, and supervises four Interact Clubs in the Bay Area. She plans to study pre-medicine at the University of California.

Jessica Coleman (Miramonte) is an outstanding student, dancer/instructor with California Academy of Performing arts, a junior swim coach and a three-year high school facilitator for AAUW's Sister-to-



Tess Olson, Emma Connolly, Caiseen Kelley, Melinda Moir, Molly Faller, and Sophie Settle. Photo provided

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