



## **The Connecticut Technology Council Announces Top Category Winners of the 12th Annual Women of Innovation Awards Gala**

**HARTFORD, Conn., April 6, 2016.** Sixty-five women from across Connecticut were honored for their innovation and leadership during the twelfth annual Women of Innovation Awards Gala held April 6 at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington. The awards program recognized women innovators, role models and leaders in science and technology professions, including outstanding young women at the high school and collegiate level pursuing technology studies. Of these 65 women, 10 were recognized as category winners.

Presenting sponsors of this year's event were the law firm of Day Pitney LLP, the accounting firm Ernst & Young, medical device manufacturer Medtronic and United Technologies Corporation.

"The Council is honored to recognize Connecticut's most extraordinary and talented women representing a cross section of the state's most important technology companies and educational institutions," said Bruce Carlson, President and CEO of the Connecticut Technology Council.

Congresswoman Elizabeth Esty of the state's 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional district was the evening keynoter. Esty's STEM Education Act is helping states promote a higher level of STEM preparedness. For this reason, the Council recognized her with a *Public Sector Innovation and Leadership* award during the event.

The following 10 women were chosen as category winners; two winners were chosen in both the Academic and Entrepreneurial categories:

**Academic Innovation and Leadership (two Winners):**

**Chinma Uche, *Math & Computer Science Teacher, CREC Academy of Aerospace and Engineering***

Chinma Uche, a math and computer science teacher, is a proponent of computer science education at all grade levels, believing it fuels innovation in all fields. She serves as president of the Connecticut Computer Science Teachers Association, and was selected as the 2015 CREC Teacher of the Year.

**Jani Pallis, *Associate Professor, Mechanical Engineering, University of Bridgeport***

Jani Pallis has devoted 30 years to reaching students on all levels, engineering colleagues and educators with her innovative and creative curriculum. She is an engineering faculty member with an emphasis on aerospace outreach and sports engineering.

**Collegian Innovation and Leadership:**

**Jacquelyn Kubicko, *Cadet, United States Coast Guard Academy***

Jacquelyn Kubicko is a senior at the United States Coast Guard Academy. She is ranked number one in her class and has received orders to Naval Flight Training where she aspires to be a Coast Guard Search & Rescue helicopter pilot. Jacquelyn has recently received a Fulbright U.S. Student Award.

### **Community Innovation and Leadership:**

#### **Carolyn Begnoche, Senior Design/Drafter at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft**

Carolyn Begnoche is Outreach Chair for the Society of Women Engineers, an active member of Women in Aviation International and a judge for the *FIRST* Robotics Competition and the Connecticut Invention Convention. Carolyn is also the Society of Women Engineers collegiate counselor at CCSU.

### **Entrepreneurial Innovation and Leadership (two winners):**

#### **Nicole Bucala, *President* and CEO, MIFCOR**

Nicole Bucala's biotech company is dedicated to commercializing novel therapeutics that extend the lives of stroke, heart attack and kidney injury victims.

#### **Merrie London, *Manager*, Small Business Innovation Research and Federal Leveraging Programs, Connecticut Innovations**

Merrie London has developed and manages a \$1 million+ state fund for small business innovation and research.

### **Large Business Innovation & Leadership:**

#### **Terri Wells, *Vice President, Global Marketing for Access & Instruments*, Medtronic**

Terri Wells is a 20+ year veteran of the medical device industry. She has launched and managed numerous device products as well as directed portfolio and brand strategy.

### **Research Innovation and Leadership:**

#### **Annabelle Rodriguez-Oquendo, *Linda and David Roth Chair of Cardiovascular Research*, University of Connecticut Health Center**

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Annabelle Rodriguez-Oquendo is an internationally recognized expert in cholesterol metabolism and the genetics of the HDL receptor SCARB1. She is also the founder of Lipid Genomics, a drug development company targeting cholesterol disorders.

**Small Business Innovation and Leadership:**

**Dina Dubey, *Executive Vice President, Corporate Development, Z-Medica***

Dina Dubey is responsible for business development, research and development, quality assurance, clinical affairs and U.S. & International Regulatory affairs at Z-Medica, a medical device company based in Wallingford.

**Youth Innovation and Leadership:**

**Helen Liu, *Senior, Amity Regional High School***

Helen Liu is an exceptional student who has explored a diversity of research topics over the last four years, and was one of the rare high school students accepted into the 2015 Jackson Genomics Laboratory summer student program. She has received many STEM awards including: 2014 and 2015 finalist of the NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Award; finalist in the 2015 Young Naturalist Award (American Museum of Natural History) and is co-author of a paper currently under review for publication with her mentors from NYU. She tied for 1<sup>st</sup> place in the CT STEM Fair and placed 2<sup>nd</sup> overall in the CT Science and Engineering Fair in the Biotech category and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Life Sciences category. Most recently, Helen was selected as one of the top 40 finalists in the Intel Science Talent Search in Washington DC.

**The following is a complete list of the 2016 Women of Innovation® Honorees:**

### **Youth Innovation and Leadership**

- Sara Banach – Academy of Aerospace and Engineering, Windsor, CT (High School Student)
- Sophie Bardos – Greenwich High School, Riverside, CT (High School Student)
- Annie Blumenfeld – Fairfield Warde High School, Fairfield, CT (High School Student)
- Victoria Li – Amity Regional High School, Woodbridge, CT (High School Student)
- Helen Liu – Amity Regional High School, Woodbridge, CT (High School Student)
- Kanika Malani – Glastonbury High School, Glastonbury, CT (High School Student)
- Megan Siedman – Joel Barlow High School, Easton, CT (High School Student)

### **Collegian Innovation and Leadership**

- Aimee Alphonso – Yale School of Medicine, New Haven, CT (College Medical Student)
- Wafa Elmannai – University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT(PhD Candidate / College Student)
- Jacquelyn Kubicko – United States Coast Guard Academy, New London, CT (Cadet / College Student)
- Stephanie Reeve – University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT (College Student)
- Yan Xia – University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT (College Student)

### **Community Innovation and Leadership**

- Michelle Andersen – Sikorsky Aircraft, a Lockheed Martin Company, Stratford, CT (Research & Engineering Technology Manager)
- Carolyn Begnoche – Pratt & Whitney, East Hartford, CT (Senior Designer / Drafter)
- Wendy Durica – Datto, Inc., Norwalk, CT (SQA Engineer – Team Lead)
- Gail Gottehrer – Axinn, Veltrop & Harkrider LLP, Hartford, CT (Partner)
- Kirsten Schnappauf – Sikorsky Aircraft, a Lockheed Martin Company, Stratford, CT (Combat Tempered Platform Demonstration Structural Analysis Lead)
- Kelli-Marie Vallieres – Sound Manufacturing Inc., Monster Power Equipment Inc., Old Saybrook, CT (President & CEO)

### **Research Innovation and Leadership**

- Maria Ellis – University of Connecticut School of Medicine, Storrs, CT (M.D., Assistant Clinical Professor)
- Dr. Jane Grant-Kels – University of Connecticut School of Medicine, Storrs, CT (Dept. Chair and Professor of Pediatrics and Pathology)
- Jessica Newman – Sikorsky Aircraft, a Lockheed Martin Company, Stratford, CT (Integration Manager SB>1 Defiant™)
- Karolina Palucka, M.D., PhD – The Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine, Farmington, CT (Professor and Associate Director of Cancer Immunology)
- Annabell Rodriguez-Oquendo – UConn Health Center, Farmington, CT (Linda and David Roth Chair of Cardiovascular Research)
- Holly Rushmeier – Yale University, New Haven, CT (Professor)
- Bing Wang – University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT (Associate Professor)
- Sandra Weller – UConn Health Center, Farmington, CT (Professor and Chair)

### **Academic Innovation and Leadership**

- Stacey Brown – UConn Health Center, Farmington, CT (Director, Dept. of Community Medicine and Health Care)
- Chinma Uche – Academy of Aerospace and Engineering and Greater Hartford Academy of Math and Science, Windsor, CT (High School Teacher)
- Caroline Deally – UConn Health Center, Farmington, CT (Associate Professor, Reconstructive Sciences, Founder and CTO, Chondrogenics)
- Lisa Dierker – Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT (Professor, Psychology)
- Amy Howell – University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT (Professor and Dept. Head)
- Ishita Mukerji – Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT (Fisk Professor of Natural Science and Professor of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry)
- Jani Pallis – University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT (Associate Professor, Mechanical Engineering)

- Lynne Regan – Yale University, New Haven, CT (Professor of Molecular Biophysics & Biochemistry; Professor of Chemistry)
- Kelly Angelini – Simpson Healthcare Executives, Old Lyme, CT (CEO / CSO)
- Nicole Bucala – MIFCOR, New Haven, CT (CEO)
- Janine Darling, STASH America, LLC, Stamford, CT (Founder & CEO)
- Wendy Davis – GestVision, New Haven, CT (CEO)
- Marcia Fournier – BioArray Therapeutics, Inc., New Haven, CT (Founder & CEO)
- Anuja Ketan – Zillion Group Inc., Norwalk, CT (CTO)
- Gloria Kolb – Elidah Inc., Monroe, CT (CEO/Owner)
- Amy McCooe – Level Up Village, Old Greenwich, CT (Co-CEO)

### **Small Business Innovation and Leadership**

- Melissa Casini – etouches, Norwalk, CT (Director of Account Management)
- Dina Dubey – Z-Medica, Wallingford, CT (Executive VP, Corporate Development)
- Merrie London – Connecticut Innovations, Rocky Hill, CT (Manager, SBIR and Federal Leveraging Programs)
- Jackie Mulhall – SMC Partners, Hartford, CT (Director)
- Pam Perdue – Continuity Control, New Haven, CT (Founder, EVP Regulatory Operations)
- Kathleen Roberge – etouches, Norwalk, CT (VP of Global Sales)

### **Large Business Innovation and Leadership**

- Anna Aulabaugh – Pfizer Inc., Groton, CT (Associate Research Fellow)
- Nancy Cika – Pratt & Whitney, East Hartford, CT (Manager, PW4000 Programs)
- Teresa Cowles – UTC Aerospace Systems, Windsor Locks, CT (Chief Engineer, Project Engineering)
- Elizabeth Deckers – Hartford Hospital, Hartford, CT (Director of Labor and Delivery)
- Linda D'Elia – Medtronic, New Haven, CT (Senior Product Manager)
- Jennifer Graham – Sikorsky Aircraft, a Lockheed Martin Company, Stratford, CT (S-97 Raider Dynamic Systems Integrated Product Team Lead)

- Cheryl Hayward – Pfizer Inc., Groton, CT (Director, Chemical R&D)
- Stacy Lanata – Pratt & Whitney, East Hartford, CT (Manager, Strategic Sourcing)
- Michelle McComb – Datto, Inc., Norwalk, CT (CFO)
- Lesia Protsailo – UTC Research Center, East Hartford, CT (Project Leader, Advanced Materials)
- Mary Schubert – Pratt & Whitney, East Hartford, CT (PW UPPAP Program Manager)
- Jessica Skuby – CCSU ITBD, New Britain, CT (Business Development Manager)
- Cyn Stehouwer – Frontier Communications, New Haven, CT (VP, Operations)
- Margaret Steinbugler – Pratt & Whitney, East Hartford, CT (Manager, Materials Analysis and Mechanics)
- Anita Tracy – Pratt & Whitney, East Hartford, CT (Principal Engineer)
- Terri Wells – Medtronic, New Haven, CT (VP, Access and Instruments)
- Xiaomei Yu – Sikorsky Aircraft, a Lockheed Martin Company, Stratford, CT (Manager of Environmental and Corrosion Technology)

### **About the Connecticut Technology Council**

The Connecticut Technology Council ([www.ct.org](http://www.ct.org)) is Connecticut's industry association for the technology sector. CTC's mission is to connect people, ideas and opportunities to the global technology and innovation community. CTC provides members with business assistance and specialized programs, in addition to promoting and supporting public policies that globally position Connecticut's "culture of innovation" that helps attract great ideas and entrepreneurs to develop new jobs and wealth for the state.

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