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17th Annual *Women of Innovation* Nominations Due April 9; Finalists to be Announced in May, Featured at Fall Awards Ceremony

*Women in STEM Disciplines Propel Businesses, Academia,
Innovation & Breakthroughs Across Connecticut*

Hartford, CT - The deadline for nominations is just two weeks away, as plans for the 17th annual Women of Innovation® awards program proceed. The prestigious awards highlight the increasing impact of women innovators, role models, and leaders in science and technology professions throughout Connecticut, and also recognize outstanding young women at the high school and collegiate level pursuing technology studies.

The highly regarded annual event is presented by the Connecticut Technology Council (CTC) and Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology (CCAT), and will once again be a virtual event this fall. The deadline for submitting nominations is **April 9, 2021**. Eligibility Criteria and Category Descriptions can be reviewed, and nominations submitted, at www.womenofinnovation.org.

Expanding a vibrant network of nearly 800 women throughout Connecticut who have been recognized through the years, the diverse group of outstanding women who will be selected as finalists and award recipients will be recognized for their substantial achievements and excellence in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) fields. In business and academia, women are advancing scientific and technological progress, and pushing the envelope on what's possible.

Nominations are being accepted in the following categories of Innovation & Leadership: Youth, Collegian, Secondary Academic, Postsecondary Academic, Research, Community, Entrepreneurial, Small Business, Medium Business and Large Business. An award will also be given for Inspiring STEM Equitability, presented to an individual for promoting equality and diversity in STEM.

“There are incredible women working throughout the STEM fields in our state, leading innovation, achieving breakthroughs, and encouraging girls to carve out their own distinctive paths in STEM,” said Giovanni Tomasi, President/Chief Technology Officer of RSL Fiber Systems and Board Chair of CTC. “The contributions of women in STEM will be indispensable as we work to reignite the Connecticut economy post-COVID.”

Following a review of nominees' credentials by expert judges after the nominations deadline, the finalists for the Women of Innovation® awards will be announced in May. Finalists will be selected based on their professional experience, history of innovation, ability to think creatively



and solve problems and demonstration of leadership. Students will be judged on inventiveness and accomplishment in science and technology and academic achievement.

“Connecticut’s resurgence in advanced manufacturing and other technology sectors can be traced to game-changing advances led by women. We must continue to accelerate these advances,” said Ron Angelo, President & CEO of the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology. “Across STEM fields throughout Connecticut, the exceptional skills and dynamic leadership that women provide is essential for our businesses and our economy.”

Despite accounting for over half of the college-educated workforce, women in the United States made up only 29% of those employed in science and engineering occupations in 2017, according to data compiled by [Catalyst](#). Only 11.5% of science and engineering employees in the United States were women of color.

Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics occupations are expected to experience rapid growth in the coming decade, Catalyst reported in 2020. Technology and engineering are among the top sought-after skills in the United States. However, a gender gap in STEM persists. The Smithsonian Science Education Center points out that “the scarcity of women in STEM fields is a long-standing and persistent problem.”

In an analysis of the top 1,000 firms in the United States by revenue, women accounted for only 18% of Chief Information Officers or Chief Technology Officers on average across all industries. In the United States, women in computer, engineering and science occupations were paid an estimated 80.3% of men’s annual median earnings, as of 2017.

Sponsorship information for the 17th annual Women of Innovation® awards is available by contacting Maureen Lord, Operations Manager for the Connecticut Technology Council, at mlord@ct.org.

For more information about Women of Innovation®, go to www.womenofinnovation.org.

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