



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**DRAFT**

## The Joys of Scientific Discovery: Technology Webinar to Feature Sonata Scientific Senior Researcher and Principal Investigator

*2021 Women of Innovation® Finalists to be Announced*

Passion for creating and implementing technology to enhance well-being and protect the environment will be the focus of Connecticut Technology Council's upcoming webinar featuring Melissa Petruska, Senior Researcher and Principal Investigator at Sonata Scientific, LLC. Petruska was a 2020 Women of Innovation® Finalist in the Small/Medium Business Innovation and Leadership category.

The webinar, to be held on **Tuesday, July 27 at 12 Noon**, will also include the formal announcement of the **2021 Women of Innovation® finalists**, in addition to the timely discussion with Petruska. Registration for Tuesday's webinar can be made now at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/163206544167>.



Melissa Petruska

In her current role at Sonata Scientific, Petruska develops novel catalysts for air purification and self-disinfecting surfaces which can then be used in diverse ways to improve air quality, increase shelf life of fresh produce, and provide protection against surface-borne bacteria and viruses. She will share her diverse research experiences and scientific discoveries, as well as the lessons learned throughout her career that she uses to help young women navigate their own career paths.

Developing innovative material solutions to technical and environmental challenges has been a hallmark throughout her career. With a BS in chemistry from Carnegie Mellon and a PhD in chemistry from the University of Florida, Petruska is a co-author on 36 scientific publications and a co-inventor on 15 issued patents.



The webinar will be moderated by **Karen Buell**, a member of the Women of Innovation® committee and Connecticut Technology Council Board Member. Currently the VP of Operations at Payveris, Buell has 10+ years of experience in banking with a focus on customer facing technology, UI/UX and digital channels. Additionally, she is a Financial Peace University coordinator, devoting many hours to teaching financial literacy, and serves on the Houghton College MBA Advisory Council, Buell's alma mater.

The **Women of Innovation® Spotlight monthly webinar series**, which will continue into the Fall, features women from the network of more than 800 previous honorees, as well as members of the upcoming 2021 class. The webinars include compelling stories highlighting their current work, as well as the career paths that contributed to their success.

### ***Women of Innovation® Awards Finalists to be Announced Tuesday***

The finalists for the 17th annual Women of Innovation® awards will be announced during Tuesday's webinar. The distinguished awards are earned by women innovators, role models and leaders in



science and technology professions throughout Connecticut. The awards program will also recognize outstanding young women at the high school and collegiate level pursuing technology studies. Nominations were reviewed by expert judges, and finalists are selected based on their professional experience, history of innovation, ability to think creatively and solve problems and demonstration of leadership. Student finalists were selected based on inventiveness and accomplishment in science and technology and academic achievement.

Nominations were accepted earlier this year in the following categories of Innovation and 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.

**The 17th annual Women of Innovation® awards program will be held as a virtual event on October 14 at 5:00 PM.** The highly anticipated event is presented by the Connecticut Technology Council (CTC) and Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology (CCAT). Sponsors include Medtronic, Pfizer, and Sonalysts. Media sponsors include WTNH News8 and Hearst CT Media. Sponsorship information is available by contacting Maureen Lord at [mlord@ct.org](mailto:mlord@ct.org). For more information, go to [www.womenofinnovation.org](http://www.womenofinnovation.org).



The Connecticut Technology Council is a statewide, member-based trade association focused on uniting and growing Connecticut's technology community by connecting leaders, driving public policy, and providing needed resources to growing tech companies. The CTC works together with members and the community at large to advance Connecticut's reputation as a technology state.

The Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology Inc., a 501(c)3 nonprofit, validates, demonstrates, and encourages the adoption of leading-edge technologies into global industrial companies and the advanced manufacturing supply chain, while also providing the training and education necessary to utilize the capability of these advancements and drive efficiency.

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