

Samantha Hirsch Awarded Aspire2STEAM Scholarship

Aspiring Mechanical Engineer Strives to Bridge Gender Gap in Industrial Environments Through Mentorship

ANKENY , IOWA , UNITED STATES, December 9, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Aspire2STEAM.org](https://aspire2steam.org), which provides educational scholarships and mentoring to young women and girls who are working toward careers that require education in science, tech, engineering, the arts, or math (STEAM), has awarded Samantha Hirsch an ASPIRER scholarship made possible through a kind donation from CompTIA. CompTIA.org is a leading voice and advocate for the \$5 trillion global information technology ecosystem; and the estimated 75 million industry and tech professionals who design, implement, manage, and safeguard the technology that powers the world's economy.



Samantha Hirsch, Aspire2STEAM Scholarship Recipient

“

I want to contribute the same inspiring feeling to those who may doubt their own abilities.”

Samantha Hirsch

As a junior at Purdue University, Samantha is pursuing a major in Mechanical Engineering with a minor in Management. She was drawn to Purdue's top-tier engineering program and the opportunity the university provided her to continue to build on her strengths and interests. “Among the many things we love about Samantha Hirsch is that she is paving the way for other young women and girls to cultivate their natural

mechanical abilities and carve out careers in male-centered fields,” said Cheryl O'Donoghue, CEO at Aspire2STEAM.

Starting at a young age, Samantha recognized her hand/eye coordination and fine motor skills

set her apart from others. She would spend countless hours in her dad's garage, helping him build his drag racing car. Fast forward several years, Samantha now serves as a chair for her university's Society of Women Engineers Grand Prix team. Within this dynamic role, she's a member of the pit crew team, helps in kart maintenance, contacts sponsors, and oversees budgetary decisions. Each season includes multiple races a year culminating in the "Purdue Grand Prix" race held in the spring. The race is an important event supported by the Purdue Grand Prix Foundation (www.purduegrandprix.org) and strives to be an outlet for engineering students to exercise their knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm while also providing student scholarship funding.

Additionally, Samantha is a member of the Women in Engineering Outreach Program where she engages with local preschool- to high-school-aged female students to help them complete engineering-related tasks. Through her involvement, she hopes she can encourage girls to consider engineering education and careers, showing them that while the field is dominated by men, there are opportunities for women, too.

Inclusivity and mentorship are very important to Samantha. She has worked two internships—one in construction and one in manufacturing. In both experiences she was the only woman on the work site, a fact that prompted indirect and oftentimes isolating comments from her peers. "Over time, as more and more women show their value in mechanical engineering fields, gender-based stigmatism may improve and more women may feel welcomed to contribute their

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talents,” said Samantha.

Specifically, Samantha has been lucky to have female mentors who have shown her how to be an inclusive manager and encourage other women to pursue work in industrial environments. “Their intelligence and approach to working in male-dominated industries inspires me,” said Samantha. “I hope to one day have the same effect on female employees in the workplace, especially interns who may doubt their own abilities or may have experienced bias or discrimination. It’s important that women feel welcomed, too.”

Academically, Samantha is a top performer, earning a place on Purdue’s Dean List each semester since she enrolled at the university. She also completed a certification through her engineering college for Python (computer language) programming.

When she is not in the classroom or participating in extracurricular activities, Samantha can be found writing. Her current book is set in a dystopian future focusing on a group of women who come together to defeat a common enemy. Writing comes naturally to Samantha. She already has over 28,000 words in her book and she’s only just begun. Samantha explained, “I have always had narratives and plots in my head, so having the ability to write them down has been a rewarding experience.” Samantha loves to meet other engineers who also have a passion for reading and writing. Connecting with others of similar interests is exciting for her and something she hopes to continue to explore in the future.

About Aspire2STEAM

Aspire2STEAM.org is a charitable 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which has earned Guidestar’s Gold Seal for integrity, transparency, and accountability. Aspire2STEAM provides educational scholarships and mentoring to young women and girls who are working hard—aspiring—to achieve careers that require education in science, tech, engineering, the arts, or math. Aspire2STEAM is committed to helping women and girls with a hand up over the incredible barriers of student debt and rising education costs, and the real, ever-present opportunity barriers that keep them out of most male-dominated industries.

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