

Aspire2STEAM Expands Vision and Impact

More than a scholarship and recognition program, Aspire2STEAM now offers young aspiring leaders paid opportunities to learn how to run a nonprofit

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Aspire2STEAM.org, which provides educational scholarships, recognition, and mentoring to young women and girls who are working towards careers that require education in science, tech, engineering, the arts, or math (STEAM), has announced the launch of a new program. In addition to serving young women and girls pursuing STEAM careers through its scholarship and recognition program, Aspire2STEAM will now offer students and young adults paid opportunities to learn how to run a nonprofit organization.

"We're adding a 'Students4Students' program element where we will work with a group of students and recent graduates each year to train them how to run a nonprofit like Aspire2STEAM, providing a real-life learning lab for future nonprofit leaders while they earn pay for their work," said Cheryl O'Donoghue, Founder at Aspire2STEAM. "Ultimately, we are building a legacy by transforming Aspire2STEAM into a nonprofit run by emerging leaders who are closer in age to the young women and girls we serve. I envision the dynamic will be exciting and of great value to all involved."

Earlier in the year Aspire2STEAM was engaged in discussions with its strategic advisors and leadership team on different ways it could create a legacy that would live far beyond its founder's lifespan and abilities. "Many wonderful nonprofits fade away when a founder or CEO retires or ceases to exist," said O'Donoghue. "Aspire2STEAM has been growing in impact over the



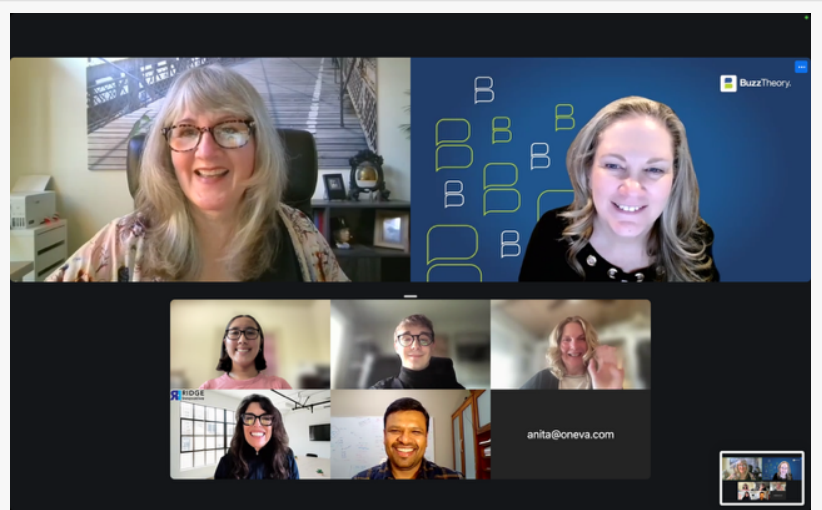
Madelyn Qayyum is currently a high school junior serving as Aspire2STEAM's Marketing Coordinator. In addition to her current role, she will lead the Students4Students alongside O'Donoghue and Logan.

years and I don't see the need for our type of scholarship and recognition program going away any time soon. In fact, we only see it expanding as young women pursuing STEAM education receive only 30% of the school scholarships offered though they make up over 70 percent of the applicant pool."

O'Donoghue hatched the idea of evolving Aspire2STEAM into a student-run nonprofit after successfully working with Madelyn Qayyum, a high school junior. Madelyn is currently serving as Aspire2STEAM's marketing coordinator. "When I first met Madelyn, she struck me as an individual with a passion for female-forward initiatives, STEAM education, and leaving this world a better place," said O'Donoghue. O'Donoghue showed Madelyn how to set up her own business as an independent contractor and in a couple of months the enterprising high schooler quickly picked up a wide range of coordinating activities.

"From what I've noticed, Gen Z is more interested in designing their own careers than simply filling roles," said Madelyn. "We are challenging the traditional 9-5 workweek in favor of a dynamic work setting, exploring the 'roads not taken' and often taking the form of self-started initiatives. Even better, a lot of these initiatives are focused on addressing 21st century issues that are pressing in today's world. It's amazing to see the passion of our generation being directed towards social good!"

With this in mind, Aspire2STEAM believes it's more important than ever to provide opportunities for these students to explore the realm of entrepreneurship and nonprofits, all while they



At the forefront of the Students4Students initiative is Aspire2STEAM's team of advisors. Comprised of passionate individuals across all walks of both tech and business fields, the advisory board is united in supporting Aspire2STEAM's impending expansion.



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endeavor to do “good deeds” and be of service to others.

In addition to O’Donoghue, the nonprofit has enlisted other accomplished industry leaders to participate in the Students4Students program as mentors and advisors. Those advisors currently supporting Aspire2STEAM include: Anita Darden Gardyne, Chief Development Officer at Global Strategies; Khali Henderson, Senior Partner at Buzz Theory; Trushant Mehta, Co-Founder & Chief Technology Officer at OpenEyes Technologies Inc.; Jean O’Neill, Vice President Channel at Performive; Nancy Ridge, Founder & President at Ridge Innovative; and Debbie Kestin Schildkraut, Vice President, Business Marketing at Association of National Advertisers.

“There’s so much to learn from accomplished leaders like Cheryl and the Aspire2STEAM Industry Advisors, who have blazed a trail for future changemakers through Aspire2STEAM,” added Madelyn. “I believe that the Students4Students initiative will continue to uplift the Aspire2STEAM mission, while empowering participating students for their passion-fueled careers.”

Since Madelyn began working with Aspire2STEAM, Logan Williams, another student and recent University of Iowa graduate, has joined the team with a special focus on providing impactful business writing. “Logan’s expertise in painting compelling stories will be key to helping Aspire2STEAM attract grantors who connect with our nonprofit’s mission and track record of serving young women, and now aspiring nonprofit leaders,” said O’Donoghue.

Effective immediately, Madelyn and Logan will both assume leadership roles on the Students4Students operations team. Aspire2STEAM is currently looking to add at least three additional students or recent graduates between the ages of 16 and 24. The operations team will work together to review scholarship applications, make scholarship award decisions, attract supporters using social media, write scholarship award recognition news stories, work with schools and grantors to help promote Aspire2STEAM programs, and update advisors on key activities. Those interested in learning more about becoming a member of the operations team can email Info@Aspire2STEAM.org or send a message via LinkedIn.

About Aspire2STEAM

Established in 2018, Aspire2STEAM.org is a charitable 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which has earned Guidestar’s Gold Seal for accountability, integrity, and transparency. Over the years it has become known for its scholarship and recognition program to support 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 break the incredible barriers of scholarship award inequity, rising education costs and student debt, and the real, ever-present opportunity barriers that keep them out of most male-dominated industries.

Scholarship Applications Accepted Year-Round! Share this [online application](#) today.

[Please donate](#). Your kindness is a catalyst for change and empowerment for the young women and girls we serve!

Cheryl O'Donoghue

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