

46 Inspiring Connecticut STEM Leaders Selected as 2025 Women of Innovation® Finalists

Recognizing Innovation and Leadership in Academia, Community, Corporate, Entrepreneurship, and Research; Youth Scholarships to be Awarded

HARTFORD, CT, CT, UNITED STATES, July 17, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Forty-six accomplished Connecticut women will be honored for their achievements in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) at the 20th annual Women of Innovation® awards, hosted by the Connecticut Technology Council (CTC).

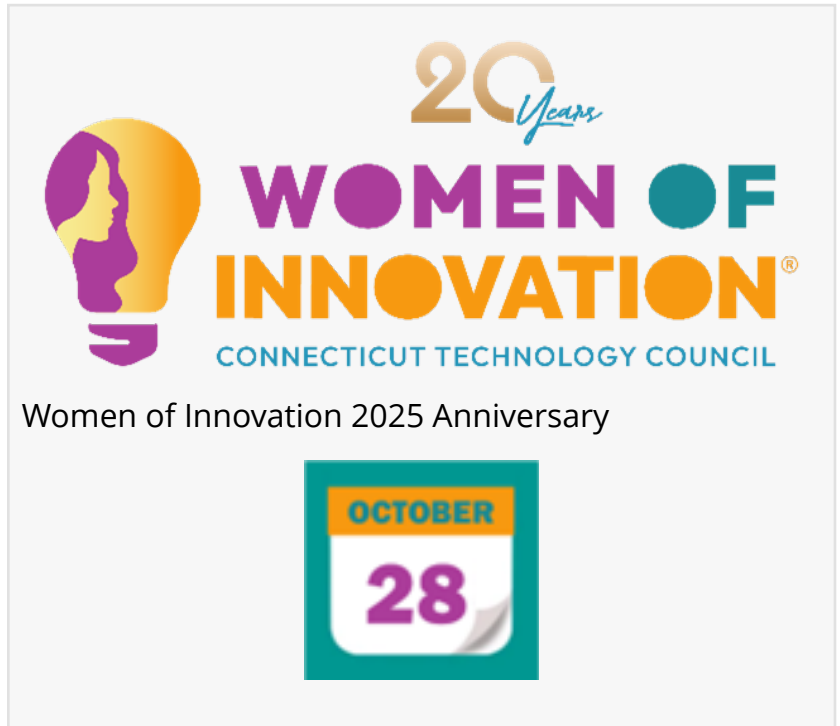
These inspiring leaders were selected from a field of nearly 100 nominations.

Nominees include scientists, researchers, academics, manufacturers, student leaders, entrepreneurs, and technicians who are driving scientific advancement and business growth throughout Connecticut.

The prestigious awards ceremony recognizing this outstanding group and announcing the winners in nine categories will be held on Tuesday, October 28, from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Doubletree by Hilton in Bristol. All finalists will be recognized at the ceremony. Youth finalists (high school juniors or seniors) will receive scholarships to further their education.

“Congratulations to all these amazing women – our 2025 Women of Innovation! The Connecticut Technology Council is committed and proud to carry on the legacy of this long-standing event in this 20th year, with the support of our members, sponsors, and partners,” said Milena Stankova Erwin, CTC’s Executive Director. “We look forward to celebrating all the finalists, highlighting their impact in Connecticut and beyond.”

The 20th annual Women of Innovation awards event – always an exciting and inspiring evening -



will include networking with technology and business leaders from across the state, as well as the official announcement of the category award winners.

All nominees had to meet the following minimum requirements: currently working or studying in Connecticut, demonstrated strong leadership abilities, and serving as a mentor - either short or long-term, peer, career or life mentor. Nominees also met the specific requirements of the award category in which they were nominated.

“Since the first Women of Innovation event that I attended, I have been extremely impressed with the great contribution these outstanding women - including this 2025 WOI group - have had and continue to have on the technology ecosystem and our society,” said Giovanni Tomasi, President/Chief Technology Officer of RSL Fiber Systems and Board Chair of CTC. “As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of Women of Innovation, it reaffirms the caliber of talent and leadership in business and academia across our state.”

Held annually since 2005, the Women of Innovation program has created a vibrant community of women and girls in STEM, passionate about making an impact, mentoring, leading, and sharing their expertise with those pursuing career development and growth. It is one of the largest networks of women in technology, science, and engineering in Connecticut.

Registration for the awards event opens later this month. A link to register, sponsor, donate, and additional details can be found at www.ct.org/womenofinnovation.

2025 Women of Innovation®

Corporate Innovation and Leadership - Large Business

- Lisa Brown – Market Segment Director, Launch Vehicles, Ensign-Bickford Aerospace and Defense Company
- Julie DiGiacomo - Mechanical Systems and Externals Integrated Team Leader, Pratt & Whitney, An RTX Business
- Dawn Maskell – IT Business Relationship Manager, Eversource Energy
- Kathleen Moore - Senior Manager, Global Innovation Portfolio, Engineering, Otis Elevator Company
- Kristina Pacheco – Machinist V, Kamatics Corporation, a division of Kaman
- Hope Utterbeck – EVP & CIO, Liberty Bank

Corporate Innovation and Leadership – Small/Medium Business

- Katie Digianantonio, Ph.D. – Senior Research Investigator, Arvinas, Inc.
- Brittany Isherwood - President & CEO, Burke Aerospace
- Rajeswari Kompalli- Vice President, Research and Development, Laticrete International, Inc.
- Amy Thompson, Ph.D. – Chief Talent & Training Officer, Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology (CCAT)

Entrepreneurial Innovation and Leadership

- Amber Childs, Ph.D. - Founder, M-Select
- Barbara DeLoureiro – Founder and CEO, Vizionara, LLC
- Roberta Nole – Founder and CEO, Nolaro24 LLC; Stride Physical Therapy and Pedorthic Center
- Vanessa Sena – Founder and CEO, My Local Chefs (MLC) Nutrition

Research Innovation and Leadership

- Veronica Maria Pimental, M.D. - OBGYN Residency Research Director, Trinity Health of New England. Associate Professor OBGYN, QU Netter School of Medicine, Assistant Professor, OB/GYN, UConn School of Medicine.
- Ruzica Piskac, Ph.D. - Donna L. Dubinsky Associate Professor of Computer Science, Yale School of Engineering & Applied Science
- Anna Tarakanova, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, Mechanical Engineering and Biomedical Engineering, University of Connecticut
- Tamilla Triantoro, Ph.D. – Associate Professor, Business Analytics and Information Systems, Quinnipiac University School of Business
- Lea Winter, Ph.D. - Assistant Professor of Chemical and Environmental Engineering, Yale University

Community Innovation and Leadership

- Nagasree Garapati, Ph.D. – Assistant Professor, Chemical Engineering Program, University of New Haven
- Jodie Gillon – President and CEO, BioCT
- Tanya Henneghan – Director, IT Administration, Southern Connecticut State University
- Emily Jacobs, Ph.D. – Senior Principal Biomedical Engineer, Technical Fellow, Medtronic
- Jennifer Pascal – Associate Professor in Residence and Associate Department Head, University of Connecticut

Academic Innovation and Leadership – Post-Secondary

- Colleen Bielitz, Ph.D. – Associate VP for Strategic Initiatives & Outreach, Southern Connecticut State University
- Malgorzata Cartiera, Ph.D. – Innovation Director, Yale University
- Clara Fang, Ph.D. - Professor & Chair, Department of Civil, Environmental, & Biomedical Engineering, College of Engineering, Technology & Architecture, University of Hartford
- Susan Freudzon – Director of Biomedical Engineering Graduate Program, Fairfield University
- Kristine Horvat, Ph.D. – Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering, University of New Haven
- Jasna Jankovic, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, Department of Materials Science and Engineering, University of Connecticut
- Kiku Jones, Ph.D. – Professor and Chair of Department of Business Analytics and Information, Quinnipiac University School of Business

Academic Innovation and Leadership – Secondary

- Alissa DeJonge - President, Mercy High School, Middletown
- Lindsay McCarthy – Science Teacher, Amity Regional High School, Woodbridge

- Julie McTague - STEM Department Chairperson, Joel Barlow High School, Redding
- Sarah Reeves – Science Teacher, Amity Regional High School, Woodbridge
- Chinma Uche, Ph.D. – Computer Science and Mathematics Teacher, CREC Academy of Aerospace and Engineering, Windsor

Collegian Innovation and Leadership

- Amna Al-Azdee – Chemical Engineering Undergraduate Student, University of New Haven
- Mariaceleste Florian – Undergraduate Student, Southern Connecticut State University
- Rachel Godek - Undergraduate Student, Biomedical Engineering, UConn Health
- Sophia Hatzis - Undergraduate Student, Student Lab Manager, University of Connecticut Innovate Labs, School of Business, College of Engineering
- Anjal Jain - Undergraduate Student, Yale University; Founder, AdheRx

Youth Innovation and Leadership

- Valeria Pegkou Christofi – High School Student, Farmington High School
- Rhea Doshi – High School Student, Choate Rosemary Hall, Wallingford
- Caeli Edmed – High School Student, Lyme-Old Lyme High School
- Namyanzi Edwards – High School Student, CREC Academy of Aerospace and Engineering, Windsor
- Arianna Pereira – High School Student, Joel Barlow High School, Redding

The 20th annual Women of Innovation® awards event is sponsored by Medtronic (Platinum); Axinn, Veltrop & Harkrider LLP (Silver); Arvinas, Inc. (Bronze); Day Pitney LLP (Bronze); McCarter & English, LLP (Bronze); and Carillon Technologies (Award and Scholarship). Supporting level sponsorships and scholarship funding is provided by Bento Engine, Income Conductor and NBT Bank. Media Sponsor is WTNH News 8.

Sponsorships and scholarship donations are still accepted. For more information on how to support WOI and women leaders in STEM, contact Milena Erwin at executive.director@ct.org.

About the Connecticut Technology Council

The Connecticut Technology Council (CTC), a statewide trade association, unites the state of Connecticut's technology ecosystem, serving as a dynamic platform for idea exchange and resource sharing. Formed in 1994, CTC connects across sectors, firm sizes, and business models, to drive innovation and growth in Connecticut's tech sector.

The CTC offers exceptional networking, learning, and promotional opportunities, connecting a diverse network of technology leaders, educational institutions, government agencies, non-profits, and service providers. Members gain access to a dynamic community of influential tech leaders, founders, business owners, and partners. Through exclusive, invitation-only forums and signature events like the annual Women of Innovation awards, the CTC addresses key technology issues and trends, providing valuable insights and opportunities for knowledge sharing among industry experts and peers, both in Connecticut and globally. www.ct.org

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