

Press Release

## **Tech Trek Founder Marie Wolbach to be honored as the 2017 Kiwanis Angel Award recipient on October 19, 2017**

Marie Wolbach has been selected as the recipient of the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Kiwanis Angel Award for founding and scaling up Tech Trek, an AAUW (American Association of University Women) summer STEM camp (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) for rising 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls. The Kiwanis Angel Award, sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Palo Alto, honors an individual who has had a significant, positive impact on children and youth and provides a \$1,500 contribution to the recipient's organization.

The award reception will be held on October 19, 2017, 5:30—7:30 PM at the Sheraton Palo Alto Hotel, 625 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. Moderator will be Police Chief Dennis Burns (Ret.). Ticket price is \$50 until October 12, \$55 afterwards, and can be ordered online at <http://kiwanisangelaward.org>

In the last nine years, Tech Trek has reached over 15,000 girls nationwide. Research has shown that Tech Trek alumnae are less susceptible to negative stereotypes about women in STEM, surpass the national average in advanced high school math and science courses, and have been introduced to STEM careers which they had been unaware of.

According to Nora Jane Brackenbill, a former Tech Trek camper, current Stanford graduate student, and also Tech Trek volunteer, "At Tech Trek, not only did I meet inspiring women in a variety of STEM careers, I also met other girls my age who were interested in science! For the first time, I could envision a future for myself and for my fellow campers in the scientific community. When I started my PhD in Physics at Stanford in 2013, I knew I wanted to volunteer at Tech Trek so that I could help provide that same sense of community to a future group of female scientists!

In 1998, with a grant from AAUW (American Association of University Women), Marie Wolbach created and ran the first Tech Trek summer camp at Stanford University. The camp was a response to an AAUW study, How Schools Shortchange Girls, which showed that girls with science interests often dropped that interest when they reached middle or high school. Adopted as a program by the national AAUW, Tech Trek held 22 camps in 10 states this summer <http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/stem-education/tech-trek/>

In Palo Alto, seven 7<sup>th</sup> grade girls from 49ers Academy, Foundation for a College Education, St. Elizabeth Seton School, and Jane L. Stanford, David Starr Jordan, and Terman Middle Schools were chosen by Palo Alto AAUW to attend this year's Grace Hopper Camp at Stanford. The students, who had each written an essay on an aspect of science that interested them, lived in Stanford dorms with girls from all over the state. They experienced such projects as Virtual and Augmented Reality at Google, astronomy, Build It Night, cyber security at VM Ware, DNA testing, aquatic wildlife and nature, finance, app invention, lighting and sound design at Bing Concert Hall, nanotechnology, mousetrap and balloon car construction, and Pixar movie making.

Wrote supporter Judge LaDoris Cordell (Ret.), "Marie Wolbach has single-handedly made this world a far better place by opening the eyes and minds of girls to the power of mathematics and science education."

Marie has received several prestigious national awards, including the Jefferson Award and the Classic Woman Award from Meredith Publishing Corporation-Traditional Home Magazine, this will be her first local honor.

Funds raised by the Angel Award event through sponsorships and tickets will support the Kiwanis Club of Palo Alto's community service projects and grants, benefiting institutions working with children, youth, and families in the Palo Alto area.

For more information on sponsorship opportunities or event details, please go to <http://kiwanisangelaward.org>, or contact:

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