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AspireIT Initiative Enlists Women To Engage 10,000 Middle School Girls in Computing Programs

- By [Rhea Kelly](#)
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The [National Center for Women & Information Technology](#) is scaling up its [NCWIT AspireIT](#) initiative, which enlists technical high school or college women in designing and leading computing programs for younger girls, to engage 10,000 middle school girls in learning computing concepts. The \$3.71 million program is a Commitment to Action for the [Clinton Global Initiative](#) (CGI) America, an organization that "brings together leaders in business, government, and civil society to generate and implement commitments to create jobs, stimulate economic growth, foster innovation and support workforce development in the United States."

NCWIT AspireIT's "near-peer" approach "allows young women to become role models and build leadership skills while encouraging younger girls to pursue computing," according to a press release. As Ruthe Farmer, chief strategy & growth officer of NCWIT, commented, "This initiative was born from young women's enthusiasm for technology and desire to pay it forward. Who better to invite girls to explore and experiment with technology, than the young women they look up to and aspire to be like? NCWIT AspireIT provides the national infrastructure needed to harness this energy and rapidly bridge the computing education gap for thousands of girls nationwide."

"Not only has leading an AspireIT program been a tremendous benefit for the students but I have also learned to challenge myself to take charge and inspire the girls through my love of technology," said Noor Muyhi, a computer science student at [New Mexico State University](#) and an NCWIT AspireIT program leader, in a prepared statement. "My goal is for every girl in the program to feel 110 percent supported and to leave the camp with a spark of curiosity towards technology fields."

To fulfill the CGI Commitment, NCWIT will work with 600 high school and college members of the NCWIT Aspirations in Computing program and 250 partner organizations to create and deliver 400 computing-focused after-school programs for middle school girls across the country through 2018.

About the Author

About the author: Rhea Kelly is executive editor for Campus Technology. She can be reached at rkelly@1105media.com.

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