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Las Cruces High School Student Earns Prestigious Computing Award

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[January 28, 2019](http://www.lcps.net/2019/01/28/las-cruces-high-school-student-earns-prestigious-computing-award/) [slewis](http://www.lcps.net/author/slewis/)[LCPS News](http://www.lcps.net/category/lcps-news/)[2](http://www.lcps.net/2019/01/28/las-cruces-high-school-student-earns-prestigious-computing-award/)

Las Cruces High School senior Breanna Widner gained national recognition after placing among the top 40 students in the nation for her work in the field of computer science. Widner competed in a national competition, earning the Aspirations in Computing Award from the National Center for Women and Information Technology.

This month, NCWIT announced the 2019 AiC national recipients, honoring four hundred women in high school from all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and all U.S. overseas military bases.

[](http://www.lcps.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Las-Cruces-High-Breanna-Widner-683x1024.jpg)Las Cruces High School senior Breanna Widner was among 40 female students nationwide to earn the Aspirations in Computing Award from the National Center for Women and Information Technology.

Lauren Curry, Breanna Widner’s computer science teacher at Las Cruces High School, said Widner attended summer camps for computer science in middle school, leading her to complete the computer science pathway at Las Cruces High. As a freshman, Widner took Intro to Video Game Design, and followed it up her sophomore year with AP Computer Science Principles. As a junior, Widner focused on earning college credit from UNM by taking a dual-credit course offered by Curry at Las Cruces High School. Now a senior, Widner is taking AP Computer Science and plans to take the dual-credit test offered for the course.

“Breanna is really dedicated and has a grasp of computer science that has made her a mentor to her peers,” Curry said. “Not a lot of high school students have that capability. She also spends a lot of time working on it. Through dedication and work ethic, she has taught herself how to understand something that is not intuitive to most people. She has developed her own computational thinking skills in a way that enables her to grasp, and then turn around and explain these things.”

Each year, U.S. high school women in grades 9-12 are eligible to receive recognition for their demonstrated interest and achievements in computing, proven leadership ability, academic performance, and plans for post‑secondary education. This year, 40 winners and 360 honorable mentions were selected from more than 4,300 applicants.

With the support of NCWIT Award for AiC National Sponsor Bank of America, each of the 40 national award winners received various prizes, cash, and a trip to Bank of America headquarters March 8-9, for a celebration and networking with Bank of America employees.

“We are certainly proud of Breanna’s accomplishments and her passion for technology,” said Las Cruces Public Schools Superintendent Greg Ewing. “Historically, women are under-represented in technology and STEM fields. To see one of our students being recognized on a national level is extremely gratifying, and we know that she has a bright future ahead of her.”

View a complete list of the 2019 national winners [here](https://www.aspirations.org/blog/four-hundred-us-high-school-women-are-recognized-technological-achievements-0#Winners). A complete list of 2019 honorable mentions are available [here](https://www.aspirations.org/blog/four-hundred-us-high-school-women-are-recognized-technological-achievements-0#Mentions). The NCWIT Award for AiC is sponsored by Apple, Bank of America, Microsoft, Motorola Solutions Foundation, and Symantec.

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