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# CWIT *update*

THE CENTER FOR WOMEN IN  
TECHNOLOGY AT **UMBC**  
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

## A Word From the Director

By Dr. Penny Rheingans

Wow. I can't believe it's time for another Update. This semester has been a whirlwind of activity here in CWIT -- from the Winter Retreat, to Bits & Bytes, to new Scholar selection, to Spring into Leadership, to the CWIT Showcase, to .... Well, you get the picture. As you read through this Update, you'll get a snapshot of just how much our Scholars are up to, both in CWIT and across campus.

Getting to watch new graduates walk across the stage is one of my favorite opportunities of the academic year. This week, I got to watch 19 CWIT, CYBER, and TSITE Scholars walk: Oluwagbemileke Alafe (TSITE, CBEE), King Carmichael (TSITE, CMPE), Hannah Corcos (CWIT, ME), Alejandra Diaz (CYBER, CSMC), Cristina Fortiz (TSITE, IS), Sergey Grokhovetskiy (CYBER, CMSC), Sophia Haire (CWIT, CMSC), Edward LaFemina (CWIT, CMSC), Megan Lynch (CWIT, IS), Elyse Hill (CWIT, ME), Alex Jackson (CYBER, CMSC), Sydney Menikheim (CWIT, CBEE), Viviane Natacha Ngea Mebila Olugemo (TSITE, CMPE), Bailey Rouk (CYBER, CMSC), Samantha Smith (CWIT, ME), Samantha Sullivan (CWIT, CMPE), Katie Swanson (CYBER, CMSC), Moustapha Tiam (TSITE, CMSC), and Casey West (CYBER, CMSC). It's been great to watch them grow in knowledge, skills, and confidence. It will be even more fun to watch what amazing things they do next.

We've finished selecting our C16 cohort of CWIT Scholars who will begin in the fall. This highly accomplished group of twelve is Ashley

Amundsen (Bel Air HS), Olivia Bailey (Chesapeake Senior HS), Juanita Botonero-Murcia (Annapolis Senior HS), Elizabeth Emberger (Our Lady of Mercy Academy, NJ), Ariella Garcia (Notre Dame Academy HS, NY), Carly Heiner (Bel Air HS), Kavya Kavanakudy (Western Tech), Reagan Roberts (The Excelsior Academy), Maddy Selby (Mount De Sales Academy), Marian Singletary (Charles Herbert Flowers HS), Anna Staats (Great Mills HS), and Frances Watson (Towson HS). They'll be joined by two incoming freshmen Y5 CYBER Scholars: Mariela Guardado-Martinelli (Meade Senior HS) and Amina Mahmood (Mount Hebron HS). We're excited that they've chosen CWIT and UMBC.

We are also looking forward to welcoming a group of transfer and continuing students to become CYBER and TSITE Scholars. The new rest of the CYBER Y5 cohort is Daniel Diseroad (UMBC), Lauren Hale (UMBC), Lydia Hogan (UMBC), Muhsina Helal (CC Baltimore County), Matt Manzi (UMBC), and Bianca Monge (Montgomery College). Our T6 TSITEs are Diana Bell (CCBC), Azaria Gallo (CC Baltimore County), Basma Kanjar (Howard CC), Kyle Roberts (UMBC), and Dwan Smith (UMBC).

I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge that we couldn't do what we do without the strong support of the extended CWIT community -- our Board, our faculty mentors, our industry mentors, our event speakers, and other partners across and beyond campus. We are so thankful for your engagement and support!

## Cyber Corner By: Cindy Greenwood

The 2016-2017 school year was an exciting one for the Cyber Scholars Program. This year marked the fourth year of the program and saw the graduation of the three students who started as freshmen in the first Cyber Scholar cohort (Y1) in fall 2013. Robert Thompson graduated in December after completing his computer science degree in just 3.5 years and both Alejandra Diaz and Vaughn (Alex) Jackson graduated this week, also in computer science. This milestone is a great time for reflecting on how much the program has grown and developed over the past four years as well as looking ahead to how much more we can grow. We look forward to bringing in a new cohort of approximately 15 Scholars and Associates in the fall to help us continue building our community.



# T-SITE Update

By Dr. Danyelle Ireland

Since 2012, the Transfer Scholars in IT and Engineering (T-SITE) program has successfully served 32 transfer students from Maryland community colleges within the CWIT community at UMBC. As

of May 2017, 84% of the T-SITE Scholars in the first three cohorts have graduated within 3 years of their matriculation. One hundred percent of all incoming T-SITE scholars have been retained in a computing or engineering major. These results are far exceeding the average metrics of STEM transfer students nationally.

As I reflect upon my first year managing the T-SITE program, I am most grateful for the expertise, passion, and fortitude of the T-SITE Scholars that I serve. Their impressive reputation as scholastic achievers, student leaders, industry savvy future professionals, and researchers in training, continues to advance the status of transfer students at UMBC. Additionally, as incoming T-SITEs navigate their transition and subsequent successes in this new environment, they provide insight for faculty and staff about how to best serve this key student population at UMBC. This summer, T-SITEs will go on to impressive REUs, internships, and professional positions at locations such as Salisbury University, University of Arizona, University of Pittsburgh, Northrop Grumman, Travelers, HughesNet, National Security Agency, and Harris Corporation. It is a joy to know that the T-SITE program and the CWIT community contributed in some way to their amazing accomplishments.

We look forward to welcoming the T6 cohort into the T-SITE family and the CWIT community. I have no doubt that they will carry the distinguished T-SITE legacy!

## conGRADulations!

### Our May 2017 CWIT, Cyber, and T-SITE Graduates

- Oluwagbemileke Alafe (T3):** Pursuing opportunities within the chemical engineering field
- King Carmichael (T4):** Working at Northrop Grumman
- Hannah Corcos (C12):** Moving to Michigan to be an Electrified Powertrain Engineer, Ford Motor Company
- Alejandra Diaz (Y1):** Interning at Northrop Grumman this summer, then full-time grad school at UMBC
- Cristina Fortiz (T4):** Working at the Department of Defense
- Sergey Grokhovetskiy (Y3):** Working at Northrop Grumman
- Sophia Haire (C12):** Moving to Minnesota to work with the Community Technology Empowerment Program as an AmeriCorps VISTA member
- Edward LaFemina (C12):** Working at the Department of Defense
- Megan Lynch (C12):** Moving to New Jersey to be a Business Analyst with Verizon
- Elyse Hill (C12):** Pursuing a PhD in mechanical engineering at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada
- Alex Jackson (Y1):** Working as a Software Engineer, Freedom Consulting Group and finishing his 1st novel
- Sydney Menikheim (C12):** Completing her master's degree at UMBC
- Natacha Ngea (T3):** Moving to Florida to be a Software Engineer at Harris Corporation
- Bailey Rouk (Y3):** Working at Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab in the Air and Missile Defense sector
- Samantha Smith (C12):** Moving to Ohio to be a Process Engineer at Smucker Natural Foods
- Samantha Sullivan (C12):** Working at Northrop Grumman
- Katie Swanson (Y2):** Moving to Ohio to be a Software Engineer at J.P. Morgan
- Moustapha Tiam (T4):** Pursuing opportunities within the computer science field
- Casey West (Y3):** Working as a Cybersecurity Engineer at Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab



## Summer 2017 Internship and Research Plans (Not an exhaustive list)

- AMAZON**  
John Shueh (Y4)
- BGE**  
Emily Duan (C14)  
KelseyHof (C12)
- CISCO SYSTEMS**  
Kwame Robertson (Y3)
- DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
Bryan Vanek (T3)  
Bethany Von Ludwick (Y4)
- GE APPLIANCES**  
Tobi Tunde-Alli (T4)
- GE WATER**  
Kourtney Rutkowski (C12)
- JHU/APL**  
Stephanie Saloka (C15)  
Sami Turskey (Y2)  
Danielle Zack (Y3)
- MCCORMICK**  
Tess Wootton-Klebanoff (C13)
- MICROSOFT**  
Sara Masoudi (C13)
- NORTHROP GRUMMAN**  
Pragya Chaudhari (Y3)  
JoHannah Couture (Y4)  
Alejandra Diaz (Y1)  
Seth Jenkins (Y2)  
Priyanka Ranade (Y4)
- PRIME SOLUTIONS**  
Emily Yu (C14)
- TRAVELERS**  
Sophie Kozolan (T4)
- UMBC DIVISION OF IT**  
Sophia Haire (C12)
- UMBC MARTEN LAB**  
Sammie Maygers (C15)
- UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT**  
Jenette Phillips (C12)
- VISIONIST**  
Caroline Kery (C13)
- WAYFAIR**  
Celeste Wong (C13)

## Grants Update By: Dr. Danyelle Ireland

CWIT's newest grant is sponsored by the National Science Foundation Improving Undergraduate STEM Education program (DUE-1626413) and supports a collaborative project at UMBC called the Post-Transfer Pathways Program for Computing and Engineering Majors (Pathways). The four year project (2016-2020) addresses the national need to increase the number and diversity of new computing and engineering graduates by improving the post-transfer success, retention, and graduation of computing and engineering majors from community colleges to four-year public research universities, with a focus on women and underrepresented minorities. More specifically, this program includes three parts:

1. an innovative model of pre- and post-transfer academic coaching for transfer students in computing and engineering
2. a discipline specific one-credit first year experience course designed for transfer

students in computing and engineering majors at UMBC

3. an active, data-driven, collaborative learning community comprised of computing and engineering faculty, advisors, and administrators from six partners community colleges and from four academic departments at UMBC.

Our institutional partners on this project include Anne Arundel Community College, Community College of Baltimore County, Harford Community College, Howard Community College, Prince George's Community College and Montgomery College, as well as the College of Engineering and IT at UMBC. We anticipate that approximately 1,160 students and 20 faculty/staff will participate in the Pathways program throughout the four years of the project.

For more information about the UMBC Post-Transfer Pathways project, visit [ptp.umbc.edu](http://ptp.umbc.edu)!

## Sophomore Leadership Seminar

By: Erica D'Eramo

To enhance the sophomore experience and help Scholars better understand leadership and their role within CWIT and UMBC, the CWIT sophomore Scholars participated in a Leadership Seminar this Spring semester. The seminar took place six times during the semester and topics included understanding self, communication, working in teams, values, and overcoming impostor syndrome. Students completed the True Colors activity that promotes appreciation of individual differences and ways to utilize each others strengths in a team building environment.

## Film Screenings

By: Dr. Danyelle Ireland

In alignment with our mission to collaborate with our internal and external partners to make UMBC a national model for female-friendly education in computing and engineering, CWIT co-sponsored two timely and important film screenings this semester:

On February 24, we joined a private UMBC screening of Hidden Figures at the Hollywood Theatre. The film tells the stories of three African American women working at NASA in the 1960's during the Space Race and their pivotal roles in NASA operations of that time.

On March 31, we partnered with the UMBC Computer Science Education Club to host a screening of the documentary film CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap, which exposes the dearth of American female and minority software engineers and explores the reasons for this gender gap.

Students, faculty, and staff who attended these events enjoyed the opportunity to hear inspiring stories and also learn more about some of the issues impacting diversity and inclusion in technology fields. We will continue to host events like these in the future so that members of our community can engage with one another and have fun together!



## CWIT Affiliates Workshops By: Dr. Danyelle Ireland

Our sense of connection and community within CWIT has been strengthened by the growth of the CWIT Affiliates program. The CWIT Affiliates Workshop series is a semester-long program with sessions on topics such as leadership, academic success, personal development, career exploration and planning, community building among women (and their allies) within COEIT, wellness, and much more. This past semester, the CWIT Affiliates workshops also included a special session on overcoming Imposter Syndrome led by Dr. Katherine Gibson in CSEE, and an interactive micro book club featuring the book, "Women in Tech: Take Your Career to the Next Level with Practical Advice and Inspiring Stories" by Tarah Wheeler Van Vlak. We look forward to the continued expansion of our CWIT Affiliates program and invite all women and interested allies majoring in computing and engineering to become a CWIT Affiliate.



# Bragging Rights: Scholars' Awards & Accomplishments

**Sophie Kozolan (T4):** I am proud of being the president of the Information Systems Security Association (ISSA), participating in the STRIVE leadership program, and being a student ambassador at UMBC.

**Danielle Zack (Y3):** I am excited to have been selected to attend the Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing!

**Sam Smith (C12):** I was President of ASME while being the Desk Manager of Chesapeake Hall and a teaching fellow for Thermodynamics.

**Teddy LaFemina (C12):** I'm really glad I got to help plan Cyber 101 and participate in several cyber workshops this past year.

**Sara Masoudi (C13):** I'm really proud I was able to survive my study abroad experience and bring back so many more interpersonal skills.

**Kwame Robertson (Y3):** I recently got certified as a Splunk Power User. I also received funding to attend the Splunk conference!

**Steph Saloka (C15):** My team won the UMBC Spring Hackathon Legal/Justice category.

**Tobi Tunde-Alli (T4):** Induction to Tau Beta Pi engineering honors society and undergraduate research in the UMBC Energy Harvesting and Design Optimization Lab

**Bryan Vanek (T4):** President of the UMBC Cyber Defense Team, organized and led UMBC's first homegrown cyber CTF competition, brought home UMBC's first National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition championship, worked on research with other Cyber Dawgs to add a new special topics course (CMSC491: Active Cyber Defense) to the

curriculum, got recognized by the Deputy Director of the NSA (Richard Ledgett) for winning NCCDC, and helped with leading Men in CWIT along with Kwame and Connor

**Tatiana Nikolaeva (T4):** I am proud that I can work part time and attend classes. Also, I am proud of getting all A's last semester.

**Bailey Rouk (Y3):** This year I was a new RA, and received six different scholarships so that I was able to live on campus for next to nothing. I was also elected the Honors College Treasurer.

**Sophia Haire (C12):** I'll be graduating Summa Cum Laude with a dual degree in computer science and math and a minor in sociology, and have been awarded Outstanding Senior in both the computer science and math departments.

**Jenette Phillips (C12):** With the research I have done at the University of Connecticut, I was accepted to participate in the Posters on the Hill presentation during April 2017!

**Tess Wootton-Klebanoff (C13):** Last fall I built a small crane in my machine design class and competed against other cranes. We did not win, but we made it through qualifications and the first round.

**Caroline Kery (C13):** I organized school visits for the Computer Science Education club.

**Savannah Steinly (C13):** I got a scholarship to attend the Earth Optimism Summit in Washington D.C., where I gave a presentation about my previous summer research. I also earned an Undergraduate Research Award for the 2017-2018 year!

**Alejandra Diaz (Y1):** I am working on a project called the 'Internet of Botnets'. I am plan-

ning on using this project as a base for my Master's thesis next year.

**Kourtney Rutkowski (C12):** I got to spend my winter break studying abroad in Germany which was one of the most amazing and mind opening experiences I have had.

**Katie Swanson (Y2):** Studied abroad in Wales! Won New Member of the Year for my sorority! Successfully squeezed in all my classes required for my last semester so I can graduate on time!

**Seth Jenkins (Y2):** I got second place at a professional hacking competition hosted by a company called DataTribe!

**Bethany Von Ludwick (Y4):** I received a 4.0 GPA for the Fall 2016 semester. I received 3 delegate scholarships for my academic achievement.

**Natacha Ngea (T3):** Last spring, I participated at an SAT prep at Mt. Hebron High School. Their SAT scores and overall performance in school improved so significantly (90% of these students are going to college), the principal sent us a thank you note. Last summer, I successfully worked on strategic application and product for IBM Managed Security Services. I was a Grace Hopper Scholarship recipient from the Anita Borg Institute. My team was among the 8 finalists for the Yahoo Hackathon at Grace Hopper 2016.

**Sammie Maygers (C15):** I was the freshman representative for the Society of Women Engineers and I was able to participate in undergraduate research this year.

## Winter Retreat

By: Erica D'Eramo

Scholars jumped into the new semester with conversations about their life pathways as it relates to their social identities (gender, ethnicity, race, religion, socioeconomic status, language, sexual orientation, and more). In small groups, Scholars were able to share their stories and learn something new about what brought each person to UMBC and CWIT. As a community we reviewed Brave Space Guidelines and ways to engage in different types of conversation: Debate, Discussion, and Dialogue. Scholars were able to utilize these tools during retreat conversation about racism, gender, and sexuality. All of these enhance the ways we try to become better allies. At the end of the day we concluded with a refreshing and delicious ice cream bar with all the toppings!



# Shout Outs!

Scholars send anonymous kudos, congrats, and encouragement to their community

**Rebekah Kempske** - Thanks for being such a loyal friend and for your unwavering support and faith in me! Congrats on your 4.0 GPA!

**Meera Patel** - Thanks for being a consistent shoulder to lean on!

**Kristin McLaughlin** - Thanks for keeping me motivated through CompSci and Physics!

**Taylor Webb** - You work incredibly hard and your Math and CompSci skills are unparalleled!

**Bailey Rouk** and **Casey West** are amazing seniors and have done such a great job connecting with people in the program! Congrats grads!

The **CWIT tutor army** for CMSC 201-202 is doing a phenomenal job.

**CWIT new staff** made a seamless transition with the help of incredible **Cindy!** Cindy, thank you for your hard work during this transition!!

**Bryan Vanek** and the Cyber Dawgs: way to be fearless and competitive!

**Mike Byers**, you are just great! I am very proud of **Priyanka Ranade!** She has been an amazing friend and an extremely successful Cyber Scholar!

**Katie Dillon** - you were always there for me as a friend and as a helper academically. Thank you for all you have done for me, I'll miss you dearly!

Congrats to **Sophie Haire** for all she has accomplished in the

past four years. Best of luck in the future!

Shout out to **Beth Wolinski** for always being a great friend and for picking me up when I'm down!

**Avery Riehl** - you are extremely selfless, hard-working, dedicated, and brave. Your commitment to your beliefs and helping others inspires me!

Shout out to **Samantha Sullivan!** She has overcome so many obstacles while in college and she never stopped persisting!

Congrats to my LiWITs **Emily Yu** and **Kristin McLaughlin** for making it through sophomore year with flying colors! Y'all are the greatest!

Great job **Hannah Aris** and **Savannah Steinly** on your URCAD projects! It was so cool to see your posters and learn about the awesome things you do in your research!

Congrats to all my **fellow seniors**; we made it!! Y'all are amazing people and just because of that I know you're gonna do even more amazing things. Stay lovely and stay you. :)

Welcome **Erica D'Eramo** and **Danyelle Ireland!!** Y'all are the coolest people and have come into your new roles so fully and enthusiastically. I really appreciate everything you do to care for each of us!

Shout out to **King Carmichael** for doing great things and always

being able and willing to help others when they need it.

Shout out to **Bryan Vanek** for organizing UMBC's first CTF!! Congrats to **King Carmichael** and **Natacha Ngea** on their Yahoo app!

Just wanted to give a shout-out to **Alex Jackson** and **Stephanie Pearre**. You guys were super awesome to hang out with throughout the past two years, and I'm really glad to have you guys as my friends. :D Shout out to **Sydney Menikheim** for surviving her senior design project!

Congrats to **Rebekah Kempske** for landing an internship with FBI and **Meera Patel** for landing an internship with NSA.

Shout out to **Sam Mendimasa!** Thank you to **Hannah Aris** for being a great friend and cool person to talk to! I hope we get to talk more next year and maybe over Spring Break =)

I'd love to shout out **Celeste Wong** for being an awesome friend and co-partner this semester. We struggled through Algorithms together and without her I would be lost!

Shout outs to **Natacha Ngea** and **Bailey Rouk!**

Thank you **Dr. Ireland** for always encouraging me and pushing me through my limit.

Shout out to all my **graduating T-SITes** I will miss you all!

# Thank You to Our Faculty Mentors!

CWIT appreciates the time you give to working with our Scholars.

- Adam Bargteil
- Lee Blaney
- Marie desJardins
- Tim Finin
- Richard Forno
- Katherine Gibson
- Vandana Janeja
- Anupam Joshi

- George Karabatis
- Chuck LaBerge
- Erin Lavik
- Chris Marron
- Cynthia Matuszek
- Tinoosh Mohsenin
- Charles Nicholas
- Penny Rheingans
- Sreedevi Sampath
- Maria Sanchez
- Carolyn Seaman
- Anne Spence
- Claire Welty
- Mohamed Younis



## CWIT SPRING CALENDAR

### January:

30 CWIT Welcome Back Pizza & Cupcakes

### February:

3 CWIT Affiliates Workshop

6 Family Meeting

10 Spring Scholar Retreat

15 Men in CWIT

17 CWIT Affiliates Workshop

19-20 Bits & Bytes

24 Hidden Figures Film Screening

25 Scholar Selection Day

### March:

3 CWIT Affiliates Workshop

10 Cyber Workshop

13 Men in CWIT

17 CWIT Affiliates Workshop

27 Pick Your Classes Extravaganza

31 Cyber Workshop

### April:

3 Cookies & Cards Letter Writing

4 Spring Into Leadership

5 Cookies & Cards Letter Writing

7 T-SITE/Cyber Selection Day

14 CWIT Affiliates Workshop

17 Men in CWIT

19 CWIT Advisory Board Meeting

21 Cyber Workshop

21 CWIT Showcase

26 Family Meeting

### May:

7 CWIT/PWIT

End-of-Year Picnic

10 Men in CWIT

12 STEMRules Cybersecurity in the

Financial Industry Talk

17 Stress Buster Event

25 Undergraduate Commencement



The Center for Women in Technology

1000 Hilltop Circle,  
ITE452  
Baltimore, MD 21250  
410-455-2822  
[www.cwit.umbc.edu](http://www.cwit.umbc.edu)

### CWIT Staff:

Dr. Penny Rheingans  
Director

Dr. Danyelle Ireland  
Associate Director

Ms. Erica D'Eramo  
Assistant Director  
CWIT Scholars

Ms. Cindy Greenwood  
Assistant Director  
Cyber Scholars

Ms. Erin Poand  
General Assistant