

# Alexandria Gazette Packet

Alexandria, VA | Feb. 4, 2019

## Awarding Women in STEM



Catherine Kosiba of Maryland; Leslie Lytle, a senior at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria; Jessica Aujla, a senior at Centreville High School; and Doris Blanchard, with a more than 30-year career at NASA Langley.

Doris Blanchard, one of NASA's first human computers, was honored at FIRST Chesapeake's inaugural Reaching for the Stars: Women in STEM Breakfast sponsored by Rolls-Royce. This event was created to celebrate the accomplishments of exceptional women leaders in STEM and aspiring female technology leaders.

The event was a chance to network with women from the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia region while learning more about FIRST Chesapeake and its robotics programs.

Blanchard was honored with the "Reaching for the Stars" award. Between 1950 and 1985, she worked with international scientists, socialized with the Apollo astronauts, and married one of the designers of the Mercury capsule. She started out using Monroe adding machines to analyze wind tunnel data and was promoted to "head computer" in

1956. At one point, she had six young women working for her on a project that was so large it could only be run on NASA's sole computer after working hours.

FIRST Chesapeake also recognized Catherine Kosiba with an educational scholarship sponsored by LMI. Catherine is a young woman who has been involved with the FIRST program throughout her high school experience. In addition to serving on her robotics' leadership team, she provides exceptional outreach and support to many elementary school teams in the FIRST program and other STEM organizations in the Baltimore area.

Two young women in the FIRST program were awarded LMI education scholarships: Leslie Lytle, a senior at T.C. Williams High School, and Jessica Aujla, a senior at Centreville High School.

FIRST Chesapeake directly impacts over 6,700 middle and high school students through robotics workshops and competitions. Over 50,000 individuals attend 18 FIRST Chesapeake robotics competitions from December through April each year.

To learn more about FIRST Chesapeake, go to [www.firstchesapeake.org](http://www.firstchesapeake.org).

<http://www.alexandriagazette.com/news/2019/feb/04/awarding-women-stem/>