



Our AAUW Freehold Branch Honors the 2019 Award Recipients



On May 9, 2019, the Rose Fishkin Awards for the Outstanding High School Students, were handed out at our Branch meeting. These awards are named for Rose Fishkin who was a Cornell graduate, member of our branch and a believer in lifelong education for women. Proceeds from our yearly book sale, which will be held this year from June 19th through June 22nd, enable us to fund these awards.

The six amazing young ladies were selected by their high school guidance departments as the top female graduating student in their class. They represent each of the high schools in the Freehold Regional School District.

This year's recipients are outstanding in terms of academic achievement, community involvement and leadership skills. They are:

Jessica Mena - Colts Neck HS

Jessica has participated in the All Shore Symphonic Band, The Marching Band, The Concert Band and the Jazz Band. She has been a member of the Rock-Climbing Team. She took first place in the American Mathematics Competition. Jessica has received the Freehold Board of Education Student Recognition Award in the 11th grade. She is in the National Honor Society and the Spanish National Honor Society. Jessica is a National AP Scholar, AP Scholar with Distinction. National Hispanic Scholar. Commended Student of the National Merit Scholarship

Erika Tan - Freehold Boro HS

As an avid coder and advocate for all things STEM, Erika is interested in applying and teaching her knowledge to different communities around her. While managing her busy schedule in the Medical Sciences magnet program, she also joined multiple science-oriented clubs and honed her programming skills through various personal projects, including a Chrome extension for the visually impaired and an automated Parkinson's detection system. She completed a novel independent research project titled "Optimization of Thermoelectric Phone Charger Using Heat Spreader Materials." She is the author of two research papers presented at the fall 2018 MIT IEEE conference. (Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers). She is a Governor's STEM Scholar . Created a "You Tube Channel" called "Tangerine Education" which covers SAT tips and curriculum for AP Biology and AP Chemistry. She is a Governor's School of Engineering and Technology Scholar. Erika is Captain of the Math League, and a member of the Science League, American Computer Science League, Math Honor Society and National Honor Society. She has participated with food donations to Soup Kitchens, helped at local churches, and tutored others in school. In her free time, she likes to swim and play with her pet rabbit. She plans to Attend the University of Texas, Austin majoring in computer science. Her future plans are to pursue a career in software engineering or artificial intelligence.

Stephanie Appow - Freehold Township HS

Stephanie has had an interest in the world and international relations and applied to the Global Studies Learning Center in the eighth grade. After taking AP Physics in her junior year, she realized that she had a new passion. Her goal is to pursue a career in Engineering. She has been on the Principal's Honor Roll since freshman year. Stephanie has been involved in math tutoring and the Science League. She has been a member of the girls' varsity Tennis team and as a senior she became the team's captain and helped lead the team to victory in the A-North Division for the first time in twenty-nine years. She volunteers at the Monmouth County Library and performs on the piano for her community and to help charities. Stephanie is treasurer of the Habitat for Humanity club which raises money to build affordable housing all around the world. She plans to attend Quinnipiac University, School of Engineering

Kayla Laufer - Howell HS (Could not attend award presentation)

Kayla is currently a senior at Howell High School in the performing arts division with a cumulative GPA of 5.355. She is involved in many after school activities but mostly she attends Dance Attitudes in Marlboro where she dances on a competition team and is an assistant teacher. She enjoys volunteering and is involved in the Friendship Circle and works with Dancers that inspire, an organization that uses social media to share the challenges that dancers faced and how they overcame them. In addition, she has been involved in Relay for Life, a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. She has attended the Princeton Ballet School, studied ballet in NYC, Studied for five weeks at Univ. of North Carolina - Tisch School of the Arts, NYU -Tisch School of the Arts and various master classes. This fall, she will be attending Johns Hopkins University's Peabody Institute, double majoring in dance and chemistry.

Elizabeth Garcia - Manalapan HS

Elizabeth has been a student in Manalapan High School's Science and Engineering magnet program for the past four years. She earned the title of National AP Scholar in recognition of her completion of and high performance on nine AP exams. She is an active member of the Spanish, Math, and National Honors Societies. She spent her first three years at Manalapan with the winter swim team, swimming JV for the first two and becoming a manager in her third year. She has volunteered many hours after school as a tutor. She plans to attend the Stevens Institute of Technology for a degree in Mathematical Sciences. She will be working towards gaining experience in statistics for various fields, allowing her to expand the use of her skills into any field of research she wishes to pursue.

Preanka Pillai - Marlboro HS

Preanka is the president of her school's Key Club and an executive board member of the Rutgers Model Congress Club. She is a member of the National Honor and Spanish Honor Societies, and she is also a National Merit Finalist. To explore her interest in politics, she has interned at the Monmouth County Clerk's Office and has presented her research on legislative solutions for DNA theft at MIT. As a Rutgers University Presidential Scholar, she plans to pursue marketing and political science.

These young ladies have presented their incredible accomplishments in academics as well as extracurricular activities. Their volunteer work in the community is truly commendable.

AAUW Freehold Branch wishes these fine women much success in their future endeavors.

We know they will succeed!

Sheila Menendez

Rose Fishkin High School Awards Coordinator