



# *News Release*

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## **21 MICHIGAN STUDENTS EARN BREAKING TRADITIONS AWARDS**

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LANSING – Twenty-one students statewide are winners of Michigan Department of Education (MDE) Breaking Traditions Awards for surpassing obstacles and stereotypes to achieve success in career and technical education (CTE) programs, State Superintendent Mike Flanagan announced today.

“The Breaking Traditions Awards recognize high school and college students who have demonstrated success in CTE programs that are nontraditional to their gender,” Flanagan said. “At a time when there is a call from various stakeholders for building a more-responsive, market-driven schools-to-jobs pipeline, it is important to recognize the efforts of these students and the programs that helped them.”

The students received the awards at a ceremony at the Library of Michigan in Lansing. MDE’s Office of Career and Technical Education oversees high school instructional programs that teach students skills in a specific career cluster. Most programs offer early college credit opportunities to provide a seamless transition to postsecondary education.

“These outstanding students are preparing themselves to enter a career that will benefit them individually and benefit Michigan by increasing diversity in our state’s workforce.” Flanagan said. “By their determination and dedication to pursuing careers in an area nontraditional for their gender, they are role models for peers who may be considering such a career path.”

The list of awardees, in alphabetical order, by county, for each category, is as follows:

### **Michigan Breaking Traditions 2014 Excellence Award:**

#### **Postsecondary**

Genesee

#### **Jeremy Todd Geda**

Mott Community College

Nursing Program

**Postsecondary**

Genesee

**Ebony Moon**

Mott Community College

Electronics and Electrical Technology Program

**Secondary**

Ingham

**Kaitlyn Elizabeth Denczek**

Capital Area Career Center, Haslett High School

Culinary Arts and Hospitality Program

**Michigan Breaking Traditions 2014 Merit Award:**

Antrim

**Mariah Holley**

Traverse Bay Area Intermediate District Career-Tech Center, Mancelona High School

Culinary Arts Program

Calhoun

**Rebeca Tani**

Calhoun Area Career Center, Lakeview High School

Welding Program

Cass

**Misty Marie Bannow**

Van Buren Technology Center, Dowagiac Union High School

Auto Body Program

Gladwin

**Haley Forbes**

Clare Gladwin Career Center, Beaverton High School

Criminal Justice Program

Ingham

**Savannah R. Ruby**

Ingham Intermediate School District, Waverly High School

Computer Science Academy Program

Kent

**Sydney Yichun Bogard**

Kent Career Technical Center, Rockford High School

Criminal Justice/Public Safety Program

Lapeer

**Faye Elizabeth Wright**

Lapeer Education and Technology, Imlay City High School

Public Safety and Protective Services Program

Macomb  
**Destiny Helena Williams**  
Fitzgerald High School  
ASE NATEF Automotive Program

Macomb  
**Elizabeth Edberg**  
Utica Center for Science and Industry, Stevenson High School  
Engineering Technology Program

Newaygo  
**Kristine Dean**  
Newaygo County Career-Tech Center, Grant High School  
Welding Technology Program

Newaygo  
**Rachel Ekkel**  
Newaygo County Career-Tech Center, Homeschool student enrolled through Fremont High School  
Agriscience Program

Newaygo  
**Samantha Muir**  
Newaygo County Career-Tech Center, Grant High School  
Culinary Arts Program

Saginaw  
**Ce'Aira C. Richardson**  
Bay-Arenac ISD Career Center, Bridgeport Spaulding High School  
Emerging Technologies in Computers, Multimedia & Software Program

St. Clair  
**Katlyn Nita Sienkiewicz**  
St. Clair Technical Education Center, Port Huron High School  
Culinary Arts Program

St. Clair  
**Sydney Martin**  
St. Clair Technical Education Center, Port Huron High School  
Digital Media Technology Program

Tuscola  
**Rachael B. Hahn**  
Tuscola Technology Center, Unionville-Sebewaing High School  
Welding & Fabrication Program

Wexford  
**Megan Hughes**  
Wexford-Missaukee Career Technical Center, Pine River High School  
Power Sports and Equipment Program

Wexford

**Rachel Schmid**

Wexford-Missaukee Career Technical Center, Cadillac High School  
Welding/Metal Fabrication Program

To qualify for consideration, a student had to meet the following criteria:

- Complete a CTE program that is nontraditional for his/her gender
- Enroll in a Michigan high school or career center program during the 2013-2014 school year
- Be nominated by a teacher, counselor, administrator, or other personnel employed by the student's school or career center
- Have satisfactory academic standing and acceptable citizenship and disciplinary history
- Have made a contribution to awareness of nontraditional careers through successful participation in one or more of the following activities:
  - Exemplary completion of a program considered nontraditional for the student's gender
  - Successful competition in a program-related event or contest
  - Participation in a CTE student organization
  - Actively recruit other students into programs nontraditional for their gender
  - Mentor other students in CTE programs nontraditional for their gender
  - Make significant contributions to the student's CTE program

Applicants had to provide two letters of support and write a brief narrative explaining their career obstacles faced, plus key accomplishments.

“The MDE is investing in Michigan's future by helping ensure that our children are career and college ready and have the skills the jobs of today and jobs of tomorrow demand,” said Patty Cantu, Director of the Office of Career and Technical Education. “Career and Technical Education is education that works for Michigan.”

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Local Story Ideas for Media:

- Economic advantages of nontraditional career fields for women
- Programs available at local career center
- How area educational agencies are preparing students to be successful in careers and college
- Barriers to participation of women in high skill, high wage careers