

## TWO QUAD CITY WOMEN HONORED FOR INNOVATION

Written by Brittany Marietta

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Nine Iowa Women of Innovation were honored last Thursday evening by the Technology Association of Iowa at the Hy-Vee Conference Center in West Des Moines. Honorees included entrepreneurs, executives, college professors, and two students who each received \$2,500 scholarships. **Betty Griffin, Curriculum and Instruction Specialist for Davenport Community Schools, and Pavane Gorrepati, senior at Rivermont Collegiate in Bettendorf, were among the nine winners.**

The Iowa Women of Innovation awards celebrate female leaders in science, technology, engineering, and math. Nominations were submitted from communities across the state and finalists represented a range of backgrounds: teachers, researchers, technologists, and CEOs, among other titles. Finalists also include high school, undergraduate, and graduate students who have demonstrated extraordinary achievements in technology.

For a complete list of finalists and winners, visit [www.technologyiowa.org](http://www.technologyiowa.org).

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### 2011 Women of Innovation Award Winners:

**Research Innovation and Leadership:** Dr. Byrony Bonning, a professor at Iowa State University's department of entomology. Bonning, a nationally and internationally recognized scholar, is the founding director of the ISU Virus-Insect Interactions Initiative. Her research has resulted in five patents that have attracted industrial support.

**Academic Innovation and Leadership in Secondary Education:** Betty Griffin, curriculum and instruction specialist in the Davenport Community Schools.

Griffin brought the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) program to Davenport, and developed a PLTW summer camp for 8th grade students. She helped create a scholarship fund to promote college credit for high school students.

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**Academic Innovation and Leadership in Post-Secondary Education:** Dr. Sarah Larsen, a professor of chemistry at the University of Iowa. Larsen's internationally-recognized research program studies nanomaterials, and has advanced the understanding of how porous particles can be used in environmental protection, catalysis, drug delivery and biomedical imaging.

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**Entrepreneurial Innovation and Leadership:** Dr. Jennifer Nieweg of Des Moines, co-founder of Catilin. Nieweg's company develops cost-efficient catalysts for the production of bio-fuels. Recently, Catilin merged with a multinational company, Albemarle, which develops, manufactures, and markets complex chemicals worldwide.

**Non-Profit/Government Agency:** Toni Tassone of the Iowa Department of Corrections. Tassone created the Iowa Corrections Offender Network (ICON), an offender case management system. ICON's first year return on investment is estimated at \$2 million.

**Small Business Innovation and Leadership:** Charise Flynn, Chief Operating Officer at Dwolla, a social payment network in Des Moines. Flynn leads a team of 20, managing the company's fast-paced growth, implementing new processes and systems, and executing the company's vision.

**Large Company Innovation and Leadership:** Kristin Runyan, Chief Information Officer and Vice President of Product Management for CDS Global in Des Moines. Runyan leads the company's vision of diversifying its business, changing company culture, and transforming technology.

**Collegiate Innovation and Leadership:** Chloe Dedic, a senior in mechanical engineering at Iowa State University. Dedic studies pollutant formation in devices used for clean power generation. Thanks in part to her work, the mechanical engineering department was recently

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awarded a National Science Foundation grant.

**Youth Innovation and Leadership: Pavane Gorrepati, a senior at Rivermont Collegiate in Bettendorf.**

Gorrepati is the only student there who has completed six science classes in four years. She earned a Borlaug-Ruan International Internship and has founded "Sending Seeds Overseas," which provides seeds for farmers in third-world countries.

**Note: Rivermont Collegiate senior Meghana Pagadala was also a finalist in this category.**

For additional information on Rivermont Collegiate, contact Brittany Marietta, Director of Admissions, at [563 359-1366 ext. 302](tel:5633591366) or [marietta@rvmt.org](mailto:marietta@rvmt.org).

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