



Girls Inc of the Island City

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8th Annual *Women Who Dare* Awards Event 2007

Saturday, June 2, 2007
11:00 am to 2:00 pm
Caffe Verbena
Oakland, California

She's Got Moxie Award: Adult Awardee - Michele de Coteau (*see bio below*)

Youth Awardee - Cecilia Martinez (*see bio below*)

Stick-to-It Award: Adult Awardee - Lita Anderson (*see bio below*)

Youth Awardee - Ankitha Bharadwaj (*see bio below*)

Feng Shui Award: Adult Awardee - Ellen Spertus (*see bio below*)

Youth Awardee - Naomi Muzack (*see bio below*)

Planning Committee:

- Dawn Wade and Arlette Walls, Board Co-Chairs
- Kristin Butler, Girls Inc. Director of Development & Communications
- Courtenay Davis, Board Member
- Emily Griego, Community Volunteer
- Karen Kenney, Girls Inc. Executive Director
- Mary Kenney, Community Volunteer
- Kate Rezucha, Board President

Production Volunteers: Graphic design and program cover by Christine Clark.
Additional graphic design and program interior by Karen Granados of Karen G Design.

Dessert created by Jasmine Walls of To Die For

- Tristen Fredrickson, Girls Inc. Program Director
- Dorie Guess Behrstock, Board Member
- Gail Graves, Board Member
- Mary Kenney, Community Volunteer
- Melissa Marsh, Board Member
- Lani Wagner, Girls Inc. Office Manager & Program Assistant
- Jasmine Walls, Community Volunteer
- Toniesha Webb, Girls Inc. Teen Program and Volunteer Coordinator

Event Staff:

- Event Host – Karen Kenney and Girls in the Best Foot Forward Program
- Prize Host – Kate Rezucha
- Best Foot Forward Coordinator – Tristen Fredrickson
- Best Foot Forward Assistant – Natalie Duarte
- Stage Manager – Annie Anderson
- Audio Visual – Joel Wilmot
- Photographer – Al Wright, Raintree Studios
- Event Coordinators – Dawn Wade and Kate Rezucha
- Logistics – Juelle-Ann Boyer, Kristin Butler, Courtenay Davis, Emily Griego, Nancy Heastings, Marilyn Sandifur, Arlette Walls

Award
Recipient: Michele de Coteau – *She's Got Moxie Award, Adult Awardee*



Award Recipient Michele de Coteau is the Assistant Dean for Special Programs in the College of Engineering at the University of California, Berkeley. She is a remarkable woman who received the *She's Got Moxie Award* for her determination to follow her dreams, break glass ceilings, and inspire others to follow in her footsteps.

Dr. de Coteau is responsible for diversity initiatives in the College of Engineering, serving faculty, undergraduate, and graduate students. She leads Berkeley's Center for Underrepresented Engineering Students (CUES), which offers programs to recruit underrepresented minority students and women to the College of Engineering, ensuring they thrive academically, complete their degrees, and make successful transitions to graduate school and careers.

Dr. de Coteau is a lead member of the UC Berkeley Coalition for Excellence and Diversity in Mathematics, Science, and Engineering. Honored for Excellence in Management, she was also singled out in a survey of undergraduates as one of Berkeley's "everyday heroes" - remarkable employees who make day-to-day encounters memorable and give the campus experience a human face. Her skill at inspiring students comes not only from her love of the job, but also from her own Berkeley Engineering experience - as a student, she participated in the CUES programs she now directs.

Dr. de Coteau graduated from UC Berkeley with a B.S. in Materials Science and Engineering. In 1988, she became the first Berkeley student in 25 years and the first American woman from Berkeley ever to win a Rhodes scholarship. She earned her D. Phil. (Ph.D.) in Metallurgy and Science of Materials from the University of Oxford, England.

Award
Recipient: Cecilia Martinez – *She's Got Moxie Award, Youth Awardee*



Award Recipient Cecilia Martinez is a senior at Encinal High School in Alameda. She is a very motivated young woman who received the *She's Got Moxie Award* for her determination to accomplish her dreams.

Ms. Martinez is involved in a variety of different activities. She is a member of the tennis team, the global freedom club, the Germany Club, and the Latino club, volunteers for the Home Project in Alameda, and works for the McCullon Youth Court. Like other students, in the spare time that she has, Cecilia enjoys watching movies and spending time with her friends. She feels her biggest accomplishment so far was getting into several different colleges and universities and in five years she sees herself either starting law school or traveling the world.

Award
Recipient: Lita Anderson – *Stick to It Award, Adult Awardee*



Award Recipient Lita Anderson is a resident of Alameda and a parent of a Girls Inc. girl. She received the *Stick to It Award* for placing her highest life values on her family and persevering, despite the odds, to adopt her daughter from Africa. She and her husband, Lance Anderson, are the proud parents of Sara Jessa Ghion Anderson - who is in Girls Inc.'s *Best Foot Forward* program – and have been for the last two years since they journeyed to the East African country of Ethiopia to adopt her. They share the belief that all children, regardless of circumstance, location or heritage deserve loving parents and a secure home.

Two years ago, after viewing a short video clip of a little 8-year-old orphaned girl named Sara, they embarked on a 44-hour round trip flight to Africa to bring her home. Since joining her new family, Sara has made many friends and her English speaking skills are incredible. Lita and Lance make it a point of sharing with Sara's family back in Ethiopia updates on her progress and that makes them proud. Through her actions, Ms. Anderson has encouraged others to do what they can to reach out to children in need and make a difference. The story of the Andersons' journey to adopt Sara was featured in the May 2007 issue of Redbook Magazine.

Award
Recipient: Ankitha Bharadwaj – *Stick to It Award, Youth Awardee*



Award Recipient Ankitha Bharadwaj is 17-year-old junior at Alameda High School. She is being awarded the *Stick-to-It Award* for demonstrating a significant amount of perseverance throughout her high school years to become a writer and aspiring journalist. A few years ago, she and one of her peers had the idea to create a magazine in Alameda for teens that dealt with issues that affect them. From their idea they developed a "teen zine" – "*Outloud: Thoughts of a Teenage Mind*" - from inception to conception with the help of Girls Inc., the Home Project, and the Alameda Collaborative for Children, Youth and their Families.

Besides working on the magazine, Ms. Bharadwaj is also involved in *Youth Radio*, where she is a producer and a reporter. She loves writing and is an aspiring journalist, also interning at the *Alameda Sun*. In addition, she is an editor for her high school newspaper, *The Oakleaf*. This summer she will be working more closely with *Youth Radio* to expand her role in the organization and will be working hard to complete five summer assignments for her 12th grade AP classes.

*Award
Recipient:* Ellen Spertus – *Feng Shui* Award, Adult Awardee



Award Recipient Ellen Spertus is an associate professor of computer science at Mills College and a part-time software engineer at Google. She received the *Feng Shui Award* for being a brilliant woman who decided to make choices in her career in order to create balance in her own life and gender equity in the field of computer science.

Dr. Spertus received her bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees from MIT. She has produced many technical publications in parallel computing, information retrieval, and online communities, was Principal Investigator on a National Science Foundation (NSF) Faculty Early Career Development Grant, and has been written about in *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Wired*, and *The Weekly World News*.

After graduating from MIT, she was invited to interview at many places, but chose to move to California and take a position at Mills College. She made this decision because, after years studying in a setting that was mostly male, she wanted to live and work in a supportive environment where she could be with other women. She also chose the job to be near her husband, who had received an offer to work in the Bay Area, and because she wanted to help other women follow their dreams to work in the normally male-dominated field of computer science.

Since 1990, Dr. Spertus has worked to increase the number of girls and women in computer science through her writing, organizing, and teaching. Her 1991 report "Why Are There So Few Female Computer Scientists?" has been highly influential. She has also developed tools and strategies for women online and has spoken on the subject internationally. She was a co-Investigator on an NSF grant to develop technology classes and clubs for girls in the Oakland area and has led numerous workshops on electronics for girls. And since 1998, she has taught computer science at Mills College, where she has directed the Interdisciplinary Computer Science program (2001-2007) and chaired the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science (2005-2007).

Dr. Spertus is a unique individual who challenges stereotypes and inspires others to be themselves, and in 2001 she was named "Sexiest Geek Alive" at a pageant in recognition of her accomplishments, enthusiasm, and sense of humor.

*Award
Recipient:* Naomi Muzac – *Feng Shui* Award, Youth Awardee



Award Recipient Naomi Muzac is a junior at the University Preparatory Charter Academy (Uprep), a year-round school in East Oakland. She received the *Feng Shui Award* for having the courage to set her own priorities, overcome adversity, and create balance in her life and stay true to her own goals and dreams.

Ms. Muzac works hard in school, is a member of Girls Inc. of Alameda County's Girls Advocacy Project, played in Division 2 basketball with her high school team, and is also very involved in her church. She has spent some time in foster care and has overcome huge personal hurdles to become the awesome teen she is today. Her personal mantra is to overcome everybody's lack of expectations of her.

Though she is driven and focused on her goals, she has learned to comfortably negotiate the competing demands placed on her and is not afraid to step back and say "no" to some opportunities in order to achieve balance in her life. To that end, Ms. Muzac recently decided to put aside her childhood love of basketball in order to concentrate on her studies and make her health and college admissions her top priorities. She hopes someday to become a therapist.

This summer, Ms. Muzac will travel to Africa and Mexico on missionary trips with her church and will also be one of three Girls Inc. girls to go to Florida to work on a Habitat for Humanity project.