JANUARY NEWSLETTER

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RESOURCE INFO

Scholarship Opportunity from AAUW Naperville



AAUW Naperville Area (Vision 1948's sponsor) is offering scholarships in 2026. A $5,000 scholarship is for those returning to school after an interruption in their education. Another $5,000 scholarship is for a student majoring in a STEM field, and in support of Vision 1948's mission, special consideration will be given to applicants majoring in Computer/Information Science or Engineering. There are two $2,500 scholarships for D203-204 HS Seniors that also provide membership in AAUW Naperville. Further, a Career Development Grant up to $250 is available for those pursuing a certificate, credential, or training program. Finally, there are two development grants and sponsorships for attending an AAUW leadership conference. Check here for eligibility requirements and please share the application details with others.

APS Training Academy, Aurora, IL



Vision 1948 recently had an opportunity to visit the APS Training Academy in Aurora, Il. APS offers STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) after school and summer classes to students K-8 on many topics, including programming and robotics. They also work with robotics teams to prepare them to compete at tournaments. We were very impressed by the space, programming and the enthusiasms of the instructors. Check them out here.

STEM Career Advantage Academy @ Tufts University

Tufts University is offering a new on-line non-credit summer course, STEM Career Advantage Academy, for mastering Negotiation, Communication, and Leadership for Early Career Success in STEM. It prepares students for internships and early career roles with the complementary non-technical skills employers expect in new graduates, but that are rarely taught in college curriculums. It also offers structured mentoring to help students apply their learnings in real time. This program was founded and taught by Rati Thanawala, a 2018 Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative Fellow, with 40 years of leadership experience in the tech industry. Vision 1948's Tina Hinch had assisted her in coaching the students when Rati offered this as an independent program, the success of which has led to the upcoming offering at Tufts.

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VISION 1948 IN THE COMMUNITY

Engineering Ideas Competition Judging at Wright College



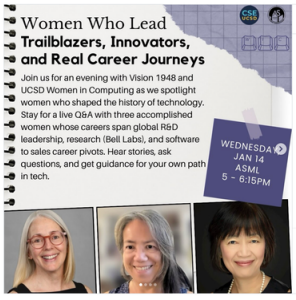
Vision 1948 (Jane Mack-Crane and Eileen Gelblat) helped judge the Engineering Ideas Competition at Wright College on 12/3/2025. The students were freshmen in the Engineering Success Seminar, which teaches personal and professional skills critical to an engineering career. Each team came up with a problem and a product to address it, product design, challenges, and possible future enhancements. There were 44 teams of 6 students. Each judge reviewed up to 5 teams, providing ranking and feedback. Kudos to all the students for their creativity, research skills and presentations!

Sharing Technology Concepts at IEEE/IEEE WIE STEM Spark!



Vision 1948 (Jane Mack-Crane, Daryl Varney, Min Huang and Tina Hinch) was pleased to support the STEM SPARK! event for Middle School and HS students on 12/6/25, at the College of DuPage. This was a half-day summit designed to ignite curiosity and inspire the next generation of leaders in STEM, sponsored by IEEE Chicago and IEEE Women in Engineering Chicago. Vision 1948 shared hands-on activities to explore technology concepts, covering Machine Learning and ways Tech Helps humanity. The activities captivated both the students and their parents! There was also a panel of college students/young professionals in STEM, and workshops on AI and other emerging technologies. The students were energized and the presenters and our fellow exhibitors provided great insights.

Trailblazers Show Us the Way Presentation at UCSD



On 1/14/26 Jane Mack-Crane presented *Trailblazers Show Us the Way: Women Belong in Technology*, the talk she gave at the Grace Hopper Celebration, to Women in Computing at University of California San Diego (WIC at UCSD). Tina Hinch and Anne Lee joined Jane in the virtual session to take questions on a variety of topics including our career paths, skills required today, and how AI is changing the landscape for people entering the workforce. WIC at UCSD is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for women to succeed in the computing industry. It was our honor to present to this amazing group of women leaders!

Girls Only Math Club @Elmwood Elementary School

In December 2025, Vision 1948 (Tina Hinch, Jane Mack-Crane and Asha Hariprasad) worked with the Girls Only Math Club in Elmwood Elementary School in Naperville. Ms. Erin Meehan-Browning, an amazing educator, started the club to encourage girls in 2nd and 3rd grade to explore the exciting world of math. We engaged the girls in Math Puzzles, enhancing their math and problem-solving skills. It was a blast!

OTHER INFO

The Fascinating World of Robotics

In November, we shared the news of an all-girls Robotics team, Robot Penguin, having secured 4th place in the World Robotics Olympiad Americas Open Robosports Championship, becoming the first U.S. team to ever make it to the semifinals in the competition. We are fortunate to have recently met another outstanding robotics team, Newton Busters, from the Chicagoland area, of which 50% are girls. The team won 2nd place Think Award in the First Tech Challenge Tournament at the World level. Surina Yadav, a team member, shares her inspiring perspective below:

I have been part of a robotics team for three years, and while I originally joined to learn 3D modeling and coding, those technical skills were just the beginning. What kept me involved was the realization that robotics is incredibly interdisciplinary, a space where you can combine interests like design, engineering, and community impact into a single project.

The most valuable part of this journey has been the community. I found a supportive network of mentors and peers who genuinely want to see you learn and succeed, which makes the more daunting aspects of STEM feel approachable. Working in this environment has taught me how to problem-solve under pressure and find my confidence through leadership opportunities. For girls especially, robotics provides a safe place to take risks and explore curiosity without getting discouraged. It has built a foundation of confidence and teamwork that I know will stay with me as I navigate new situations and pursue my goals in any field I choose.

New Trailblazer on Vision 1948 Website

Check out our latest Trailblazer, Frances Allen, a Turing Award winner who moved the field of programming language compilers forward with significant contributions in both published papers and design work.

Interesting Events

Event	Date	Location	Description
Northwestern Network for Collaborative Intelligence Talks	Mon, Feb 2 & Thu, Feb 5, 2026 (noon)	Evanston, IL (Northwestern University)	Public lectures on AI topics such as “AI & the Future of News” and “Generative AI for Molecules & Materials.”
CPS Student STEM Exhibition & Symposium	Feb 6–8, 2026	Griffin Museum of Science and Industry	Annual exhibition of Chicago Public Schools student STEM research with demos, exhibits, and interactive displays.