Immediate Release

NYU Tandon honored for increasing women's participation in computing fields

BROOKLYN, New York, Friday, February 21, 2020 – The New York University Tandon School of Engineering's Department of Computer Science and Engineering received a National Center for Women and Information Technology Extension Services Transformation (NEXT) Award for excellence in recruiting and retaining women in computing education.

The NEXT Awards honor undergraduate academic departments that have increased women's participation in computing education – an especially vital goal considering that a recent study revealed that while women earned 57 percent of all undergraduate degrees, they earned less than 20 percent of all computer and information sciences undergraduate degrees. NYU Tandon placed second in the nationwide selection process.

In 2015, NYU Tandon launched a comprehensive initiative to double the number of women in computer science by 2020, a target now far exceeded; in 2015, 61 women majored in the discipline, and by 2019, that figure nearly quadrupled, to 230.

At the same time, the overall number of women at NYU Tandon increased from 29% in 2015 to 41% in 2019, and the Class of 2023 comprises 46% women, double the average for U.S. engineering undergraduate programs. Additionally, while retention can be a struggle, computer science majors are currently retained at a rate of well over 90%.

That progress is the result of a multi-faceted, intentional effort to recruit, enroll, and retain women students. For example, the department has made numerous pedagogical improvements recommended by NCWIT, including sections of introductory computer science course targeted to students without prior computing experience and expanding the use of undergraduates, including many women students, as tutors and course assistants.

Outside of the classroom, women students can choose to live in the Women at Tandon Explorations Community, a dedicated floor in a residence hall that offers a strong support and networking system,

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and can join such clubs as the ACM-W chapter, Society of Women Engineers, STEMinist, and Women in Business and Entrepreneurship. Additionally, sponsorships are available for those attending the annual Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing.

"These efforts, collectively, have transformed our undergraduate computer science program from one in which female students often felt isolated to one in which most classes are over a third female and female students feel a sense of community, feel empowered, and are using their educations as launch pads into great careers," explained Professor of Computer Science and Engineering Phyllis Frankl, who also serves as the associate department chair and director of undergraduate studies.

"We're deeply honored to receive this award in recognition of our efforts to diversify our student population," said Jelena Kovačević, who in 2018 became the first female dean in the School of Engineering's history. "I salute the team at Tandon who have been instrumental in this initiative, and look forward to building on our success and expanding our efforts to encourage underrepresented groups to pursue degrees in vital STEM-related fields, including computer science."

NYU Tandon's Department of Computer Science and Engineering will receive $50,000, which will be used to increase support for women in computer science and engineering.

"Not only are we proud to recognize these departments for their remarkable results, but we're also proud to recognize the ripple effect these institutions create among the computing community at large," said NCWIT CEO and co-founder Lucy Sanders. "They are setting an example for other institutions – reinventing their culture by establishing better habits and practices for attracting and keeping a range of students in their computing programs."

The award will be presented May 19, 2020 at the 2020 NCWIT Summit in Grapevine, Texas.

About the New York University Tandon School of Engineering
The NYU Tandon School of Engineering dates to 1854, the founding date for both the New York University School of Civil Engineering and Architecture and the Brooklyn Collegiate and Polytechnic Institute (widely known as Brooklyn Poly). A January 2014 merger created a comprehensive school of education and research in engineering and applied sciences, rooted in a tradition of invention and entrepreneurship and dedicated to furthering technology in service to society. In addition to its main location in Brooklyn, NYU Tandon collaborates with other schools within NYU, one of the country's foremost private research universities, and is closely connected to engineering programs at NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai. It operates Future Labs focused on start-up businesses in Brooklyn and an award-winning online graduate program. For more information, visit engineering.nyu.edu.

About NCWIT
Each NEXT Award recipient is a client of NCWIT Extension Services – a program that connects academic departments ("clients") with expert Extension Services Consultants (ESCs) and Extension Services staff to craft high-impact reform efforts for recruiting and retaining more women in their programs. Consultants and staff provide clients with guidance on identifying opportunities and allies, utilizing strategic approaches and resources, and building assessment plans to evaluate progress. Diverse

institutional clients nationwide work to achieve quantifiable results such as increased enrollments, declared majors, and graduation rates for women students in computing. Find out more at www.ncwit.org/extensionservices.

The National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) is a non-profit community of more than 1,240 universities, companies, non-profits, and government organizations nationwide working to increase the influence and meaningful participation of all girls and women — at the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, age, sexual orientation, and disability status — in the influential field of computing, particularly in terms of innovation and development. NCWIT equips change leaders with resources for taking action in recruiting, retaining, and advancing women from K–12 and higher education through industry and entrepreneurial careers. Find out more at www.ncwit.org.

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