

## **Treefrog Consulting awards scholarships to help girls get into IT**

A leading Bermuda IT firm has provided \$15,000 in scholarships to school students in a bid to help more women get into the industry.

Bermuda software specialists, Treefrog Consulting Ltd, has given three, \$5,000 scholarships to pupils at Bermuda High School for Girls who have demonstrated excellence in the fields of robotics, computer science and artificial intelligence.

Dmitry Mnushkin, Treefrog President, said: "We hope that we can make this an annual award as there is a real need to get more women into the IT industry. It is estimated that only one in nine people working in this area are women. That is not enough.

"We are also extremely keen on helping to develop the IT skills of young people here in Bermuda and hopefully these scholarships will go some way towards that goal."

The scholarships have been awarded to Lara Backeberg, aged 13, Ashlyn Lee, 15, and Kameron Young, 16.

Mr Mnushkin added: "Lara, Ashlyn and Kameron are all outstanding students and I hope this scholarship shows them that their efforts are very much worthwhile and deserving of our praise and support. These young ladies represent the future of computing and we are happy to play a small part in their continued success."

Head of School, Linda Parker said BHS has three types of robotics clubs, one of which is run by the students who represented Bermuda in the FIRST Global Competition last summer, against 162 other countries, placing 59th, ahead of the US, UK and Russia. Two of the recipients were on that team.

"We also have a Coding and Hacking Club, STEAM Club, Maker Club and a digital leaders programme. Computer Science and Robotics are also built into the curriculum. This academic year, we have partnered with Great4Learning, which is owned by our new Head of Computer Science, Darren Burchall, to offer STEAM camps to girls across the Island."

Ms Parker added: "Our responsibility in schools is to provide these kind of skills, they are the employable skills and are required in a variety of professions. Our job is to prepare these girls for the future. In addition, there is a lack of representation by women in fields such as robotics and it is important that we help to address that.

"Lara is the most enthusiastic student that we can think of with computer science and robotics, Ashlyn is a very smart young lady who was part of the First Global Robotics Team as the strategist and Kameron was part of the First Global Robotics team. She worked incredibly hard for her GCSE exams, gaining four grades higher than predicted and ending with 7As and 2Bs."

Year 9 student, Lara said she had her sights set on a career in technology, adding: "I like to learn how things work and to put things together. Using technology comes easy to me and I like being able to do stuff. I'd like to thank Mr Mnushkin for his generosity."

Ashlyn added: "I do see it as a career path and definitely want to continue studying these fields. I am very grateful for the scholarships which will help me further my studies."

And Kameron said: "The science side of technology interests me, things like neuron technology. I am really delighted to receive this scholarship."

Minister of Government Reform, Lovitta Foggo congratulated the students and told them: "You are our future and these scholarships will help you develop your skills. I wish you all the very best with your education and I am sure you will all go very far."

**ENDS**

**For more information contact Jeremy Deacon, Deep Blue Communications, email [dbcnda@outlook.com](mailto:dbcnda@outlook.com) or call 534 2205**