

Tallahassee student gets into Harvard through Ladies Learning to lead's STEM program

Special to the Outlook

Ladies Learning to Lead (L3) is a program focused on bringing the world of STEM to young ladies throughout the North Florida region, primarily in the Tallahassee Community. L3 not only offers resources, technology, STEM field trips, and career counseling, but also brings experts in the field as guest speakers. All are pulled together with the goal of exposing STEM to as many middle and high school girls as possible. Partnering with the Jane and John Marks Foundation, L3 has been sought out for an expansion to serve elementary girls and provide hands-on coding training. L3 has made an impact in the community and continues to influence the futures of its participants in positive ways.

Hana Kiros, a Senior at Rickards High School in the IB Program in Tallahassee, Florida, is one of L3's success stories. Kiros was recently accepted to Harvard University to study Computer Science. Kiros started her journey in STEM when she began learning to code from her instructors through the Jane and John Marks Foundation. Along with learning coding skills, Hana and her peers were provided professional development training, confidence building, goal setting, job readiness, and other leadership training. She credits the discovery of her passion in STEM to L3, noting that she would have never known what field she wanted to pursue in and after college until her participation. The same coding that she was taught gave her the ability to build her own

website, which she presented on the local news. At the conclusion of the 6-month program, the Jane and John Marks Foundation gave each participant a Raspberry Pi mini computer to keep and take home, which was used for in-class coding.

In Hana's own words, "Thank you for the STEM program, seriously. I work with a Raspberry Pi computer at the MagLab, and it's awesome to have one at my home to work with. And I got an internship with Cattlesoft! I would have never reached out to them if the STEM field trip we took to FSU School of Engineering hadn't exposed me to their work."

Other young ladies have found similar success from the L3 STEM program. The crucial skills that Ladies Learning to Lead teaches to its students, the individual-ly tailored career counseling, and the technological resources help participants feel confident that they can be a lady of STEM. To continue this great work, L3 has submitted a funding request to the Florida Legislature in the amount of \$300,000. This request allows expansion of the STEM program to other counties in North Florida, which would assist other young ladies in becoming an Ivy League student and lady in STEM, like Hana Kiros.

To learn more about Ladies Learning to Lead, or to get involved, please visit www.l3ladies.org or contact Executive Director

Samantha Vance by phone at (850) 445-3144 or by email at sam@L3Ladies.org.



Pictured on the left is Hana Kiros, Incoming Harvard student who attends Rickards High School; on the right is Executive Director of Ladies Learning to Lead Samantha Vance.

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