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City woman endows NJIT scholarship

By LIZ KEILL

SUMMIT - Roberta Renard, president and chief executive officer of Renard Communications, has endowed a \$68,000 scholarship to the Albert Dorman Honors College at New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT). Ms. Renard, a Summit resident, was recently elected to the board of visitors of the honors college.

Veronica Caballero of Union City, who will be a freshman majoring in architecture, will receive the scholarship. It covers her tuition, board and fees for four years.

The student said in a telephone interview that she had also been admitted to Penn State University, Rutgers and Philadelphia University. "I'd heard a lot of good things about NJIT," she said, "plus it was close to home." Her fall curriculum, she said, will include calculus, introduction to design and graphics and an English freshman seminar, among other courses.

Ms. Caballero was encouraged to explore architecture through her computer graphics and design high school teacher, she said. "I found myself focusing toward architecture ever since I was a kid with Legos. I've always liked drawing, even to the way I wanted my room to be at home," she said. In addition to her honors courses, she played basketball and softball in high school and served on the student council.

Currently, Ms. Caballero is leaning toward hotel and restaurant architecture, but she said that could change as she becomes more deeply involved with both her academic courses and other students. She has spent her summer working at Blockbuster, she said, which keeps her on her feet.

Ms. Renard said, "If it weren't for scholarships, some of these kids wouldn't be going to school. Just to get into the honors college is quite an accomplishment."

The Albert Dorman Honors College of NJIT consists of over 500 exceptional students preparing to become leaders in their fields. Selected students are offered a wide array of research opportunities: exclusive use of an honors lounge, study and computing areas; guaranteed on-campus housing and a series of Colloquia at which speakers and panels discuss current scientific and social issues. Classes are small, averaging 13 students.

NJIT is a public scientific and technological research university enrolling more than 8,800 students on a 45-acre campus in the University Heights section of Newark.

Ms. Renard said she chose to endow a scholarship at NJIT because of its commitment to educating inner city, minority students and women, especially in technical fields such as engineering, architecture and information technology. That commitment is also a reflection of the mission of Renard Communications. “They’re doing such a great job there for those kids,” she said of the institute.

“We wanted the scholarship to go to a female or a minority majoring in a technological field and NJIT is an inner city school with diverse students,” Ms. Renard said in a press release. “It’s important for minorities and women to have rich and rewarding technology careers that will also give them financial independence. In educating those students, NJIT has a big impact on the community.”

Renard Communications, Springfield, publishes *Diversity/Careers in Engineering & Information Technology*, a magazine and website (www.diversitycareers.com) that covers career issues for engineers and information technology professionals who are women, minorities or people with disabilities.

In addition to its publishing activities, Renard Communications supports minority technical education at the University of Denver, Colorado, where the company provides scholarships to three undergraduate women in technical and business majors. The company also contributes to the St. Labré Indian School, UNICEF, Fresh Air Fund, Doctors Without Borders, the Heartland AIDS fund and the ASPCA.

Ms. Renard started Renard Communications in 1993 to publish *Diversity/Careers*. “I saw that there was a need for a publication focused on technical careers for these under-represented groups,” she explained. *Diversity/Careers*, which celebrates its ninth anniversary this year, has been a successful recruitment vehicle for a wide range of companies that want to reach out to the minority technical community.