



UTICA

Student to be honored at White House

Li attends Stevenson and district magnet school

By Frank DeFrank
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Christina Li doesn't remember a time when computers and technology didn't interest her.

"Ever since I was little," she said.

A senior at Stevenson High School and the Utica Center for Math, Science and Technology,

Christina isn't little anymore.

Neither are her accomplishments.

On Tuesday, the Macomb Township student will be one of just nine — and only two high school students — from across the nation who will be recognized as "White House Champions of Change for Computer Science Education."

The Champions of Change pro-

gram was created as an opportunity for the White House to feature individuals doing extraordinary things to empower and inspire members of their communities. The ceremony honoring the nine will be held at the White House — yes, that White House — on Tuesday.

"I've been outside (the White House), but I've never been in-

STUDENT » PAGE 8



Senior Christina Li will be honored at The White House for being one of nine individuals named a "Champion of Change for Computer Science Education."

RAY SKOWRONEK — THE MACOMB DAILY

Student

FROM PAGE 1

side," she said.

Christina isn't satisfied

with simply pursuing her passion, she helps others do the same. She created Hello World, a week-long computer science day camp for 30 middle-school girls to learn how

to code robots, apps, Websites and games.

Through the program, Christina hosted online and in-person meetings with female computer engineers from Google,

Microsoft, the Michigan Council for Women in Technology and Ford Motor Co.

Her goal: to close the gender gap in computer science.

Asked the best part of the recognition to come her way, Christina responded: "Kids loving computer sciences, especially for the girls."

During Tuesday's ceremony, Christina and the other honorees will meet several dignitaries, including Valerie Jarrett, senior adviser to the president; John King, acting U.S. Department of Education secretary; Megan Smith, chief technology officer of the United States; and Gilliam Jacobs, an actress and director; and Meredith Walker, co-founder of Amy Poehler's Smart

Girls.

Christina and her family vacationed in Washington, D.C., last summer, but didn't get to visit the White House.

Following the ceremony Tuesday, a tour of the people's house is on the docket.

And while her group is not scheduled to meet the White House's most-famous occupants, stranger things have happened.

"I don't think we'll be meeting the president," Christina said.

The event will be live streamed on the White House website at whitehouse.gov/live/ on Tuesday, January 26, at 1 p.m. To learn more about the White House Champions of Change program, visit whitehouse.gov/champions. Follow the conversation at #WHChamps.

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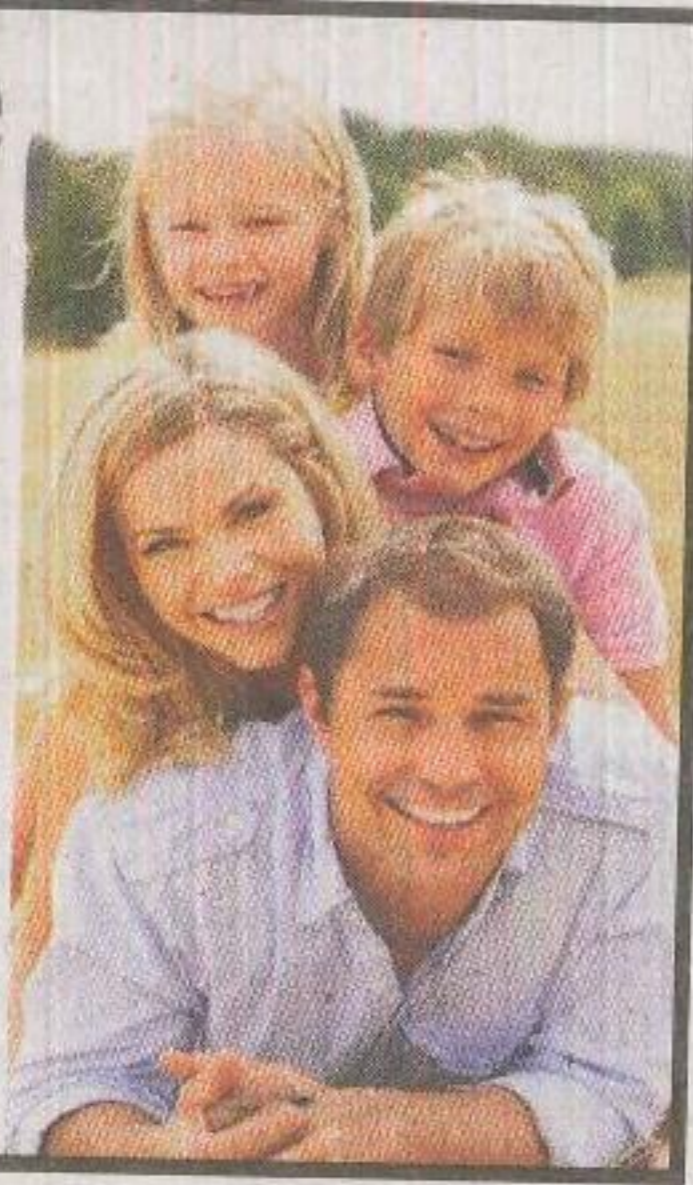
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