

AWIS NEWSLETTER

Mission Statement: The Association for Women in Science, Inc. (AWIS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the achievement of equity and full participation of women in all areas of science and technology.

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Upcoming Events

By Fan-Li Chou and Barbara Armstrong

For more information on any of these events go to:

<http://awis.npaci.edu/shtml/events.shtml> or
http://awis.npaci.edu/shtml/events_meet.shtml

July 8: Directed Job Search Strategies; 6-8pm; location TBA; speakers TBA; for information contact Fan-Li at flchou@scripps.edu

August: Tour of University of San Diego Tech Center; for information contact Tracy at tracyviv@aol.com

August 4: Strategy Sessions – A Self-Assessment Workshop

August 12: San Diego Bioinformatics Forum meeting – Presentation by Johnson & Johnson. <http://www.sdbioinfo.org>

September 4: SD-AWIS open house; Salk Institute; 6-9pm; for information contact Fan-Li at flchou@scripps.edu or Karin at kkillerm@ucsd.edu

October: Myers -Briggs self assessment; location TBA; speaker TBA; for information contact Janice Payne at janice_payne@hotmail.com

October 6: Strategy Sessions – How to Negotiate a Job Contract

December: Social, TBA;

December 1: Strategy Sessions – Conflict Resolution in the Workplace.

AWIS – San Diego Chapter Scholarship Committee

Announces 2003 Recipients

By Alycen Nigro

The AWIS Scholarship Committee, Alycen Nigro, Tobey Tam, Fran Putkey, Anna-Maria Hays, Susan Fitch, Charlotte Flowerree, Rachelle Thompson, Jodi Connolly, Katie Kline, and Cathy Manner, have chosen the following eight recipients out of a group of 100 candidates. Scholarship recipients are chosen on the basis of grades, two letters of recommendation and a written essay describing their aspirations and need for the scholarship. Scholarships are awarded annually in the spring.

Community College

1st Place: Kimberly Samms

Kimberly presently attends San Diego Mesa College, where she is pursuing an associates degree in chemistry in order to “comprehend the awesome power of the entire universe.” Quite a tall order for any scientist, but, according to her professors at Mesa, Kimberly “has enormous potential for building upon her current knowledge, and most of all, she has an ardent desire to do so.” Kimberly’s most recent research has focused on investigating the link between epilepsy and defective sodium and potassium channels. She presented this work at the third annual Honors Transfer Council of California Conference at the University of California at Irvine. In her essay, when discussing the challenges that study and research in the field of chemistry presents, Kimberly stated that she “simply loves chemistry and that the challenges will not make [her] give up on something [she] loves.” Kimberly’s drive and appreciation for the beauty of science is inspirational and reminds us all that science should be a profession of continuing discovery and exploration.

2nd Place: Yessenia Ibarra

Yessenia presently attends San Diego City College, where she is pursuing an associates degree in applied biology. Following receipt of her degree, she plans to pursue a bachelor’s degree in molecular biology followed by a doctorate, where she wants to conduct research related to human tissue regeneration. Her professors describe Yessenia as a person who “will work at a problem until she understands and has solved it” which makes her “ideally suited for a career in biological research.” Yessenia stated in her essay that “after Marine Corps boot camp, there is nothing she cannot do” and that her ultimate goal is “to live long enough to be able to look back and say that [she] could not have tried any harder to make [her] dreams come true.” Yessenia’s diligence in pursuing a career in biological research as well as her enthusiasm for studying the problems not yet solved in the area of tissue regeneration make her an outstanding woman in science.

Undergraduates

1st Place: Van Nguyen

Van presently attends San Diego State University, where she is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in physics with a minor in mathematics. Her future plans include conducting research this summer as part of the McNair Scholars Program and eventually entering a doctorate program in physics with the goal of becoming either a physics professor or working for the EPA or NASA. In

addition to her rigorous academic schedule, Van has served as a workshop leader for Academic Enrichment workshops in physics at SDSU, participated in outreach programs, such as Expanding Your Horizons at UCSD, a member of the Society of Physics Students, and is an active member in Mesa Engineering Program/Minority Science Program. Van's professors describe her as "very independent, mature and responsible" and state that she is "the type of person you like to see as a role model for other students, especially to other females in science." Van's desire to push back the scientific limits and open up new areas of research to women coupled with her active role in her community make her an outstanding woman in science.

2nd Place: Charlene Hooper

Charlene presently attends San Diego State University, where she is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry with a minor in women's studies. Her future plans include attending graduate school in biochemistry or organic chemistry, then pursuing a career in the biotechnology/pharmaceutical industry. Charlene is presently conducting research in protein design and engineering, with a focus on understanding the underlying principles of supramolecular biochemistry (*i.e.*, molecular self-assembly). Outside of the lab, Charlene participates in several community outreach programs including Mama's Kitchen, which delivers meals to people with HIV or full-blown AIDS, and Rosa Parks Elementary School's Pen Pals Program. Charlene's professors describe her as "an intelligent, dedicated and inventive" student who gives willingly of both her time and skills, whether in the lab or in the classroom. Charlene's dedication to both her research and her community makes her an exemplary woman in the scientific field.

2nd Place: Robyn Clark

Robyn presently attends San Diego State University (SDSU), where she is pursuing a bachelor's degree in geography with an emphasis in physical geography. Her future plans include pursuing a doctorate in geography at SDSU beginning in the fall of 2003, where she plans to continue research on the impact of climate change on rainfall patterns and river flows. While an undergraduate, Robyn participated as a research assistant in a NASA-funded climate change study, where she worked on developing statistical procedures for climate and fire simulations. In her essay, Robyn stated that an unfortunate lack of coordination foiled her budding career as a ballerina, forcing her to trade in her tutus for test tubes. After reading Robyn's application, it is clear that the dance world's loss is the science world's immense gain. Her enthusiasm for all things scientific and her ambition to continue along her rigorous academic path to become a research scientist in physical geography makes Robyn an extraordinary woman in science.

Graduate

1st Place: Iman Famili

Iman presently attends the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), where she is pursuing a doctorate in bioengineering and bioinformatics. As a graduate student, Iman's research has focused on the development of mathematical models of biological systems. In particular, Iman has worked to develop the first metabolic model of a eukaryote, namely *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. Iman will receive a \$120,000 grant from the NIH Small Business Innovative Research program, on which she will serve as Principal Investigator. Despite her focused and extensive research, Iman is described as "a team player, who is generous with her time and willing to help others even if it does not directly further her thesis work" and as someone who "will become a wonderful role model

for aspiring female scientists and engineers." Iman's hard work in increasing the understanding of and building models for the metabolism of various organisms, coupled with her willingness to encourage and educate others, makes her an outstanding woman in science.

2nd Place: Rosemay Ambata Remigio-Baker

Rosemay presently attends San Diego State University (SDSU), where she is pursuing a master's degree in public health with an emphasis on women's and immigrant's health. As a graduate student, Rosemay is an intern at UCSD Family and Preventive Medicine, where she is investigating the prevalence of Type II diabetes and hypertension among Filipino women. In addition to her graduate work, Rosemay has participated in several programs and internships focused on increasing health awareness in the community, such as the California Program of Project Concern International and the Harbor-UCLA Summer Urban Preceptorship Program. She is described as an enthusiastic student who works beyond what is required and has a dedication to her chosen field that reflects her strong underlying interests in immigrant health and health issues in developing countries. Rosemay's dedication to improving the health of those not only in her community but internationally and her desire to "inspire other young female scientists in developing their interests" makes her an outstanding woman in science.

2nd Place: Alison McManus

Alison presently attends the University of San Diego (USD), where she is pursuing a master's degree in nursing in the Family Practitioner Program. Her future plans include continuing her education to earn a doctorate in nursing and to ultimately become involved in scientific nursing research focused on the differences between the female and male response to the disease process. After 16 years as an emergency room nurse, Alison decided to pursue the knowledge and skills that will allow her to move beyond the emergency room and into the community. In addition, she has developed an interest in women's health issues and feels that it is up to those of us with the strength and ability to ensure that women have access to adequate and informative health care. She is described by her colleagues as a person who has "a passion for the science of nursing" and is "dedicated to the cause of advancing nursing as a profession." In her essay, Alison states that she feels that "the women's population is currently underserved by the health care system, but through the furthering of nursing science research and the support of women by other women, we can change that." Her passion for improving the health of women through increased scientific research in the field of nursing coupled with her drive to continue her education to ensure that she is ready to assist in the endeavor, makes Alison an outstanding woman in science.

Changes on the AWIS Board

By Barbara Armstrong

Alycen Nigro, who has served as AWIS Historian and Chair of the Scholarship Committee, has moved to Connecticut. **Fran Putkey**, who is a member of the Scholarship Committee, will now serve as Chair and **Susan Forsburg**, who served on the 2003 Women in Bioscience Conference Facilities Committee, has agreed to serve as AWIS Historian. Welcome to the Board, Fran and Susan!

New AWIS-SD Career Center Job Board

By Natalie Schiller

I'm pleased to announce the kickoff of the new AWIS-SD Career Center Job Board and introduce myself as the new Corporate Liaison for the San Diego chapter. My primary role as Corporate Liaison is to maintain contact with hiring managers of universities, research institutions, and biotech/pharmaceutical companies and encourage them to post their job openings on our Online Job Board (<http://awis.npaci.edu/shtml/jobs.shtml>).

This Job Board is available to our active AWIS members. You will receive email updates each time new job openings are posted and will be given the password to view the Job Board. Currently, the password is the same as the one needed to view the AWIS-SD Newsletter.

The email list for the Job Board will initially include all active members. After that time, members who would like to continue to receive these updates will need to RSVP to me at: nschill@cox.net.

I would also appreciate assistance from each of you to help me maintain and update my database of hiring manager contact information. Another great help would be for each of you to inform your own hiring managers of our Career Center Job Board. I've included the terms and pricing of the Career Center Job Board in this letter and would appreciate your passing along the information. The term and pricing schedule is quite competitive and very flexible.

Our chapter currently has over 300 active members and is growing at a rate of about 40 members per year. Our membership includes women at many different career levels who are in a range of scientific fields. We have members who are in early career stages including undergraduate students, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. Other members are senior scientists, CEOs of biotechnology or pharmaceutical companies and professors at top research institutes. We have members who are in "non-traditional" science careers including business development, science writing, technology commercialization, patent law, sales and marketing. I feel that hiring managers will share my opinion that this job board is a powerful way to tap into an important resource – a diverse group of women scientists in the San Diego area.

To post a job visit: http://awis.npaci.edu/jobs/jobs_employer.htm

TERMS AND PRICING:

Jobs will be posted within one business day upon confirmation of your payment. Payment may be made using a major credit card (Visa/Mastercard) via Acteva.com. Jobs will be checked for accuracy before they are posted. You will receive notification by email when the job postings are about to expire.

1) Hot Jobs

\$15 per job
One-time email alert to AWIS members

2) Monthly

\$90 Up to 3 jobs
\$165 Up to 7 jobs
\$200 Up to 10 jobs
Jobs will be posted on the website for 30 days
AWIS members will receive a one-time email alert of newly posted jobs

3) Bi-monthly

\$110 Up to 3 jobs
\$185 Up to 7 jobs
\$220 Up to 10 jobs
Jobs will be posted on the website for 60 days
AWIS members will receive a one-time email alert of newly posted jobs

4) Quarterly

\$150 Up to 3 jobs
\$200 Up to 7 jobs
\$250 Up to 10 jobs
Jobs will be posted on the website for 90 days
AWIS members will receive a one-time email alert of newly posted jobs
Jobs will be listed in the AWIS Newsletter

LIFESTYLE ESSENTIALS: HEALTH, DIET AND RELAXATION

By Shermali Gunawardena

High-Protein, High-Fat and Low-Carbohydrate Diet: Is it good for you?

Bacon and eggs or egg beaters and tofu dogs, which is it? Two scientific articles in the May issue of *The New England Journal of Medicine* has re-opened the debate on the controversial high-protein, high-fat, low-carbohydrate diet a month after its creator's death. This is the first time that studies on the controversial Atkins diet have been published. From the start, the Atkins diet, first introduced in 1972 by Dr. Robert Atkins, a Manhattan cardiologist, was ridiculed and criticized, with doctors warning about the dangers in consuming large quantities of meat and fat which could lead to high cholesterol levels.

Two comparative studies, one lasting six months (Samaha et al 2003) and the other lasting a year (Foster et al 2003), found that obese subjects on the Atkins diet lost twice as much weight over six months as those on the standard low-fat diet recommended by most health organizations. Samaha et al randomly assigned the two diets to 132 severely obese subjects with 79 subjects completing the six-month study. They found that subjects on the Atkins diet lost more weight than those on the standard diet and had greater decreases in triglyceride levels and improvements in insulin sensitivity. Similar results were found in the Foster et al study. Sixty-three obese men and women were randomly assigned the two diets for one year and only 37 subjects completed the study. Subjects on the Atkins diet lost more weight than subjects on the standard diet both at three months and six months, but no significant difference was seen at 12 months. Again, decreases in the triglyceride level and insulin response to oral glucose load were observed with a significant decrease in diastolic blood pressure.

Both studies suggest that the Atkins diet appears to be a short-term approach to losing weight, although they both caution long-term interpretations. It is possible that a drastic diet such as the Atkins diet simply messes with the metabolism of one's body, a sort of confuse the body approach, such that only short-term effects are observed. Indeed, Foster et al suggest that "long-term adherence to the low-carbohydrate diet may be difficult" and Samaha et al put forward "simplicity of diet and improved compliance related to novelty of diet" as other possible explanations. In addition Foster et al observe that the Atkins dieters regained much of the weight by the end of one year. It is also conceivable that the loss of study subjects (41% in the Foster et al study and 40% in the Samaha et al study) could add significant bias to the outcome of the study. No

explanation is given as to why 40% of the subjects did not complete the diet. Did they get sick? Did they have complications as a result of the diets? If these questions are answered in the affirmative, then the outcome of the two studies must be differently interpreted. Regardless, what is evident is that the Atkins diet is still controversial, and the true long-term gains of such a diet are still unknown.

References:

Foster G.D et al., (2003) A randomized trial of a low-carbohydrate diet for obesity. *New Engl J Med.* 348:2082-2090.
 Samaha F.F. et al., (2003) A low carbohydrate as compared with a low-fat diet in severe obesity. *New Engl J Med* 348:2074-2081.

QUICK AND HEALTHY FIXINGS FOR WOMEN ON THE GO

Pizza with roasted peppers, caramelized onions and olives

(adapted from *Cooking Light*)

1 teaspoon olive oil
 2 cups vertically sliced onion
 1 cup roasted bell peppers (see below)
 1/4 cup chopped pitted olives
 1 can Italian-style diced tomatoes, drained
 1 thin pizza crust (such as Boboli)
 1/2 cup provolone cheese

1:Preheat oven to 450°. Cut bell peppers in half lengthwise, discard seeds and membranes. Place pepper halves, skin side up on a foiled baking sheet, flatten with hand. Bake for 20 minutes or until blackened. Immediately place peppers in a large Zip-lock plastic bag, seal. Let stand for 20 minutes. Peel pepper skins. Slice vertically.

2:Cook onions in olive oil until browned. Remove from heat, stir in peppers, olives, and tomatoes.

3:Place pizza crust on a baking sheet. Spread tomato mixture over pizza crust. Top with cheese. Bake at 450° for 12 minutes or until cheese melts.

Meeting in the Ladies' Room

By Hima Joshi

Ahhh. Tsss. Push it. "Shuffle, shuffle, turn! Pivot! Pivot!" It is 8:30 on a Saturday morning. Twenty women move in synch around a collection of blue, plastic platforms while an old-school Salt-N-Pepa song thumps rhythmically from the four corners of the room. An attorney, clad in a red tank top and black leggings, twirls around her bench in her designated spot toward the front of the room. A bunch of new moms surround her. In the back is a 60-year-old cyclist who doesn't look a day over 45. These women seem to have worked themselves into some sort of group trance. No one talks except for the instructor, Leah Bisesi, who shouts out choreography at the front of the room.

This is the typical Saturday-morning scene in the group-exercise studio at Her Fitness and Day Spa in the Costa Verde Shopping Center in University City. Her Fitness, which was founded in 1994, is one of only a handful of women's health clubs in San Diego. In fact, of the approximately 70 health clubs listed in the 2002 San Diego Yellow Pages, only nine are apparently women's gyms.

Three of these are branches of Curves for Women, an international franchise that was founded in 1995. The 30-minute Curves

workout involves going twice around a circuit comprised of hydraulic-resistance machines. There are no free weights or aerobics classes at Curves. The Curves experience consists of strength training in a social, supportive, all-female environment. Curves recently entered the Guinness World Records as "the world's largest fitness center franchise."

San Diego also has three branches of Women's Fitness World, a company that has been around for approximately 20 years. The El Cajon branch of Women's Fitness World boasts a pool and a variety of aerobics classes. In addition to these multi-branch establishments, there are a few independent women's health clubs in San Diego such as La Physique Elite Health Spa for Her, The Woman's Club, and Her Fitness and Day Spa.

What do these gyms offer that co-ed gyms do not? First of all, the weight machines are designed for women's bodies. The chest-fly or pec-dec machines fit the arm span of the average woman, and the pull-up machines have knee rests.

Graphic designer Jean Fujisaki decided to join Her Fitness because of its unique culture. "I feel more comfortable here," she says. "For me, it is more relaxed." Fujisaki has found that there is more "posing," or showing, off at co-ed gyms. Bisesi, who is the group exercise director at Her Fitness, feels that "you are allowed to be yourself" at women's gyms. "[At co-ed gyms,] it's more about being on display... You don't primp to work out here," she says. Fujisaki enjoys the opportunity to meet women from a variety of age groups at Her Fitness. "If you go to a co-ed gym, you see mostly younger people... Here, you see the whole gamut," she says. Bisesi takes pleasure in developing friendships with members of the Her Fitness community. "It's more personalized here," says Bisesi. "You get to form relationships."

Jennene Halder, a 61-year-old retiree who used to work in infectious diseases, tried going back to co-ed health clubs several times before she realized that she prefers women's gyms. Like many other Her Fitness members, Halder depends on group-exercise classes for her workouts. "Every year, I decide I'm not going to [renew my membership] because I can do it on my own," she says sarcastically. Fujisaki and Halder are impressed with the quality of instruction at Her Fitness. They agree that the weight-training instructors emphasize the importance of proper form instead of pushing people to lift large amounts of weight.

Bisesi's goal is to help members "improve their quality of life" and to provide exercise classes that are tailored to the needs of women. She stresses the value of maintaining balance despite a busy lifestyle. "As women, we are expected to do so much," she says. Her belief in balance and the mind-body connection is reflected in the large number of Pilates classes offered at Her Fitness. Pilates is a form of exercise that combines powerful breathing, mental focus, and strengthening movements. Pilates classes are designed to tone muscles, increase mobility around the joints, improve posture, and release tension. Strength-training classes such as Rep Reebok and Body Sculpt help prevent osteoporosis and other health problems that women experience as they age.

Bisesi explains that at many larger clubs, the classes are "pre-formatted." The instructors have to follow specific routines that have been written for them beforehand. "Instructors who thrive on creativity tend to avoid teaching at large gyms for this reason," she says. On the other hand, instructors at small, specialty clubs like Her Fitness have lots of room for creativity. They come up with their own choreography, and they vary their routines. As a result, small, specialty clubs successfully attract high-quality instructors.

Thump. Thump. Thump. Thump. Be back real soon. Nine o'clock has come quickly. The music dies down. There is a round of applause, and the sweaty, but satisfied, pack disperses. In the front corner of the room, a few women gather to look at baby pictures. A couple of friends chat on their way out into the weight room. Bisesi hands off the microphone, and the music starts up for the next class.

AWIS - San Diego Chapter Welcomes New Members:

By Emily Leong and Susan Jennings

Sara Al-Hardan	
Anna Amirkhan	Beckman Coulter
Pratima Bansal-Pakala	La Jolla Institute for Allergy & Immunology
Julie R. Bradbury-Bennett	
Tiffany P. Barrow	Dept. Mol. Bio. & Biochem UCI
Catherine H. Charles	Perlan Therapeutics
Sharon H. Choi	UCSD
April Cresse	
Fan Dong	BioSite
Emiley A. Eloe	UCSD
Colleen Fearn	The Scripps Research Institute
Victoria Freitas	
Phyllis Frosst	The Scripps Research Institute
Sibylla Maria Grahm	The Scripps Research Institute
Nora S. Green	The Scripps Research Institute
Mary Ann Hawke	URS Corporation
Holly Heaslet	The Scripps Research Institute
Sanna Herrgard	Ambit Biosciences
Roya Hooshmand-Rad	The Burnham Institute
Hsiu-Cheng Hung	The Scripps Research Institute
Huong T Huynh	The Burnham Institute
Margery S. Johnstone	
Suzanne Krinsky	Gen-Probe Incorporated
Lisa Lai	The Burnham Institute
Karla Miller	UCSD
McKenzie Minke	MSI-International
Pamela Moses	UCSD
Rose Murphy	TriLink Biotechnologies, Inc.
Cathy A. Schnabel	
Deborah Stauber	The Scripps Research Institute
Rhonda Torres	The Scripps Research Institute
Beth Anne Weaver	UCSD, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research
Priscilla Li-ning Yang	The Scripps Research Institute
Xiaohong Helena Yang	ISIS Pharmaceuticals
Stacie Anne Young	Genicon Sciences

AWIS Members On the Move...

In this section of the newsletter, we report on the accomplishments (new job, promotion, award, publication of scientific or other article, etc.) of AWIS-SD members. If you have an accomplishment to report, send it to Barbara Armstrong at baawis@nethere.com and put "members on the move" in the subject heading.

Marjan Haghnia, a member of the Speakers Committee for WIB 2001 and WIB 2003, finished her Ph.D. in Chemistry and Biochemistry at UCSD in May 2003.

The title of her dissertation was: "Analysis of Axonal Transport Mutants in *Drosophila*." She is currently employed at Nanogen, Inc., focusing on detection of biowarfare agents using electronic microarrays.

Denise Hickey has qualified for the Boston Marathon to be held in April of 2004. She ran a qualifying time in the San Diego Rock and Roll Marathon held on June 1, 2003.

Cathy Manner, a writer and editor for the AWIS-San Diego newsletter since 1999, recently completed her Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences at UCSD. Her thesis was entitled "The Consequences of CAT2 Arginine Transporter Ablation in Cancer and Neuropathology."

Janice Payne, a writer and editor for the AWIS-San Diego newsletter, has published an article in the most recent edition of the AWIS National magazine. The article is about the resume writing workshop given by Barbara Coleman, AWIS-SD Vice President, last January.

Natalie Schiller recently joined the law firm of Heller Ehrman White and McAuliffe LLP from her postdoctoral research position at The Scripps Research Institute. As a scientific advisor, she will be working in patent prosecution.

Sharon Wampler, a Councilor on the National AWIS Executive Board, presented a workshop on fundraising skills at the winter AWIS-National board meeting. An article about the workshop can be found in the most recent edition (Spring 2003) of the AWIS National magazine.

Biotech Briefs

By Suzie Bailey

ACADIA Pharmaceuticals and **Allergan, Inc.** have initiated a drug discovery and development collaboration, which will focus predominantly on potential drug targets and novel chemistries for eye care. (PR Newswire, 4/15/2003)

Althea Technologies has received a Phase I Small Business Innovation Research grant from the NIH, by way of the NCI, to develop a new high-throughput, production-oriented approach to gene expression analysis for cancer. (PR Newswire, 5/5/2003)

Amylin Pharmaceuticals Inc. announced that a recently completed clinical test showed that its diabetes drug Symlin met regulators' expectations for glucose control, and hopes to finally win approval for the drug by year's end. (SD Union Tribune, 5/20/2003)

CancerVax announced that the Food and Drug Administration has lifted a hold on new patient enrollment in two Phase III clinical trials of the therapeutic skin cancer vaccine, Canvaxin. The company expects to finish recruiting patients for the two studies in 2004. (SD Union Tribune, 4/16/2003)

Diversa Corporation will collaborate with the **U.S. Department of Energy's Joint Genome Institute** to discover and sequence novel microbial genomes. (PR Newswire, 5/5/2003)

Epimmune, Inc. has entered into an agreement with **Merck & Co** under which select Epimmune epitopes will be evaluated by Merck in connection with their vaccine development technologies. (PR Newswire, 5/1/2003)

Epimmune, Inc. and Anosys, Inc. have entered into a definitive merger agreement to form a combined company, headquartered in San Diego, that will focus on the field of immunotherapeutics and cancer and infectious disease-treatment products. (PR Newswire, 5/12/2003)

Genetronics Biomedical Corporation and Genteric, Inc. will partner to evaluate electroporation-assisted delivery of DNA to the salivary gland for the commercial development of gene therapy products. (PR Newswire, 5/22/2003, SD Union Tribune 5/23/2003)

Hollis-Eden Pharmaceuticals announced that its experimental drug to treat people exposed to nuclear fallout showed promise in an early monkey study. The company expects the result to lead to FDA approval under new guidelines designed to speed bioterrorism countermeasures to market. (SD Union Tribune, 4/8/2003)

Immune Response Corp. has announced that it may face delisting from the Nasdaq stock market listing as a result of failing to maintain the minimum equity requirement. (SD Union Tribune, 5/23/2003)

ISIS Pharmaceuticals, Inc. has initiated Phase I clinical trials for its antisense drug, ISIS 113715, for Type II diabetes. The drug targets the gene PTP-1B and in preclinical studies improved the regulation of blood sugar levels. (PR Newswire, 5/14/2003)

ISIS and Ercole Biotech, Inc. (Chapel Hill, NC) have initiated a multi-year collaboration to discover antisense drugs that regulate alternative splicing, with an initial focus on new agents for the treatment of prostate cancer, breast cancer, psoriasis, cardiovascular disorders and genetic diseases. (SD Union-Tribune, 5/20/03)

La Jolla Pharmaceutical has laid off about 15% of its workforce (24 positions) following disappointing results from a late-stage study of an experimental lupus medicine. (SD Union Tribune, 5/13/2003)

Neurogenetics, Inc. has announced an agreement to license and further develop a compound from **Eli Lilly and Company** that has shown efficacy in several Phase II trials of different pain models, including migraine, chronic lower back pain and pain associated with spinal cord trauma. (PR Newswire 5/6/2003)

Pfizer, Inc. will shift some research jobs to its La Jolla campus in the wake of its acquisition of Pharmacia Corp. and expects expansion at La Jolla in both the short and long term. In addition, Pfizer is negotiating with **Neurocrine Biosciences** to purchase their 94,000-square-foot research headquarters which is adjacent to the Pfizer campus, with an additional four buildings under construction and due for completion in 2004. (SD Union Tribune, 5/1/2003)

Quidel Corp. announced that it would cut 22 percent of its work force in a restructuring plan that will cost 42 San Diego employees their jobs. An additional 8 jobs that were open will not be filled. (SD Union Tribune 4/30/2003)

Vical has signed a contract to make bulk experimental DNA vaccines for the Dale and Betty Bumpers Vaccine Research Center, for the exploration of therapies to counter bioterrorism. The deal is expected to help Vical fund its own vaccine programs as well as build a new manufacturing facility in Sorrento Valley. (SD Union Tribune, 5/13/2003)

Women in Bioscience Conference 2003

The sixth biennial Women in Bioscience Conference was held on May 3, 2003. Most of the men's restrooms in the vicinity of the Frederic de Hoffmann Auditorium at the Salk Institute were converted to women's restrooms for the day. The UCSD Bookstore and the conference sponsors set up shop in the foyer. Old friends chatted over coffee, and recent graduates spoke with industrial scientists. The theme of the conference was "Creating the Future." After hearing from the plenary speakers, conference attendees broke out into several workshops. Here are some of the highlights of the conference... (Hima Joshi)

Plenary Speakers at WIB 2003

By Julie Kinyoun

Lynne Friedmann and Gail Naughton spoke during the morning session of WIB as plenary speakers. Both told their success stories including struggles and triumphs along the way.

Lynne Friedmann spoke on the theme of taking risks to achieve goals in life. Her path to success included three major risks. First, she left her steady job at a police station at age 27, withdrew her pension, and went to college to study marine biology. Upon completing her degree in journalism with a minor in biology in the early 1980s, she took advantage of writing opportunities in the new biotechnology industry. After working in a public relations firm, she solidified her experience in science writing. At age 35, she married and moved to San Diego where she took her second major risk. This move was risky because the biotechnology industry was not well established, and her opportunities were few. To compensate for the lack of opportunities, Friedmann took a risk and started her own business. She made mistakes but enjoyed dividing time between freelance science writing and media consulting.

Then, as her third major life risk, ten years ago, she initiated and chaired the first Women in Bioscience Conference. After calling several friends and receiving support for her idea, she pursued steps toward organizing the conference. This calculated risk was worthwhile because she had committed support from acquaintances. The support provided additional assurance that the idea might succeed.

Overall, Friedmann conveyed the importance of taking risks in the path toward a successful career. She also stressed that someone's risks are as individual as his/her definition of success.

Gail Naughton outlined her experience in the biotechnology industry and the process of bringing new drugs to the market. Currently, she serves as Dean of the College of Business at San Diego State University. Her years of experience as a scientist and businesswoman in biotechnology made her qualified for this prestigious appointment. Business people today know how important science is to biotechnology. Naughton said she learned long ago never to say "never." When she was 21, she said she would never be in a business and never have children. Both promises proved untrue.

Naughton provided an overview of recent biotechnology trends, emphasizing the expense and the number of people needed to gain FDA approval for a product.

Naughton emphasized the importance of having passion for work. Passion helps bring about belief in oneself and guides a person through hard times. Passion helps someone generate creativity

about him/herself and the surrounding environment. Scientists at her company, Advanced Tissue Sciences (ATS), called the company a “highly intelligent environment where people constantly over stimulate each other” because of their passion and drive for what they do.

What caused ATS to file for chapter 11 bankruptcy? Naughton attributed this to trying to do too many things at one time. The research on a product must be done ahead of time so that business planning and analysis can continue on an ongoing basis. What made sense in 1990 may not apply to the same situation in 1995. In a competitive environment, constant reevaluation is essential. A company must establish mutual trust on all levels of the organization for success.

Naughton concluded with a statement that “the entrepreneur can accomplish the impossible, but sometimes it takes longer than anticipated.”

Hot Topics: Bioterrorism and Public Health

Speaker: Jacqueline Hopkins

By Siobhan Malany

We hear every day about threats to our health and potential bioterrorist attacks. We have anthrax scares. Stories of SARS have spread through the media as fast as the infection itself. If you have visited the San Diego Zoo or Wild Animal Park recently you have noticed that the aviaries are closed to the public because of West Nile virus. Yes, there are health threats all around us. We certainly don't need to live with heightened anxiety, nor do we need to transform our homes into huge zip-lock bags; but we do need to be accurately informed and aware of our health risks. So, how is our community here in San Diego County prepared to rapidly identify and respond to public-health emergencies?

Jacqueline Hopkins, an epidemiologist with the County Department of Health and Human Services, led a workshop on bioterrorism and public health at the Women in Bioscience Conference. She is part of an early warning group that investigates and monitors communicable diseases and potential outbreaks. She spoke about various health teams organized through the Office of Emergency Planning that are prepared to handle potential crisis situations and about the establishment of a county-based communication center referred to as EMAN, the Emergency Medical Alert Network.

The Office of Emergency Planning (www.co.san-diego.ca.us) acts as a command and control center for early detection, environmental surveys, mass patient care, mass immunization, and mass fatality management. It coordinates several teams including:

- ❖ Epidemiology Team
- ❖ Chemical Counter-Terrorism Team
- ❖ Metropolitan Medical Strike Team
- ❖ Early Warning Group
- ❖ Enhanced Health Surveillance Team
- ❖ Rapid Response Team

“In the Early Warning Group, for example,” says Hopkins, “we monitor absenteeism at 16 schools in San Diego County.” Her team also investigates any influenza-like or food-borne illnesses. They review death records and animal morbidity, keep tabs on pharmacy sales, and receive laboratory test results.

In order to respond rapidly to health emergencies, it is critical that the exchange of medical information between health care systems and health professionals be expedited. Even with present technological advances, manual medical records, incompatible

databases, and inadequate communication links among health agencies are problems that delay the diagnosis and reporting of suspicious occurrences. The healthcare industry surprisingly invests less in information technology than any other information intensive industry. In terms of medical emergencies that put the larger population at risk, lack of awareness due to poor communication can have devastating consequences. What may seem like isolated occurrences of food poisoning, for example, may mark the emergence of a highly contagious pathogen. An initial outbreak can reach epidemic proportions within one to two weeks. Hopkins explains that the day a patient comes to the emergency room (Day 1) with a suspicious illness, the public health department is then able to get the information and respond to a health alert about five to seven days following. “But this still needs to be shortened,” she says. “We need to be ready to respond by Day 3!”

EMAN is a web-based information center

(www.emansandiego.com). Its mission is to expedite sensitive or confidential medical information between health care systems and health professionals. Via EMAN, physicians, the public health department, and the office of emergency planning form an electronic network. Unusual disease outbreaks, known/suspected disease clusters, and possible acts of terrorism can be quickly brought to the forefront. Another important purpose of EMAN is to keep the public accurately informed and provide educational material about public health issues. The website contains links to the 80 plus reportable diseases and categorizes the diseases into two groups. Category A includes major threatening diseases such as small pox, anthrax, and plague. Category B includes more common diseases such as staphylococcus B and food/water-borne diseases. Influenza occurrences are surveyed on a weekly basis. The data are gathered from several resources including epidemiology departments, immunization programs, public health labs and local hospitals. The analysis of each flu season is displayed on the website for the public in an easy-to-read bar graph.

San Diego County public health services have the resources to detect early and respond quickly to health emergencies due to the establishment of a public health infrastructure. The various local surveillance teams and response teams operated by the Office of Emergency Planning, local hospitals, medical professionals and the community are linked together through EMAN. In addition, EMAN provides links to the California Infectious Disease Branch and to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. We all have good reason to stay relaxed, be informed and save our plastic wrap for picnic lunches.

Creating Balance – A Coach's Secrets for a Great Life

Speaker: Kathy Nelson

By Janice Payne

I have always thought of myself as a scientist, and much of my identity comes from my work, rather than from the fact that I am a daughter, sister, wife and friend. I've been told that I focus too much on my work, and as I get older I want my focus to shift more toward family, friends and activities outside of work. That led me to the Creating Balance workshop facilitated by Kathy Nelson, a certified coach with her own business, On Track Success Coaching. Nelson has coached hundreds of clients, from accountants to scientists, either over the phone or in person. Her role is to help her

clients identify their values and dreams and lend the support and direction that allows them to achieve their goals.

The first step in creating balance in life is to make sure you know what your priorities are. Nelson had the group attending her workshop identify five personal priorities from a long list that included: having a close family, having good friends, being healthy, having career satisfaction and parenting wisely. Once you understand what your priorities are, you must decide what each one means to you and how you can incorporate these into your daily life. Nelson illustrated the importance of considering priorities first with a jar of rocks and sand. If the jar is your life, and you fill it with small stuff, the larger, important rocks or priorities won't fit in. Fill your jar with what's important to you.

The next step in creating balance in life is to learn to set boundaries. Setting boundaries will protect your priorities and allow you to have more time to do what's important to you. The biggest boundary word is "NO," and Nelson listed several nice ways to say it such as "I really can't commit to that now" or "I'm sorry I can't help with that, have you asked Ms. X?"

As Nelson stated, "Your ultimate objective should be to be a success in life not just a success in your career." She quoted from a poem by Robert Louis Stevenson. "That man is successful who has lived well, laughed often, and loved much." Not many people are remembered for spending all of their time at work.

For more information about Kathy Nelson and her coaching services, visit www.ontracksuccesscoaching.com or call her at 858-481-6757.

Networking: Marketing Myself for Success **Speaker: Marla Goonan**

By Barbara Armstrong

Marla Goonan, an Executive Career Coach teaching through UCSD Extension, conducted the workshop on networking at the Women in Bioscience Conference. She defines networking as a deliberate process of building relationships for personal and professional success. To network effectively, you need to have a strategic plan. Building and maintaining relationships is a time and energy consuming process. If you don't have a goal in mind, your network may not work efficiently or effectively. Joining and being active in organizations can be a way to build your network, but you should periodically evaluate whether the organizations you are active in continue to contribute to your professional or personal development and provide you with peer relationships.

The networking process starts after you have determined your goal: to change jobs, get a promotion, change career, etc... If your goal is to attain a job, you need to determine who the decision-makers are in the hiring process. It is best to contact the hiring managers directly and not go through the Human Resources Department. In a competitive job market, you have to find a way to be considered when job opportunities become available.

Networking is about educating your contacts about you, your goals and qualifications and how they can count on you, then learning the same about your contacts. The networker's goal is to become visible and remain memorable. This can be achieved by joining committees and becoming a board member. Another way to become known in your field is by writing for newsletters or publications, being a guest speaker, or presenting workshops or seminars in your area of expertise.

Perhaps the position you seek is not advertised. If this is the case, you need to contact the CEO of the company to convince him/her that you would be an asset to their company. Ms. Goonan counsels people not to be intimidated by a person's title. Call with the goal of seeking an "informational interview," not asking for employment. But first you need to find out as much as you can about the company. Your contact with the CEO may not yield a job offer immediately, but it may lead to a contact with another decision-maker. It is through this process of building contacts (networking) that you eventually will attain your career goal.

Quotables from WIB 2003

By Hima Joshi

"The organizers chose to focus on opportunities, not on barriers."
"It was 10 years ago, but it was the Dark Ages. We had no email."

- Lynne Friedmann, Plenary Speaker (regarding the planning of the first WIB conference which was sponsored in the San Francisco Bay area)

"I ended up taking a year sabbatical that lasted 15 years."

- Gail Naughton, Plenary Speaker

"If it's not written down that you can't do it, then you can do it."

"For me there is a separation between who I am and what I do."
- Donna Dean, Panelist at "Women Leaders – Lives of Calculated Risk Taking" Workshop

"There's the well-timed bathroom break."

- Bill Decker, Panelist at "Negotiating – Getting to YES" Workshop (regarding how to deal with an unanticipated comment from the other party in a negotiation)

"Let them know that you enjoyed your time working there even if you didn't."

- Meredith Dow, Panelist at "Stay or Leave – A Career Decision Tool" Workshop (regarding giving notice of resignation)

"The more you're dying to get out of there, the less you should say."

- Peggy Eis, Panelist at "Stay or Leave – A Career Decision Tool" Workshop (regarding giving notice of resignation)

Meet Our Corporate Sponsor

By Janice Payne



**Genomics Institute of the
Novartis Research
Foundation**

The Genomics Institute of the Novartis Research Foundation (GNF) was a generous sponsor of the 2003 Women in Bioscience Conference and AWIS appreciates their support!

GNF is one of a worldwide network of research centers operated by Novartis Pharmaceuticals. Founded in 1999, GNF was set up as a for-profit research center funded by the Novartis Research Foundation. Their new state-of-the-art research facility, which

houses over 200 scientists, opened in 2002 and is located in the Torrey Pines area.

Scientists at GNF conduct independent research in genomics and proteomics and their goal is to develop a wide range of advanced technologies that will enable scientists to rapidly evaluate thousands of genes and proteins per day. Among these technologies, which use whole cells as the target, are high-throughput robotic screening, microarray analysis and rapid bioassay development. Identification of genes involved in immune disorders, infectious diseases, cancer and other disease states could then lead to development of novel therapeutic approaches.

The Immunology group at GNF is primarily focused on lymphocyte function and development. They examine RNA expression profiles of activated lymphocytes to identify genes involved in cell activation. They also use high-throughput screening to identify compounds that can block lymphocyte proliferation.

Scientists in the Cancer and Cell Biology group are focused on overexpression of proteins in various cancers and using those proteins as therapeutic targets. The Cell Biology group researches the mechanisms by which RNA viruses, such as HIV and HCV, become pathogenic. Identifying therapeutic agents to treat malaria and identifying antifungal compounds are two research projects being investigated by the Infectious Disease group.

The volume of research and discoveries by scientists at GNF and collaborators from academia and industry has lead to the formation of the start-up companies, Syrrx, Kalypsys and Phenomix.

For more information on career opportunities at GNF, visit their website at <http://web.gnf.org/employment.html>.

Meet Our Corporate Sponsor Submitted by Pfizer



La Jolla



Pfizer La Jolla is part of Pfizer Global Research and Development (PGRD) the world's largest private biomedical R&D organization, responsible for the research and development of new medicines. Pfizer's mission is to be the most valued company to patients, customers, colleagues, investors, business partners and the communities where its employees live and work.

For over 150 years, people have counted on Pfizer to discover and develop important new medicines. From the beginning, Pfizer has been a pioneer in developing medicines to meet the needs of our nation and our world. From the first mass-production process for penicillin to breakthroughs for treating heart disease, diabetes, and depression, Pfizer has led the way in the search for new medicines. It's part of their ongoing commitment to meeting the important medical challenges of our times.

Thirty-eight million people use Pfizer medicines everyday. Its combined portfolio includes more category-leading medicines than any other company; 14 vital treatments that are helping millions of people fight diabetes and cancer, control hypertension, manage depression and ease nerve and arthritis pain.

Pfizer has discovered and developed many of the world's best-known medicines, including Norvasc (high blood pressure), Zoloft (depression), Viagra (erectile dysfunction), Geodon (schizophrenia), Lipitor (cholesterol-lowering) and Diflucan (antifungal.)

Pfizer's R&D campus in La Jolla offers a unique working environment where colleagues enjoy the advantages of a small innovative biotech culture, as well as being part of the world's largest private biomedical research organization. Its location enables close working relations with the vibrant medical research community in San Diego. VIRACEPT, a protease inhibitor used in combination with other HIV drugs to keep HIV from reproducing in the patient, was discovered right here in San Diego.

Pfizer La Jolla employs over 1000 scientists and support staff focused on cancer, viral diseases, diabetes, obesity, and diseases of the eye. It is Pfizer's center of excellence for structure-based drug design and combinatorial chemistry. Pfizer scientists are researching cancer treatments for non-small cell lung cancer, breast cancer, and colorectal cancer, targeting anti-angiogenesis, signal transduction, and cell cycle regulation. To treat viral disease, Pfizer is taking a comprehensive approach, targeting key enzymes required for viral replication. In the area of diabetes and obesity, Pfizer scientists are seeking medicines that suppress appetite, increase energy expenditure, sensitize diabetics to the actions of insulin and treat diabetic complications. Their research program on eye diseases is focused on the search for anti-angiogenesis compounds to treat age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and diabetic macular edema.

La Jolla Labs is Pfizer's fastest growing R&D site. When completed, the new campus on Science Center Drive, will have nearly 1 million square feet of lab and office space. Since 2001 Pfizer has invested millions of dollars in California, the majority of which has been spent on expanding the company's site in La Jolla.

The company is not only earning a strong reputation for excellence inside the labs, it's also committed to playing an active role in the community. Getting involved in community projects is a key Pfizer value. For example, Pfizer continues to be an active leader with United Way in San Diego and has extended its support to San Diego County through a range of community grants and science education projects. Pfizer La Jolla is one of the top five leading

corporate contributors to United Way in San Diego County. Pfizer colleagues, the heart of Pfizer's philanthropic activities, play an active role in making the community a better place to live and work. By generously contributing time, talent and money, colleagues share with their neighbors the Pfizer values of community and respect for people.

In San Diego, Pfizer brings a world-class pharmaceutical organization to a world-class medical/biomedical environment. It's a perfect partnership!

The Women in Bioscience Conference Organizing Committee and Corporate Sponsors

By Barbara Armstrong

The attendees of the 2003 Women in Bioscience (WIB) Conference have given the conference their endorsement. Ninety-nine percent of the conference attendees who completed the conference evaluation form said they would recommend the conference to a colleague. The conference fund-raising effort was the most successful in the history of the conference.

The success of the conference was a product of twenty-two workshop speakers, twenty-seven corporate sponsors and thirty-three conference organizers working for seven months to make the conference a reality. Local companies who sponsored the conference were: Pfizer, The Genomics Institute of the Novartis Research Foundation, Avanir Pharmaceuticals, Beckman Coulter Immunomics, Biocom/San Diego, K-force, UCSD, Alexion Antibody Technologies, Canji, The Dow Chemical Company, FeRx, Nanogen, SAIC, Torrey Mesa Research Institute, CBS Scientific, Elitra Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Forward Ventures, Friedmann Communications, Gemini Science Inc., Gen-Probe, Heller Ehrman, Immusol, MDS Pharma Services, Neurocrine Biosciences, Neurome, The Scripps Research Institute, and Signal/Celgene. The organizers of the conference would also like to recognize The Salk Institute and Torrey Pines Hilton for their in-kind support.



Top row: Marjorie Rowland, Janna Bednenko, Natalie Schiller, Karin Lucas, Tracy Vivelmere, Katie Kline, Melissa Fitzgerald, Jennifer Beamer

2nd Row: Marjan Haghnia, Shermali Gunawardena, Barbara Scholz, Swanie Schmidt, Christina Niemeyer, Jodi Connolly, Barbara Armstrong, Kathy Ogilvie

3rd Row: Cathy Manner, Joy Jacinto, Charlotte Flowerree, Alycen Nigro, Helen Chen, Tobey Tam, Jing Xu

Bottom row: Lynne Friedmann, Janet White, Fran Putkey, Anna-Maria Hays, Susan Forsburg, Sharon Wampler

Not pictured: Laura Alper, Adrienne Brown, Sonya Clemmons, Barbara Coleman, and Anjali Kansagara.

Strategy Session – Mentoring

June 2nd, 2003

By Siobhan Malany

Participants were asked to ponder a few questions in preparation for this strategy session on mentoring. Some of the open-ended questions included: my greatest career strength is..., a career weakness is..., concerning my present work situation, I would most like to change..., I see my career moving in the direction of..., one of the most frequent challenges in my work situation is..., and today, I think a mentor could help me by... Swanie Schmidt led the evening's discussions after the usual networking reception, which included a tasty Chinese buffet. Swanie is Director of Career and Market Development at UCSD (swanie@ucsd.edu) and an active member of AWIS. She advised each table to discuss a couple of the pre-work questions, and then a group facilitator shared highlights with all participants. One question that many were in general consensus was the question concerning one's greatest weakness. Many face difficulties in promoting and marketing themselves, networking effectively, transitioning career paths and having a clear career direction. These are all areas where a mentoring relationship can be very beneficial. At every career stage, everyone needs mentoring!

A mentoring relationship is based on what? The question spurred words to be thrown out from all corners of the room. "A mentor is a special relationship based on a foundation of mutual respect, trust, understanding, listening, empathy, problem solving, motivation, integrity, self esteem, correcting mistakes, independence, skill development, networking, career information/advice." Swanie emphasized, the "take home" word when thinking about a mentoring relationship is "Reciprocity!" Both parties provide feedback, motivation, a unique perspective and both should gain empowerment from the partnership.

The second half of the session involved participants moving around the room and sharing their top three requirements they would like a potential mentor to have and their top three criteria a mentoring relationship should possess. Swanie pointed out that one must be specific about what they are seeking in a mentor. If, for example, you want your mentor to share a common interest, you need to be more specific. If you want a mentor who is athletic, *go further*, you are looking for someone involved in water sports, *further*, you would like them to be a swimmer, *ok*. The more specific one is in defining what they are looking for in a mentor and what they can bring to the mentoring relationship, the more successful that person will be in finding and establishing a good mentoring relationship.

The last around-the-room-discussion centered on the question, "six months from now, what would you like to have achieved from your mentoring strategy?" Finding mentors and establishing a mentoring relationship takes time. For those who want to continue strategizing and would like further guidance to meet their six-month goal, additional strategy sessions will be held on July 14th, Sept 8th and Nov 10th. Swanie's advice to those continuing is that it's important to make it a personal decision, be committed, plan your work and work your plan, document your progress, and celebrate your progress! At the close of the session, those wishing to continue signed up in groups of five that would become their mentoring group for the upcoming sessions.

San Diego Bioinformatics Forum

Diversa: Automated Genome Annotation and Mining

By Tobey Tam

Quote of the evening: "Maybe we should observe a moment of silence for our careers." – Steven Stelman, event MC, commenting on the dearth of bioinformatics jobs.

The San Diego Bioinformatics Forum (SDBF) held its first meeting on June 10th with Dr. Toby Richardson of Diversa as the inaugural speaker. The sponsors were LION Biosciences AG and the law firm of Foley and Lardner. The topic was Automated Genome Annotation and Mining. Dr. Richardson spoke about how his bioinformatics team at Diversa spent one year constructing a database called ADAMAS (the Greek word for "diamond") that automates the annotation of prokaryotic genomes and the construction and identification of prokaryotic protein families. Public bioinformatic tools and internal algorithms were integrated into a simple Graphical User Interface (GUI) application facilitating extensive data mining, sequence analysis and protein family analysis endeavors. In his presentation, Dr. Richardson demonstrated the types of observations that could be made in both presentation and live demonstration and discussed future directions for comparative analysis of prokaryotic genomes.

Well over 100 people attended the forum, and the attendees were a well-mixed group mainly from the biotech sector and academia. SDBF is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to promoting a greater understanding of bioinformatics in the local biotech industry and facilitating quality networking within the community. AWIS members Sharon Wampler and Tobey Tam modeled it after the San Diego Biotechnology Discussion Group, which has been operating with great success for nearly a decade.

These meetings provide a convenient and enjoyable forum for learning about new bioinformatics technologies and their practical application in local businesses, and keeping up-to-date on the dynamics of this field in San Diego. Moreover, SDBF meetings act as a catalyst for the development of business-related and scientific ideas, and for the establishment of valuable professional relationships. Additionally, SDBF participants are encouraged to share information about employment opportunities and various professional activities in the San Diego area.

The meetings are held every other month on the second Tuesday of the month (barring major holidays). Meetings begin with a social hour from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m., with food and beverages provided by various corporate sponsors. General announcements and a brief presentation by the corporate sponsor follow the happy hour. The meeting culminates with a feature presentation showcasing a different local company at each meeting.

There is no need to apply for membership in the group or pre-register for any meetings. Participation in the group is open to all interested individuals and is completely free of charge. The next meeting will be held on August 12th and the presentation will be from Johnson and Johnson Pharmaceuticals R&D. For more information please go to <http://www.sdbioinfo.org/> or if you have any questions contact Tobey Tam mtam@hewm.com.

AWIS Book Club Book Review for March 2003

Baudolino

[English translation from the Italian by William Weaver]
By Umberto Eco

Reviewed by Caroline Lanigan

I so looked forward to reading this book. I'm a big fan of Umberto Eco. Or shall I say was a big fan... I just loved The Name of the Rose, Foucault's Pendulum, and How to Travel With a Salmon. I bought, in hard back, The Island of the Day Before, but it is still on my list of books to read as it has yet to be unpacked since my recent move. At this point it will stay there.

I'll refer you to this link, http://www.theonionavclub.com/archives.php?acat_id=6&letter=b, and others included below, for more detailed synopsis of the 'plot'; suffice it to say here that it tells of the adventures of the Medieval peasant Baudolino, written as a first person narrative. Charitably, it could be described as a serial collection of mythological and historical anecdotes of the Middle Ages; a more accurate description, in my opinion (as well as the other members of the AWIS book club) is as a gossip's version of various mythical and historical events.

Some seem to find this presentation entertaining, as per <http://www.nesfa.org/reviews/Carey/audolino.htm>: The AWIS book club unanimously did not. Of the seven attendees, not one person finished the book. This is unusual - it is expected that most attendees will not have finished the book, but at least one person, in particular the one committed to writing the review, has read the whole thing. Usually we leave the meeting with most, if not all, attendees intending to finish the book ASAP. This did not happen: I would be surprised if any of the book club members ever finish reading it. Personally, I found it impossible to stay awake whenever I started reading it - a few lines read and I was out. This is unusual because I am a person who routinely takes over an hour to fall asleep. Another book club member did read about 400 of the 522 pages, but admitted to being in an altered state of consciousness for the duration. A third found that listening to it as a book on tape was doable, but a fourth who tried this felt listening was just as tedious as reading.

Perhaps the scientific mind-set of AWIS members and friends explains the discrepancy between the response of the book club and that of other published reviews, e.g. the publisher and customer reviews at Amazon.com:

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0151006903/ref=cm_cr_dp_2_1/104-2638974-5995134?v=glance&s=books&vi=customer-reviews,
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0151006903/104-2638974-5995134?v=glance&s=books&vi=reviews>. I don't know. All I do know is that I cannot recommend this book to anyone. Yes, read The Name of the Rose and see the movie, read Foucault's Pendulum, and any of Eco's collected essays, but skip Baudolino.

A last note: Normally, the first section of a book is supposed to 'grab' the attention of the reader, snare them into reading the book. Chapter 1 of this book is written as a sort of 'chain of consciousness' monologue by Baudolino. Perhaps Eco intends this as an insight into the workings of the peasant mind. I don't know. The publisher italicized this section - singling it out. Eco, or perhaps the publisher, chooses to use archaic, imagined, and even apparently deliberate misspellings. In my opinion, this section was difficult to read, nonsensical, and downright boring. In any case,

the universal response of the AWIS Bookclub members was relief that the entire book was not written in this style! It seems to me that this chapter was really a warning of what was to come.

AWIS rating	number of votes
1 star (could not finish)	3
2 stars (could not recommend to others)	0
3 stars (might recommend to others)	1
4 stars (would recommend to a friend)	0
5 stars (would read again)	0
new category = 0 stars	3
OVERALL	0.86 / 5

About the AWIS Newsletter

The AWIS Newsletter is published six times per year and provides AWIS members and supporters with information on Chapter activities, career development, and issues related to women in science. The newsletter is free to AWIS members. Subscription rate for non-members is \$20 a year.

July/August Newsletter staff:

Janice Payne	Siobhan Malany	Shermali Gunawardena
Julie Kinyoun	Hima Joshi	Barbara Armstrong
Suzie Bailey	Tobey Tam	Cathy Manner
Joanne Mullen	Margot Stiles	

Send news items, comments, and subscription requests to Barbara Armstrong via email: baawis@nethere.com; or AWIS, PO Box 178096, San Diego, CA 92177-8096. If you would like your article to be included in the next issue, the deadline for submission is August 8, 2003.

Posting jobs in the AWIS newsletter: Contact Natalie Schiller at nschil@cox.net or AWIS voicemail: 619-687-5580, or AWIS PO Box: 178096, San Diego, CA 92177-8096 for details. Deadline for inclusion in the next AWIS newsletter is August 8, 2003. If submitting by snail mail, include the words "ATTN: Natalie Schiller" on the bottom left corner of the envelope.

Subscribe to the Free AWIS Email List

The AWIS email list will keep you up-to-date (between newsletters) with news of job opportunities, AWIS news and events. To subscribe, please send email to sdawis@san.rr.com. Include your full name, address, and phone number.

Moving? Address Change?

Please notify us of your new address so you won't miss our mailings! Please log into our new membership update page <http://awis.npaci.edu/html/login.html> using your AWIS-San Diego username and password. If you have not yet received a username and password, or have misplaced them, please email sdawis@san.rr.com. If necessary, you can also contact us by phone at (619) 687-5580, or mail changes to AWIS - San Diego, PO Box 178096, 92177-8096.

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