



# 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.

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear AWIS members,

The Board and Committee Chairs have just had our annual retreat and it was a very productive day. Apart from setting goals for 2009, we decided to implement a couple of new programs for our members. Maintaining our membership and ensuring that members are getting the most out of AWIS is very important to us and the committees are constantly thinking about new ideas to cater to our members' needs. As you may have seen in a recent e-mail, we have announced an online networking group specifically for AWIS San Diego members. The group is facilitated by LinkedIn.com and is called AWIS San Diego. It is a great place for expressing your thoughts, getting advice from someone, announcing jobs (or that you're looking for one), or anything else that is on your mind. The group is a forum for AWIS SD members to gain more out of networking and to keep in contact with each other.

Have you ever felt the need to ask someone for advice and not known where to go? Or wanted to find out how others in a similar situation are coping with issues? Our other new program, Breakfast Forums, will be small, focused groups that meet in an entirely informal setting, such as a coffee house. The forums are intended to be a place for people of similar interests or paths in life to meet and support each other. Initially, three groups will focus on Early Career Transitions, Mid-Career Transitions, and Work-Life Balance. If anyone is interested in initiating other groups, please let myself or any other board member know. The organization of the groups is intended to be as simple as picking a date and venue and showing up to the Forum.

I hope these new benefits are attractive to everyone and that you will make full use of them. Remember that the more involved you become, the more value you will get from your membership. As usual, if anyone has any ideas or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact me at [president@awissd.org](mailto:president@awissd.org).

Best wishes.

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## “Bridging the Gap” Women in Science and Technology Conference

Saturday, May 9, 2009  
at the Salk Institute  
8:30am – 5:30pm



"Bridging the Gap" is the theme of this year's Women in Science & Technology conference (formerly known as the Women In bioScience conference) sponsored by AWIS-San Diego. This one-day symposium includes two keynote speakers, Dr. Maria Freire of The Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation and Dr. Karen McBride from the Mars Scout Program, as well as a series of workshops focusing on career and personal development. It is an excellent opportunity for members of the scientific community to network, develop new skills, and explore career opportunities.

You may register online by visiting the conference homepage at: <http://awis.sdsc.edu/WIST>

Register now to get early bird rate. Early bird registration ends **March 15**. Final deadline for registration is **May 6**.

## AWIS Scholarships: An Update on Past Winners

By Kerri Hebard-Massey

Every year, AWIS-San Diego awards scholarships to women from local schools. From community college through graduate school, awards are open to any woman in pursuit of a degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics. The awards are presented at the Women in Science and Technology (WIST) conference,

formerly called Women in bioScience conference. AWIS-San Diego caught up with several former winners:

Sharon Matsuoka is majoring in mathematics at California State University, San Marcos. She is busy tutoring 4-5 students in math each week, taking 7 classes, and planning to graduate this term. After graduation, she plans to get her teaching credentials and teach high school math and Spanish.

Anna Siebers is a Biochemistry/Chemistry major at the University of California, San Diego. Anna thought that “the most memorable part of the Women in bioScience conference was meeting other well accomplished and motivated women studying science. It was amazing to hear other girls' plans for the future and to meet with older women scientists and hear their perspectives about academic research.” After graduation, Anna plans to spend a year or two teaching, possibly with Teach for America, before pursuing an advanced degree. Last year, she developed a student cooking show for UCSD TV. Though the station has now closed, she hopes to continue cooking and teaching others. “Maybe I'll even apply to be on the Food Network or open my own restaurant some day!” she says.

Amanda Lewis received an AWIS scholarship in 2005. Since then, she has finished her doctoral work in Biological Sciences and continued onto a postdoctoral position in a collaborator's lab. She is now interviewing for faculty positions and hopes to stay within academia. As a mother of two small children, Amanda offers this suggestion: “If I could give a single piece of advice to young women in science who want a family too, it is this- put yourself in situations (i.e. labs/jobs) where you see women with children succeeding.”

We congratulate these women and all our past scholarship winners on their success and look forward to meeting the new scholarship winners at this year's WIST conference.



A quote from one of Dr. Leboy's slides illustrates the problem:

“Our struggle today is not to have a female Einstein get appointed as an assistant professor. It is for a woman schlemiel to get as quickly promoted as a male schlemiel.”

Bella Abzug (American Congresswoman and leader in the women's movement)

Dr. Leboy cited the following problems as preventing women from pursuing an academic track career:

- Emphasis on the quantity instead of the quality of published papers
- High stress and a highly competitive environment
- Chilly and isolated climate in science
- Difficulty doing the “big science” encouraged by funding institutions
- Strenuous work schedules- 12+ hour days that ignore weekends and holiday

The bottom line seems to be that the world of academic science was created by and for men, with an emphasis on competition and entrepreneurship that is not widely appealing to many women.

So what can we do about it? “We have to confront it head on,” said Dr. Leboy. The system itself needs to change, from policies established by funding agencies down to the local administration of research centers. Recent advances, such as new regulations for maternity leave and tenure clock, have improved the environment for women in science, but more needs to be done. Finally, the importance of good mentorship was emphasized for women at the end of graduate school: a good postdoctoral mentor will help them advance their careers and encourage and support them in pursuing the academic track.

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## EVENTS

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### **Round-table discussion with Dr. Phoebe Leboy: Why so Low? Roadblocks to More Women Faculty in Science and Engineering”**

By Norma Velázquez -Ulloa

Dr. Phoebe Leboy, Professor Emeritus of Biochemistry at the University of Pennsylvania and current National President of AWIS, met with women scientists from all levels on Feb 5<sup>th</sup> in an event organized by UCSD's association of Women in Science and Engineering (WISE), and GradWISE.

Dr. Leboy showed that there is a disparity between the number of women getting PhDs and the number of women being hired as junior faculty, and these disparities are field-dependent. The worst disparities are found in Biology and Biomedical Sciences, where women have been earning ~40-45% of PhDs for the past 20 years, yet only 20-30% of tenure track positions are held by women. In Physics and Engineering only ~20% of women earn PhDs, but the number of women getting to tenure track positions is not as disparate as that found in the Biology and Biomedical fields.

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### **Strategy Sessions**

By Linda L. Manza

“Unleash Your Creativity”, the last strategy session of 2008, took place on Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup> and provided some tips on how to overcome the obstacles to expressing your creative side. During the breakout sessions we came up with tips for finding outlets for your creativity:

- Outlets at work
  - Brighten up your personal space
  - Listen to music while you work
  - Seek out opportunities for cross-training
  - Volunteer for a side project

- Getting started
  - Take a class
  - Join a club
  - Try out new recipes
  - Do projects with friends
- Making time
  - Turn off the TV
  - Hire help for mundane tasks
  - Schedule "creativity time" for the family
  - Make chores fun

There were about 25 people in attendance and everyone had a great deal of fun with the session. We all agreed that bringing out and expressing our creativity will benefit our personal, as well as our professional lives.

The first strategy session of 2009 focused on speed networking. We all know the importance of networking but often find that our attempts at it are not as successful as we had hoped they would be. There were 47 attendees making it one of our larger sessions. The session opened with an explanation of "speed networking": a series of brief, sequential introductions or interviews, and a demonstration of how to prepare an "elevator speech": a personal statement meant to start a conversation and generate interest, but not to describe yourself in full. This was followed by five 5-minute speed networking sessions during which partners exchanged business cards and shared their information with each other. Everyone left feeling that they had learned a great deal and were confident that future networking opportunities would be successful.

Strategy sessions are an interactive forum for professional and personal development held on the first Monday of every second month from 6-8 pm at Biogen Idec. In addition to providing the opportunity to network (we all know how important this can be), the sessions tend to be informative and enjoyable. The topics vary from session to session and attendance is open to all AWIS members. The remaining 2009 strategy sessions are described below. We hope to see you there.

#### **April 6: Interviewing Techniques**

Tips on how to make the best first impression for the job.

#### **June 1: Negotiating Skills**

Make those difficult conversations work in your favor.

#### **August 3: Appropriate Business Conduct**

Are you self-aware of your conduct in the work place?

#### **October 5: Managing Your Time at Work**

Increase your productivity without increasing your hours.

#### **December 7: Going Green**

How to be environmentally conscious everyday at work and home.

### **News Update on AWIS Members**

Pamela Surko, former president of National AWIS, has moved from SAIC where she was a Technology Fellow, to UCSD, where she is now Director of Research for Public Programs.

To include you career updates in the AWIS-San Diego newsletter, please email [newsletter@awissd.org](mailto:newsletter@awissd.org)

### **Upcoming Events**

#### **Greater San Diego Science and Engineering Fair**

April 1, 2009, 11:30 am. Balboa Park

AWIS San Diego gives awards to 8 young women (2 senior and 6 junior division entrants) from among ~300 entrants in the San Diego Science and Engineering Fair. Approximately 30 volunteers are needed to participate in judging the projects. To volunteer, contact [outreach@awissd.org](mailto:outreach@awissd.org).

#### **San Diego Science Festival Expo Weekend**

April 4, 2009, 9:00 am. Balboa Park

The Inaugural San Diego Science Festival will unite our community to showcase the Science & Innovation that makes San Diego unique! Join us for the first full-scale celebration of Science the West Coast has ever seen! The month-long event culminates in the Science Festival Expo Weekend. [www.sdsciencefestival.com](http://www.sdsciencefestival.com)

#### **Strategy Session - Interviewing Techniques**

April 6, 2009, 6:00 pm. Biogen Idec.

Tips on how to make the best first impression for the job.

#### **Women in Science and Technology Conference (WIST)**

May 9, 2009, 8:30 am. The Salk Institute

The "Women in bioScience" (WIB) conference is now the "Women in Science and Technology" (WIST) conference! For more information see <http://awis.sdsc.edu/WIST/>

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT**



#### **San Diego Chapter**

Website: <http://www.AWISsd.org>

E-mail: [awissd@awissd.org](mailto:awissd@awissd.org)

Mail: AWIS, San Diego Chapter  
PO Box 178096  
San Diego, CA 92177-8096

#### **National Chapter**

Telephone: (202) 326-8940

Website: <http://awis.org>

E-mail: [awis@awis.org](mailto:awis@awis.org)

Mail: AWIS National  
1200 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 650  
Washington, DC 20005

#### **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.

Newsletter staff for March/April issue:

Erin Dunn	Mindy Davis	Janice Payne
Rachel Schwartz	Kerri Hebard-Massey	Norma Velázquez-Ulloa
Sama Tamrakar		

If you are an AWIS-SD member, we encourage you to contribute articles to the Newsletter. Please send articles as MS Word attachments to [newsletter@awissd.org](mailto:newsletter@awissd.org). News articles should not exceed 250 words, and event summaries should not exceed 500 words. Feature articles (special-interest stories and profiles) should not exceed 800 words. The submission deadline for the next issue is April 3, 2009.

### **Not getting AWIS-SD member e-mails?**

Update your contact information! Go to the member services page using the following link:

<http://www.awis.org/members/index.cfm>

You will need your member ID and password. If you need assistance, please contact AWIS Member Services by phone (866-657-AWIS) or by e-mail ([membership@awis.org](mailto:membership@awis.org)).

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### **AWIS-San Diego Sponsors**

AWIS-San Diego thanks our corporate sponsors for their generous support. Donations from corporate sponsors help us fund scholarship awards, monthly events and Strategy Sessions, community outreach efforts, the Newsletter and the website.

For more information about how your company can support AWIS-SD, send e-mail to [fundAWISsd@gmail.com](mailto:fundAWISsd@gmail.com).

#### **PREMIER**

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Townsend and Townsend and Crew  
Gen-Probe Inc.

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The Dow Chemical Company  
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Lab Support-a division of On Assignment  
Ricerca Biosciences, LLC

#### **PARTNER**

UC San Diego Rady School of Management  
UC San Diego Extension

**IMPORTANT CONTACTS****AWIS Board**

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Treasurer	Karen Zeh	Treasurer@awissd.org
Secretary	Cindy Atwell	Secretary@awissd.org
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	Siobhan Malany	smalany@awissd.org
	Rachel Soloff	rsoloff@awissd.org
	Rosemary Cesario	

To contact the Board, visit the following website:

<http://awis.npaci.edu/officers/biographies.htm>

**Committee**

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