



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.

NEWS

Letter from AWIS-SD President Karin Zeh



Dear Reader,

Have you noticed the many AWIS-SD events that have happened during the past three months? Chances are you missed the one or two that really interested you because of the many e-mail messages you have received from us lately. While we spread the word about our activities via e-mail, we realize that cluttering the inboxes of our members won't do the trick.

So, over the next few months we will improve how we communicate with you. First, you will notice the mix-and-match of e-mail addresses disappearing from our website as they will be replaced with addresses ending in "@awissd.org." Each committee will have its own e-mail address, and you will be able to send your emails to membership@awissd.org, outreach@awissd.org, corporatesponsorship@awissd.org... Well, you get the picture.

Then we will consolidate all announcements into one e-mail message. Instead of finding multiple e-mails in your inbox, you will receive only one message highlighting all of the events for the upcoming month. If you require additional information, links will guide you to the respective websites.

Once both goals have been accomplished, we will take this one step further by introducing e-mail formats similar to those you might already receive from vendors or Science Magazine. This will not only make it easier for you to capture all the information but will also make reading our e-mail messages more pleasant. This new system will further enhance the professional appearance of our organization – a goal we always strive toward.

I am very excited about these changes. We know it is vital to tell you about our activities in the most convenient way. The easier it is for you to learn about upcoming events and to sign up for them, the more likely you will be to take advantage of our programs. Also, for us as a volunteer organization it is of equal importance to reduce our administrative work. The new e-mail addresses, the reduced number of messages to be sent each month and the streamlined e-mail format are significant improvements leaving us more time to work toward our goal - the advancement of women in science and science-related areas.

If you have any questions or comments, drop me a line. For now the e-mail address is awis_sd_president@yahoo.com, but this will change soon.

With best wishes,

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Upcoming Events

Compiled by Janice Payne

May 6: Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) Conference. This conference is aimed at girls in grades 6-10 and is intended to encourage them to pursue science, math and engineering. AWIS-SD is leading four "hands-on" workshops at the conference this year. If you would like to volunteer to help present any of these workshops, or for more information, please contact the Outreach Committee at outreach_awissd@yahoo.com. Location: UCSD.

May 16: "Avian Flu – Experts know when it is coming, the question is when?" Speakers: Elaine Pierce, Jill Giesick. Free lecture sponsored by GWIS. Location: University of San Diego, Hahn University Center. Free parking. Time: 7-9pm. To RSVP, call 619-260-2939 or email GWIS@sandiego.edu by May 12.

May 17: Happy Hour at Cozymel's (UTC). "Meet and Mingle" with our new AWIS members. Time: 5:30-8 p.m.

May 18: Biocom Calbio conference. Location: San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina. CALBIO Plenary & Session 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Pre-dinner Reception 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Annual "Celebration of Life" dinner 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

June 5: Strategy Session: How to Promote Yourself: Getting the Recognition you Deserve. Salk Institute. 6-8 p.m. Members-only event.

July: Science Behind Food. Location and time: TBD.

July 22 (Saturday): AWIS picnic. Bring your family for lunch and an afternoon of fun and games. Location: Cottonwood Park, Encinitas. Time: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.



Sally Ride Science Festival Comes to UCSD

By Lori Kuo

Sally Ride Science Festivals are held around the country for middle school girls and boys to stimulate their interest in math and science. This year the festival was held on February 12 on the UCSD campus. The day started with a science street fair with booths featuring hands-on activities.

Volunteers of the AWIS Outreach Committee sponsored a booth and held two activities: "Toothpick Fish" and "Who Took the Cake?"

The toothpick fish activity taught students about dominant and recessive genes and traits. Colored toothpicks represented genes, and Swedish fish (later gummy bears) represented the resulting fish color. In our scenario, changes in the pond plant life affected which fish passed on their genes. We discussed how the environment might favor one color over others and how this could affect the frequency of colors in a population. Besides learning about genetics and natural selection, participants also enjoyed eating the fish they generated. They also learned about their own traits. Common phenotypes the students studied included widow's peaks, eye color, and the ability to roll their tongues.

Our second exercise combined three different activities in a **CSI-style case of a missing cake**. The scenario begins as Ms. Smith leaves a cake intended for her class in the teachers' lounge and later finds it eaten. Participants played the parts of sleuths and analyzed the three clues: a note, a chocolate thumbprint, and the fork someone used to eat the cake. As they moved through the evidence, we discussed possible ways to analyze and interpret the data. The sleuths first learned about chromatography by separating the components of black ink from different pens. They then compared fingerprint patterns and DNA.

After the street fair, Sally Ride gave an inspirational talk about her experience as a young science student and astronaut. This was followed by discovery workshops given by local scientists for the students. In addition, teachers and parents attended workshops about supporting science education.

More information about Sally Ride Science Festivals is available at <http://www.sallyridefestivals.com>. For other resources, go to <http://www.sallyridescience.com>.

To volunteer for future science activities, e-mail outreach_awissd@yahoo.com

13th Annual BIOCOM CALBIO Conference and 4th Annual "Celebration of Life" Dinner

CALBIO 2006 will bring together the finest of the state's life science executives in a full-day conference focused on the strategic issues that have key roles in the future of the life science industry. BIOCOM's fourth Annual "Celebration of Life" dinner will conclude the conference that evening. CALBIO 2006 is 14-year tradition that you can only find in California.

BIOCOM's 13th CALBIO Conference program offers attendees the most comprehensive information on building a successful company in San Diego. No matter what your company's stage of development, from start-up to commercialization, CALBIO will provide you with expert knowledge and the professional network needed for success.

Thursday May 18

San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina

CALBIO Plenary & Session 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Pre-dinner Reception 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Annual "Celebration of Life" dinner 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

San Diego Science and Engineering Fair 1200 Students Participated

By Alice Budai

An annual event called the Greater San Diego Science and Engineering Fair promotes student scientific research. Junior high and high school students present posters on research they designed and performed. Volunteer scientists are recruited as judges to walk through the myriad of posters, and winners are chosen based on the quality of the science presented.

In 1995 this entirely volunteer-run and non-profit corporation was founded, and participation has been increasing ever since. This year on March 29, 800 students from the junior division and 400 students from the senior division showed posters. To view and vote on the posters, scientists were recruited through organizations like AWIS. This year, AWIS-San Diego sent 32 judges to the scene.

There were 13 different science-related categories for the participants to choose from, and the students expressed their creativity, innovation, and interests in different ways within these categories. Although some were shyer than others, the students stood by their posters and were eager to explain what they had done. While it was impossible to meet all of the students and learn about all of their projects, a few made a memorable impression:

- ❖ One boy sampled owl droppings from his backyard in San Diego and compared them to samples he obtained from another state to the north. He detected a pH difference of nearly two points, with samples found in southern California being more acidic. The student postulated that this is a result of acid rain showing its effects within the food chain.
- ❖ A girl disagreed with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations that require all restaurants to replace their filters on sewage drains after the same period of time. She was able to show that the amount of grease disposed into sewage by burger, Mexican and Asian restaurants, as well as school cafeterias, differed significantly. According to her study, Mexican food restaurants are the worst polluters.
- ❖ Another young girl showed that a beam of light is strong enough to move a piece of metal. She made a series of modifications to increase the sensitivity of her apparatus and finally used a strand of her own hair as a low friction string to suspend a piece of aluminum to show the scientific phenomenon.

The final awards went to two students in the senior division and five in the junior division. The winners of the Science Fair were Dominiquia Moore with *DNA Extraction*, Leslie Manjarrez with *Predicting Altitude: The Science Behind Rocket Science*, Olivia Gardner with *Girls are Better Readers (or Are They)?*, Michelle Dewez with *Traffic Light Safety and Improvement*, Nina Sohrabi with *Do You Hear What I Hear?*, Heather Barnes with *Effects of Arrhenius Accelerated Aging on O-Ring*, and Cassandra Stephens with *How Effective is Burlap, Canvas and Plastic at Preventing Mudslides?* An awards and recognition reception will be held for the winners.

National News

By Siobhan Malany

“Larry Summers Resigned and AWIS is in the Black¹”

“National News” is a new biannual column intended to keep local San Diego members engaged with AWIS National by reporting on issues covered at National Board meetings.



Clemmons

I spoke with Sonya Summerour Clemmons, a member of the San Diego chapter and councilor to the National Board of Directors and Phoebe Leboy, Secretary of the Board that convened in February in Washington to discuss the achievements, growth and fiscal stability of AWIS National.

An important role of National AWIS as an umbrella organization to 57 chapters is one of activism. Women leaders in their fields and representatives within AWIS lobbied against Harvard President Larry Summers in response to his controversial speech about “innate differences” between men and women in math and

sciences. This activism is an example of the impact AWIS has on improving women’s lives and careers as scientists and engineers. “AWIS is an excellent model organization,” states Clemmons. Her goal as councilor is to **“create more awareness of the fact that AWIS is about bringing everyone together to reach a common goal, one of equality and fairness for everyone. AWIS is not just about women. It is about people of all colors, genders, and beliefs banding together to support societal and scientific progress.”**



Leboy

In keeping with this theme, a main topic of discussion at the National Board meeting was the establishment of a National AWIS conference. “Ideally, this meeting would culminate with a plan for AWIS activism surrounding a particular issue or group of issues, leading to a societal impact,” says Phoebe Leboy, Secretary of AWIS National. An e-mail survey was distributed to

members to conclude whether the AWIS membership would be most interested in a conference that focused on career development, mentoring, professional and family issues facing women scientists, or advocating for change to attract more women scientists. “Our preliminary data suggest that there is considerable interest in all of these topics,” says Leboy.

From a financial standpoint, AWIS is for the first time “in the black.” “This can be attributed,” explains Leboy, “mainly to having an executive director who increased revenue from magazine ads, institutional memberships, and corporate memberships. The less-good news,” she continues, “is that we still have to pay back \$23,000 that we borrowed from the AWIS Educational Foundation during the prior years. This means more fund-raising along with increased membership.” In order to create awareness of the need for corporate sponsorship of AWIS events, Clemmons started a column, called “Corporate Corner,” that will appear biannually in the *AWIS Magazine*. The San Diego chapter has strong fund-raising skills and has benefited from being in a biotech-rich environment. Clemmons states that, “this [corporate sponsorship] is something that we in San Diego take for granted. We need to successfully fundraise on a national scale.”

AWIS-San Diego is the largest and most active AWIS chapter.

We can assist National AWIS by helping other chapters organize programs and successfully fundraise, two areas where our chapter has built expertise. “I tend to speak about the accomplishments of the San Diego chapter every time I visit another chapter,” says Leboy who visited San Diego and participated in our Open House last fall. “I have spent many hours thinking about how we can duplicate its success around the country. The San Diego chapter has benefited by the high density of young women scientists in both academic and non-academic careers. The youth gives it great vitality and enthusiasm. And my theory is that the high proportion of members with non-academic careers dispersed around the region generates a need for networking and peer mentoring that permits an AWIS chapter to thrive.”

¹ Sonya Summerour Clemmons

FEATURES / OPINIONS

Quick Reference Guide to AWIS-San Diego Committees

By Hima Joshi

You've heard about all the benefits of volunteering for AWIS, but how do you know where to start? What do AWIS-San Diego volunteers do? There are 10 committees in the San Diego chapter of AWIS. Here's a quick summary of what they do and the skills you can acquire by joining them.

Committees that represent AWIS-SD to the community:
Corporate Sponsorship

- Primary activity: soliciting funds from local companies
- Skills: networking, negotiation

Membership

- Primary activity: recruiting and retaining AWIS-SD members
- Skills: networking, communication, and event planning

Newsletter

- Primary activity: producing the Newsletter
- Skills: writing, editing

Public Relations

- Primary activity: publicizing AWIS-SD
- Skills: networking, self-promotion, and marketing

Website

- Primary activity: maintaining the AWIS-SD website
- Skills: web design and maintenance, marketing, organization

Committees that plan programs and activities:
Book and Movie Club

- Primary activity: discussing books and movies
- Skills: networking, communication

Events

- Primary activity: planning AWIS-SD events
- Skills: organization, networking, and event facilitation

Strategy Sessions (and Focus Sessions)

- Primary activity: organizing members-only workshops
- Skills: public speaking, event facilitation

Committees that reach out to young scientists:
Outreach

- Primary activity: working with students in the community
- Skills: mentoring, creativity, and teaching

Scholarship

- Primary activity: awarding scholarship money to young scientists
- Skills: organization, hiring

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.

PRINCIPAL

Pfizer

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 Alexion Antibody Technologies
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 Amylin Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
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FRIEND

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 TargeGen, Inc.
 The Dow Chemical Company
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DEPARTMENTS

**Review from the AWIS-SD Book and Movie Club
 “Madame Bovary’s Ovaries-
 A Darwinian Look at Literature”**

By Peggy Wallace

Following a general theme that human beings are driven by the urge to reproduce, the authors, a father-daughter team of David P. and Nanelle R. Barash, apply themes from literature, heavy on the classics of Jane Austin, Bronte sisters, Victor Hugo, Shakespeare and Aeschylus as well as more modern works like “The First Wives Club” and “Harold and Maude.”

Normally science is based on data, but here the science was based on fiction. The book drew its examples from fiction citing Mark Twain’s “only somewhat ironic” observation, “The only difference between fiction and nonfiction is that fiction should be completely believable.”

One complaint was that the book completely ignored Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and focused on sex. Understanding character motivation as a biological imperative, does it make some of the “amazing” actions of people in fiction any less offensive or more realistic? The appeal of older men to younger women is their reproductively relevant resources.

The authors cite Jane Austin as “the poet laureate of female choice.” Her women select their men. Women “marry up” for wealth and social standing. Why are males so elaborate? They show good health, control of resources (birds’ elaborate plumage; men’s muscles/wealth) because it is more likely that mating with them will create a “Sexy Son” who is himself more likely to be selected to pass along the genes. What matters most to evolution is for your genes (though direct or indirect inheritance) to stay in the game.

We graded it a 3.25, “well-written and entertaining.”



AWIS Member News

AWIS Fellow **Lynne Friedmann** has been selected as one of six fellows for an environmental journalism program sponsored by the National Tropical Botanical Gardens (NTBG) of Hawaii. As a NTBG Fellow, Friedmann will participate in an intensive weeklong program on the island of Kauai. She will explore the living collections and document cultural, ceremonial, and traditional events representative of the Hawaiian Islands and Polynesia. The NTBG operates under a congressional charter and is dedicated to the conservation of tropical plant diversity, particularly rare and endangered species.

Hima Joshi, AWIS-SD Board member and Newsletter Committee co-chair, has accepted a tenure-track organic chemistry faculty position at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. She plans to move up to San Luis Obispo in August, and her new job begins in September. Many thanks from the newsletter committee for her expert editing, writing and leadership!

AWIS National Councilor **Sonya Summerour Clemmons** was featured last month in the book "Extraordinary Women Engineers" (<http://www.engineeringwomen.org>). The Extraordinary Women Engineers project was commissioned by the White House and many other science and engineering organizations. Clemmons is also an Athena Pinnacle Award Nominee again this year. Pinnacle Awards will be announced on April 25.

Joanne Mullen, a ten-year member of AWIS-San Diego, is pulling up stakes after living in San Diego for 25 years! Dubbed "Comma Queen" by her editor colleagues, Joanne participated in editing not only the first online AWIS-San Diego Newsletter, launched in November 2001 under the guidance of former Newsletter Committee Chairperson Barbara Armstrong, but every edition that has followed. Although she looks forward to a new chapter in life, living in her family home on the shores of Long Lake, Naples, Maine (25 miles from Portland), Joanne will miss AWIS-San Diego and her Newsletter colleagues and friends! Thank you to Joanne for all the years of editing the AWIS newsletter!

In this section of the Newsletter, we report on the accomplishments (new jobs, promotions, awards, publications, etc.) of AWIS-SD members. If you have any news to report, send it to Hima Joshi at hjoshi@sandiego.edu or Janice Payne at Janice_payne@hotmail.com and write "AWIS Member News" in the subject heading.

Not getting AWIS-SD member e-mails?

Update your contact information!

Go to the member services page using the following link:
<https://www.sgmeet.com/awis/memberlogin.asp>

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).

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.

May/June Newsletter staff:

Alicia Bradbury	Alice Budai	Hima Joshi
Ying Liu	Siobhan Malany	
Janice Payne	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 Hima Joshi (hjoshi@sandiego.edu) or Janice Payne (janice_payne@hotmail.com). News articles should not exceed 250 words, and event summaries may be between 500 and 1000 words. Feature articles (special-interest stories and profiles) should not exceed 1000 words. The submission deadline for the next issue is June 2, 2006.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT



San Diego Chapter

Website: <http://awis.npaci.edu>

E-mail: AWISSD@hotmail.com

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 1200 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 650
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IMPORTANT CONTACTS

AWIS Board

	<u>Name</u>
President	Karin Zeh
Past President	Janet White
Treasurer	Kathy Ogilvie
Secretary	Jenny Chaplin
Member at Large	Sheela Talwalker
	Hima Joshi
	Holly Heaslet Soutter
	Susan Myers Fitch
	Elizabeth Yoder

To contact the Board, visit the following website:
<http://awis.npaci.edu/officers/biographies.htm>

AWIS National Councilor (San Diego Chapter)

Sonya Summerour Clemmons

To contact Sonya, visit the following website:
<http://www.awis.org/network/board.html>

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Chair(s)</u>
Book and Movie Club	Alice Budai
	Amy Cullinan
Corporate Sponsorship	Robin Rosenfeld
	Sandra Rickert
Events	Cindy Atwell
	Grace Yang
Membership	Julie Kinyoun
	Lisa Whalen
Newsletter	Janice Payne
	Hima Joshi
Outreach	Alicia Bicknell
	Holly Heaslet
	Susy McKay
Public Relations	Shraddha Chaplot
Scholarship	Jenafer Evans
Strategy Sessions	Frances Putkey
Website	Barbara Armstrong

To contact the committee chairs, visit the following website:
<http://awis.npaci.edu/officers/committeechairs.htm>