

AWIS Newsletter

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Bimonthly Newsletter for San Diego's local chapter - Association for Women in Science

May/June 1996

AWIS Board Nominations Needed

It's that time of year again! AWIS - San Diego will be holding their annual election for four openings on the AWIS San Diego Board '96-'97. The four-member AWIS San Diego Board meets once a month to plan on-going programs and special events, including identifying speakers for monthly meetings, producing and distributing meeting announcements and the chapter newsletters, maintaining the mail list database, budgeting income from members' dues and fund raising efforts, as well as other related duties.

If you know of someone who you feel would be an excellent AWIS Board candidate, please make your nominations by sending e-mail to meclark@ucsd.edu or calling Melody at 619-534-1762 before May 31, 1996. Election will be held in June '96.

AWIS 25th Anniversary Party

On Saturday, April 27, 1996 our local chapter hosted a celebration of the founding of National AWIS 25 years ago, and the founding of our San Diego chapter 10 years ago, at the Natural History Museum in Balboa Park. The 150 people in attendance enjoyed great food, champagne, interesting exhibits, and a live jazz band. In addition, we recognized past and present AWIS board members and honored our first AWIS fellow, Dr. Pamela Surko a senior computer scientist specializing in artificial intelligence, who also serves as chief technical adviser to an SAIC Sector Manager (managing 2000 employees).

The event provided an excellent opportunity to catch up with old friends, meet some of our newer members, and "network" — all while having a great time. In an effort to coordinate with other women scientist in San Diego, booths were set up by the Society of Women Engineers (SWE), Graduate Women in Science (GWIS), and Moms in Science.

The AWIS-San Diego 25th/10th Anniversary Committee and the AWIS-San Diego 1996 Board would like to thank the following organizations for their support. The success of this event was due in great part to the generous contributions of the following organizations.

Gold Level:

Science Applications International Corporation
Brown Martin Haller & McClain
Houghten Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
The San Diego Biotechnology Newsletter
The San Diego Natural History Museum

Silver Level:

Isis Pharmaceuticals
Hybritech Incorporated
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Bronze Level:

The Scripps Research Institute
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Sunset Valet Service
Society of Women Engineers
L'Auberge-Del Mar Resort and Spa
Steven Birch Aquarium-Museum, SIO, UCSD
Reuben H. Fleet Space Theater & Science Center

A Special Thank You

Diana Martini, Chair of the AWIS 25th/10th Anniversary Committee would like to express her appreciation for all of the effort put forth by so many to develop, organize and successfully stage the AWIS Anniversary Party, and would especially like to thank her committee for their energy, dependability, perseverance, patience and good humor throughout the process:

Gail Butler	Isabel Corcos
Lynne Friedmann	Denise Hickey
Hui Sun Kim	Laura Lieberman
Sue Moore	Grace Nakayama
Christina Stamos-Pfeiffer	Elinor Williams

Science Fair Winners

Congratulations to this year's AWIS Science Fair Award winners. The junior high winners are Marci Pack and Arietta Fleming-Davies. The senior high winners are Jasmine Pedrosa and Van Nguyen.

Thank you to those who participated. This year's judges were Barbara Armstrong, Melody Clark, Emelyn Eldredge, Csilla Fenczik, Liz Baker, Ann Grow, Denise

Hickey, Andria Lee, Prabha Dias, Diana Martini, Sandra Slivka, Silka Thode, and Jennifer Royce.

Join us on May 22, at 6:30 - 8:00 pm, for AWIS San Diego's Science Fair Award ceremony at Qualcomm, Inc. 6455 Lusk Blvd., 1st Floor Auditorium. Hear these young women present their science projects and findings. For more information contact Jennifer Royce at 619-565-6479 or e-mail: jroyce@scripps.edu.

Five Members of UCSD Faculty Elected to National Academy of Sciences

Five members of the faculty of the University of California, San Diego have been elected this year to the prestigious National Academy of Sciences.

The five are: Maarten J. Chrispeels, Charles S. Cox, K.C. Nicolaou, Susan Taylor (professor of chemistry and biochemistry and a senior fellow at the San Diego Supercomputer Center), and Andrew J. Viterbi.

Members are elected in recognition of their distinguished achievements in original research.

For the past several years, Taylor's lab has been studying an important family of regulatory enzymes called protein kinases. In living systems, processes including cell growth and division, tissue differentiation in embryos, memory and thought, and most of the complex instructions for cellular changes from birth to death are regulated by this family of enzymes.

Faulty regulation of kinases has been linked to several diseases, including immunodeficiency diseases, diabetes, cancers, Alzheimer's disease, Lou Gehrig's disease and myotonic dystrophy.

In 1991, a team of researchers led by Taylor—codirector of the Computational Center for Macromolecular Structure—solved and published the three-dimensional structure of a member of the kinase family. Since then, the structure has been used as a template to solve and model the structures of other kinase molecules.

The National Academy of Sciences was established in 1863 by a congressional act of incorporation, signed by Abraham Lincoln. The organization was set up to act as an official adviser to the Federal Government in any matter of science or technology.

Seeking Applicants

The San Diego County Commission on the Status of Women is seeking applicants for three vacancies on the Commission this year.

Anyone interested in applying is encouraged to attend an upcoming Commission meeting on June 19 at 4:30 p.m. at the San Diego Association of Realtors offices located at 2231 Camino del Rio South, San Diego.

For more information on the application procedure call Tracy Morgan Hollingsworth at 619-291-3714 ext. 110. Also needed are your resume and any support letters or information.

Diversity in Biotech

At our March General meeting, 3 panelists discussed careers in High Technology with respect to the hiring and promoting of women and other minorities. One of the panelists, Pauline Parry Ph.D., reported that by conducting a small, informal survey of Biotech companies in La Jolla, she found that none had affirmative action hiring policies. She felt that the number of women and minorities entering into high tech careers was increasing, but, the managerial positions were still dominated by white men. Pauline felt that before the workplace was going to change, attitudes had to change and that affirmative action policies were not effective.

Sandra Daley, M.D. felt that affirmative action policies were helpful for companies because it makes people aware that in hiring, their companies should be representative of the diversity of ethnic background in the country. She felt that affirmative action policies helped her, because without them, she would not have been taken seriously as a student and in the workplace. She also felt that it is important to encourage young people to study science so that they are able to compete in school and in the workplace. She devotes some of her time as a volunteer with a San Diego Junior High.

Teresa Medina, past president of the Society of Hispanic Professionals, stated that affirmative action policies are necessary for increasing hiring opportunities for minorities (in order to get government contracts, companies are also evaluated for their compliance with federal affirmative action policies.) She is also an activist in her company for hiring and promoting minorities within her

company. She also feels that it is important to contact young people and encourage them to take courses which will be necessary to enter into the high tech fields.

Grace Nakayama, President of GWIS, said she wasn't sure if affirmative action policies were helpful, or if she felt that she had been discriminated against in school or in the workplace. She described her experience moving from California to the east coast where she attended graduate school and remarked that although there were many Asians in the schools in California, the experience in the east coast was quite the opposite. She also talked about many of the mentoring programs that GWIS runs.

Most of the panelists felt that it was important for us to encourage young people to study science if we want the workplace to change. AWIS has a number of opportunities for you to get involved. There is a speakers bureau, we will be organizing a group of AWIS members to help a Science Olympiad team in the Fall and Winter of this year, and we are working with teachers to develop a workbook of hands-on science experiments. If you would like to work with us on any of these projects, or if you have other ideas for projects please contact Barbara Armstrong at Barbara_Armstrong@Sequana.com or call the AWIS voice mail at 619-687-5580.

You're Invited!

Graduate Women in Science (GWIS) will be holding its spring luncheon on Saturday May 18, at 11:30 am. It will be held at the University of San Diego (USD) in the Faculty Dining Room of the University Center. The featured speaker is Dr. Alice B. Hayes, who is the president of USD. She has a Ph.D. in biology and will be speaking on Women Scientists and Leadership. The cost is \$15 per person, and reservations are necessary. For more information or to make reservations, please call Dr. Patricia Shaffer at 619-260-4034.

Keep Up the Great Work

As editor of our newsletter, I had the privilege of interviewing Grete Hemmingsen. In 1989, Grete's science fair project was selected by AWIS San Diego as one of the junior high awards. This year she is graduating from UC Berkeley and will be attending medical school at UCSF in the fall.

Grete felt that she was very lucky to have attended a really good public school, La Jolla High. While in high school she

was able to take a lot of college prep classes, attend community college, and enroll in UCSD classes. All of these extra units allowed her to enter UCB as a sophomore. She felt she was "absolutely" prepared for the college-level workload, thus completed her bachelor degree in 4 years without having to go to summer school. Grete's science fair projects were the most important factor in preparing her for labs in college. The process of learning what an experiment is and what controls are, helped her to get started quickly and put her at a level above her peers. Speaking to judges helped her skills in good communication. Grete saw many of her peers who coasted through high school with A's and B's, not know how to tackle problems and manage their time, but felt that high school had provided her more training on how to handle these issues.

A message she had to high school students and teachers was to take what they are doing seriously. Although she has always been interested in science and would have gone into it regardless of the science award, winning built her confidence to succeed and made her want to come back and do more. Her biggest surprise in college was getting a 4.0 GPA. The most difficult part of college was the personal sacrifices of not being able to go out and party as much as her friends. Her advice to junior and high school women is to get into computers early and to pursue them as much as you can. And above all not to be swayed from science even though it may "not be cool". If you really enjoy it, do a science fair project.

Our conversation ended with her advice to AWIS members. "I'm impressed by women in science, especially the older women scientists and well aware of obstacles they had to go through." Grete commends AWIS for their outreach programs to encourage women to study.

About the AWIS Newsletter

The AWIS Newsletter is published bimonthly and provides AWIS members and supporters with information on chapter activities, career developments, and issues related to women in science. The newsletter is free to AWIS members. Subscription rate for nonmembers is \$20 a year.

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Csilla Fenczik,	
Barbara Armstrong	Assistant Editors

Send news items and suggestion to Csilla Fenczik, Attn: AWIS Newsletter, 127 El Portal, Encinitas, CA 92024. If you would like your article to be included in the next issue, please send your items in by June 24, 1996. Csilla may also be contacted for AWIS membership information or call the AWIS voice mail at 619-687-5580.