



"Dedicated to achieving equity and full participation for women in science, technology, and engineering"

Association for Women in Science Chicago Area Chapter Spring 2007 Newsletter

The AWIS website tells us:

AWIS was founded in 1971 at the annual meeting of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, after a series of champagne brunches organized by the informal women's caucus. AWIS focused on advocacy for women in science across all scientific and technical disciplines and at all educational levels.

Our Chicago chapter was founded to sue the NIH and demand that they place women on their review panels. They sued, and they won.

It is now 2007, 36 years later. *Are we done yet?*

The answer is a resounding no. This has been made clear most recently by the National Academy of Sciences report *Beyond Bias and Barriers, Fulfilling the Potential of Women in Academic Science and Engineering*. The NIH has been quick to respond to the report.

What is *our* response?

In many ways, the initiatives proposed in the report are already in accordance with the goals and mission statement of our chapter:

- To work with local and national groups to break down barriers to promote advancement of women in science
- To enforce standards of equity
- To cultivate communication and relationships between women in academia and non-academia

To see what we have done and plan to do, please keep reading. We have been very active in serving as mentors and role models to both young women and men through our service programming. We initiated panel discussions and networking events, and plan to do more in the future. At the end the month we have an opportunity to participate in a panel event in conjunction with the ACS meeting, celebrating 80 years of the women's chemist committee, and learning how we can all work together.

AWIS Chicago would like to be the voice of women in science in Chicago. Lend us your voice. We encourage you to stop in at a meeting, check out our online book club, or send us an email at awischicago@yahoo.com.

Chicago Chapter Board Members

President

Heather Behanna

VP for Programs

Theresa Peterson

VP for Membership

Beth Schubert

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Annette Gilchrist

VP for Public Relations

Silvia Novelli

VP for Service

Joy Ramos

VP for Finance

Position open

VP for Sponsorship

Position open

Newsletter Editor

Position open

AWIS Chicago Recent Events

Wines of the World

On October 26th, the chapter hosted a wine tasting event at the Lurie Atrium, courtesy of a generous donation by Invitrogen. Meredith Mann and Crystal Kennedy from Sam's Wines provided a sampling of several different wines, all which were produced by women! In addition to the usual descriptions of the wine available for tasting, Meredith and Crystal provided a great history of each female winemaker. Despite the rainy weather, we had a great turnout for our first networking/social event of the fall, and all who attended enjoyed a fun evening drinking good wine and meeting new friends.



From the Bench to the Boardroom

On November 6th, the chapter hosted a panel discussion on the challenges of starting up a company and working for a startup. Panelists included Nancy Sullivan from Keracure, Dimitra Georganopoulou from Ohmx, Annette Gilchrist from Caden Biosciences, and Jim Bray from ITEC. The audience learned how and when to think about turning research ideas into startup companies and where to go to find the funding and resources to make it happen. We also learned the challenges and benefits that go along with working for a startup, not the least of being the cool job titles you can have! By the end of the evening, all the audience members were truly inspired by the panelists' entrepreneurial spirit!



AWIS Chicago Service Corner

Making a Difference

By Joy Ramos

AWIS-Chicago ramped up its participation in science education and outreach activities this year and members have been involved in quite a few events around the Chicago area. First, in the early fall of 2006, we participated in Chicago's first ever "Chicago Science Expedition" by providing resource speakers for the event's "Science Cafés", coffee-house discussions on relevant issues in science facilitated by a local expert on the field. The casual location and format of the event helped encourage people to ask questions and discuss the issues freely with the speaker and with other people in the audience. This event was jointly sponsored by Starbucks and they generously offered various branches in Chicago as the location for different science cafés. There was a wide range of topics covered in the whole series, from medicine to art restoration. AWIS was able to provide distinguished speakers such as: Dr. Brenda Russell (UIC), who talked about her stem cell research and the issues surrounding it with people from the community around Little Italy, and Dr. Kelly Fahrback (NU), who discussed her work on HIV with people from the Andersonville locale. We even managed to reach out and tap non-AWIS members such as Dr. Michael Kaminski (Argonne) who talked about his work on energy resources with the community around Piper's Alley.

Second, AWIS-Chicago members responded with much enthusiasm to the call for science fair judges in public and private schools in the Chicago area. We provided a total of 13 judges for science fairs held in A.N. Pritzker School (Wicker Park), Orozco school (Pilsen) and Clemente High School (Humboldt Park). These AWIS members braved the snowstorms that week in December, 2006 to talk to the budding scientists and encourage them to continue their scientific exploration.

Third, two AWIS-Chicago members, Dr. Elizabeth Smith (Somax Consulting) and Joy Ramos (NU), were featured speakers in early winter 2007 for Northwestern's Center for Talent Development's Saturday Enrichment Program. They talked to parents of academically gifted children on the different "science careers for men and women" and gamely fielded a wide range of questions from the audience.

AWIS-Chicago's outreach events don't end there! We were tapped by Argonne National Labs to participate in their upcoming annual "Science Careers in Search of Women", a highly successful conference for high school girls in the greater Chicago area to encourage them to pursue careers in science. Cynthia Daniels (NU) will be one of the featured speakers in the Engineering career panel.

We will also once again participate in Chicago's Student Science Fair by presenting AWIS Special Awards to young girls who show the most promise and potential as a budding scientist. The Fair will be held on Mar. 23rd, 2007 at the Museum of Science and Industry. It will feature the best science projects from all over Chicago and is the last stage before the best students advance to the international INTEL Science and Engineering Fair in May in New Mexico.

The active participation of AWIS in these outreach activities is a wonderful testament to how committed our members are to reaching out and giving something back to the community. If you have a great idea for an outreach activity or want to be more involved, contact me at joyramos@gmail.com. Or consider running for my position as VP-Service in the AWIS-Chicago elections this June! This is a great opportunity for someone who would like to be more actively involved in science education and outreach and allows one to meet with a variety of people who have a similar passion for it.

Check out our upcoming events!

*Chicago 2007 ACS Meeting
Special Event*

**Women Chemists
Committee Open Meeting
and Celebration of 80 Years
of Women in Science**



A panel discussion, poster session and reception as part of the Celebration of the 80th anniversary of the Women Chemists Committee.

**Saturday, March 24, 2007
From 5:00pm to 6:30pm**
Hyatt Regency Chicago
151 East Wacker Drive
Columbus EF Room

**Give an AWIS Special
Award at the 57th Annual
Chicago Public Schools
Science Fair!**

**March 23, 2007
8a.m.-12p.m.
Museum of Science and
Industry, Chicago**



AWIS members will be taking part of this momentous occasion by volunteer as judges at this year's Science Fair. Volunteers will help AWIS-Chicago choose which young girls show the most promise and deserve an AWIS Special Award.

**AWIS Chicago Chapter
General Meeting**

Featuring guest speaker
Prof. Holly Falk-Krzesinski
"Developing a Career Path in
Sciences and Engineering"

**May 14th, 6:30 p.m
Location TBA**

Join us for the talk, dinner, networking, and the presentation of the AWIS Chicago Chapter Distinguished Service Award



**Get ready
for the
Shamrock
Shuffle!**



*Enjoy the lakefront
with an AWIS
run/walk (3-6 miles)
followed by
coffee/breakfast*
**Sunday mornings,
lakefront**

You don't have to be in training for a race to come run! Locations will vary, depending on participants

NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED!!
To RSVP, or for questions
email awischicago@yahoo.com



**Introducing the
AWIS Chicago
Book Club!**

Starting this spring, we will be starting a book club to discuss books of interest to women in science. Discussions will be held online and in various Chicagoland locations.

Our first selection is:
"Every Other Thursday" by Ellen Daniell

Join us:

April 12th 6:00-7:30p.m - Downtown
April 17th 6:00-7:30p.m - Evanston
April 23rd 6:00-7:30p.m near U. Chicago
and online at:

<http://groups.msn.com/AWIS-ChicagoBookClub>

To RSVP, email awischicago@yahoo.com
Meeting places/directions to be listed on
our website: www.awis-chicago.org



Calling for Nominations for the AWIS Chicago Chapter Distinguished Service Award

Know someone who has made an outstanding contribution to the chapter?
Send a letter of nomination to awischicago@yahoo.com
Nominations must be received by April 15th.
The award will be presented at the General Chapter Meeting on May 14th.

Announcing Chapter Elections in June!

Interested in getting more involved in AWIS? Consider running for an office! Learn more about the duties of each position below, or contact awischicago@yahoo.com for more information:

President: coordinates the business of the chapter, calls and presides at all chapter and executive board (EB) meetings, prepares business meeting agendas, serves as an ex officio member of all committees, designates representatives of AWIS-CAC to other organizations or events, prepares and presents the yearly chapter status report at the Annual Chapter Meeting, performs other duties incident to the office as required by the Constitution and Bylaws, or by the EB, and represents or designates a representative of AWIS-CAC at national meetings when such attendance is authorized by the EB.

Vice President for Communications: assumes primary responsibility for recording the activities of the EB and the chapter, prepares minutes of EB. meetings, prepares other reports as requested by AWIS, updates the Web Site routinely, and publicizes all meetings and events of the chapter by any means available to chapter members.

Vice President for Membership: assumes primary responsibility for managing the list of members of AWIS-CAC, provides current member contact information as needed, and publishes a chapter membership directory.

Vice President for Programs: assumes primary responsibility for coordinating the program activities of the chapter (e.g. chapter meetings, award ceremonies, panel discussions, fund-raising events, or other special programs).

Vice President for Service: assumes primary responsibility for being the liaison between AWIS-CAC and other groups in need of AWIS members' science expertise for education and outreach activities, and coordinating and documenting AWIS members' participation in these events.

Vice President for Finance: assumes primary responsibility for conducting the financial business of AWIS-CAC, including bank transactions, tax issues, and preparing financial statements annually, or at the request of the EB.

Vice President for Sponsorship: assumes primary responsibility for all fundraising duties for the chapter.

Newsletter Editor: assumes primary responsibility for editing and publishing the AWIS-CAC newsletter.

The Chicago Chapter of AWIS is trying to revitalize its membership through a number of social, networking, educational, and outreach activities. Whether you're new to the chapter or haven't been involved in a while, take a minute to visit our chapter website at www.awis-chicago.org Or better yet, drop us an email at awischicago@yahoo.com to tell us what you'd like to see from the chapter.

Hope to see you at our next event!