
AWIS-PHL News



September 2003

President's Update

Nancy Rawson, President

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to our 2003-2004 season of AWIS-PHL events! First, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who participates in the planning and execution of our chapter activities and especially the Board members who make everything possible. I am very honored to be working with such an impressive group of caring, dedicated and talented people. I am especially pleased to welcome our new President-Elect, Suzanne McCahan and Secretary, Marian Knechel! I would also like to welcome two new members who have volunteered to take an active part in the machinery of the organization by participating in Program planning and spearheading the effort to organize our student workshop (Tara Barrett) and maintaining our membership list and also helping on publicity for the workshop (Melanie Foy)!

So, what are the goals of AWIS and how do we fit as a chapter?

AWIS is dedicated to achieving equity and full participation for women in science, mathematics, engineering and technology. AWIS seeks to achieve this goal by providing a network, resources and focal point for the voices of women everywhere working towards gender equity for women.

Our chapter has been a local outpost of this effort since 1987 and has done an outstanding job of providing opportunities and resources for networking, career development, intellectual exchange and personal growth. Through our workshops, we have made significant contributions in disseminating information about careers in science to young women at the high school and college levels. These are the things we do best! Where could we do better? I see a couple of spots that I would like to focus

my efforts on in the coming months. One is publicity. We have done a great job with our new website and have added a number of standard contacts to our circulation list. With the help of Melanie and anyone else who would like to get involved, I would like to insure that every academic institution, business, hospital and government facility in the Delaware Valley area that employs technical/scientific workers knows about us! Ideally, this will need someone to focus on each arena and develop contacts that will post flyers and forward emails. We have a lot of organizations among our membership already; I would like to increase that by 10% in the coming year! Having a contact list that is linked to organization names could also assist us when it comes time to solicit funding for special projects.

Another area I see as an important continuing focus is outreach. We are planning a workshop in November for women college students who are in the planning stages of their 'life after college'. The structure of this program will enable many students to interact with a diverse group of women scientists on a one-on-one basis and is certain to be a great experience for participants and presenters alike! I would also like to follow-up on our great effort for high school students last year by establishing contact with area high school science teachers to let them know about AWIS and provide opportunities for them to use our resources and expertise to help in their efforts to convey the excitement and rewards of a career in science to the young women in their classes.

I am looking forward to working with all of you in the coming months to carry out the work of AWIS – mentoring, networking and supporting the women scientists in the Delaware Valley!

Web Address and Webmaster

Our webmaster is Becky Pearson. She can be contacted at webmaster@awisphl.org. We can be found on the web at the URL below.

AWIS on the WebAWIS-PHL: <http://www.awisphl.org/>National AWIS: <http://www.awis.org/>**Upcoming AWIS-PHL Events**

September 24, 2003 Networking Meeting. The following organizations have been invited for an evening of networking activities: Women Chemists Committee (WCC-ACS), National Organization of Black Chemists & Chemical Engineers (Delaware Valley-NOBCCChE), and Asian Pacific American Network in Agriculture (APANA). Eastern Regional Research Center – USDA.

November 15, 2003 AWIS Career Workshop. A program for undergraduate women interested in careers in the Sciences. Location: Creese Center - Behrakis Grand Hall, Drexel University, 32nd and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia. Download a registration form from our website. Contact careerprogram@awisphl.org for more information.

2003 Elizabeth W. Bingham Award

Dr. Elinor Cantor, President, C.J. Resources, Inc. receives the 2003 Elizabeth W. Bingham Award from Dr. Angela Steel, president of AWIS-PHL, the Philadelphia Chapter of the Association for Women in Science. The award is given every year to honor an outstanding scientist who has significantly influenced the advancement of women in science. Dr. Cantor

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gave a very inspiring presentation entitled “What’s a Nice Girl Like Me Doing in a Place Like This.” Others honored at the annual awards dinner, held at Arcadia University, Glenside, PA, on May 21, 2003, included Pamela L. Geller, University of Pennsylvania, winner of the Robert E. Davies Student Travel Award; Regine Choe, University of Pennsylvania, winner of the University of Pennsylvania Women's Club Student Travel Award (pictured below with Dr. Eleni Anni, past-president of AWIS-PHL); and Raji Shankar, Havertown High School, winner of the AWIS-PHL sponsored Delaware Valley Science Council Award.

**Online Articles of Interest**

Listing here does not mean that AWIS-PHL endorses the views of these sites; they are simply provided for general interest.

Article about women in the information technology field “Inspiring Women” by Bea Mulzer:

<http://www.mcpmag.com/salariesurveys/article.asp?EditorialsID=55>

First in a series of four articles on ‘Women without Tenure’ in Science’s Next Wave by Cathy Ann Trower. Includes Links to the successive articles:

<http://nextwave.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/2001/09/12/3>

Some general stats on gender differences in science careers posted by Bayer U.S.:

http://www.bayerus.com/msms/news/pages/bacground/april_98a.html

General Contentment Masks Gender Gap in First AAAS Salary and Job Survey by **Constance Holden**

<http://recruit.sciencemag.org/feature/salsurvey/v294i5541p396.htm>

If you see an interesting article, send us the link or a copy and we'll make it available either through our website or newsletter!

Dr. Donna Murasko named Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Drexel University

An excerpt from a message to the Drexel Community from Provost Harvill C. Eaton

"I am delighted to announce that after a national search I have appointed Donna Murasko, Ph.D. to the position of Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Murasko has served as Interim Dean of the College with clear distinction. She joined Drexel as Vice Provost after an outstanding career that began at the Medical College of Pennsylvania, continued at Allegheny University of the Health Sciences and then at MCP Hahnemann University where she rose to the rank of Professor and served as Chair of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology.

The appointment of Dean Murasko represents a point of new beginning for the College."

"The Science of Ergonomics"



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On April 22, 2003 the AWIS-PHL chapter sponsored a presentation on "The Science of Ergonomics" by Lisa Clayton, BSN, MBA, ergonomics consultant for DuPont Safety Resources. This presentation was from the perspective of the disciplines that ergonomics addresses. The speaker covered anthropometry, biomechanics, physiology, cognition, and kinesiology. Shown below is Dr. Angela Steel with Lisa, helping to demonstrate how we each have a different range of motion. Ergonomics studies how to accommodate the differences between individuals. Another demonstration of our differences that evening was everyone testing their grip strength, which also varied greatly.



After the meeting, Lisa provided the following information on Ergonomics in the Office, courtesy of DuPont Safety Resources. It will be published over several newsletters.

Ergonomics is a science, which deals with the interface between humans and their environment. The goal of ergonomics is to ensure that job tasks match people's capabilities. Tools, equipment and facilities must take individual differences into account. Human vary in size, strength, endurance capabilities, ranges of motions, comfort levels and thought processes.

Chair

Your office chair becomes a critical piece of equipment if you spend more than 3 hours a day (total) seated in it. Prolonged sitting (greater

than one hour without a stretch break) causes muscle fatigue and contributes to the degeneration of discs in your spine.

The chair's "fit" is important. As you sit against the back of the chair you should feel the chair offering support to your lower back (lumbar region). Your chair may have adjustment features, which allow you to move the support up and down for comfortable positioning.

As you lean against the back support, the chair should be of a depth, which allows about 2" to 3" of space from the seat's front edge to the back of your knee/calf. If you measure less than this, your chair may be too deep, cutting circulation to your lower extremities. If you measure much more, your chair may be too shallow for your height.

If you are a large person, and your chair has armrests, make sure they are not pushing in on your hips. If so, a wider seat is a wise choice. Armrests are an option, but if your chair has them, make sure that they are not so high that they are forcing your shoulders up into a shrug, or that they are interfering with your ability to pull close to your work surface.

When you are involved in desk or computer intensive activities, your chair should have the capability of being locked into an upright position. If your chair does not offer this feature, look for a tension control knob under the seat. This will allow you to tighten the tension for firmer support. If you lack both, and your chair has a tendency to pitch backward as you lean against the backrest, a different chair is in order. Lack of firm support will cause continual muscular contraction, leading to muscular fatigue, and pain.

Another feature to look for is called a "waterfall seat pan". This simply means that the front edge of the seat has a rounded, downward curvature to prevent compression on the underside of your thighs.

As a last check, determine whether or not your chair has the capability to adjust in height. Some chairs accomplish this through rotation, others by use of a lever under the seat. The presence or lack of this feature will come into play as you begin to look at your computer set-

up and desk. No matter how high you position your chair, your feet should be supported by either the floor or a footrest.

Panel Discussion on "Hot Topics in Biotechnology"



On March 25, 2003, AWIS-PHL co-sponsored a panel discussion with the Central Jersey chapter of AWIS focused on "Hot Topics in Biotechnology" at the Sheraton Bucks County Hotel in Langhorne. The four panelists were Meryle Melnicoff, Wistar Institute, Lei Tang, Schering Plough, Catherine Verna, Buchanan Ingersoll, and Sheryl Meyer, Cephalon, Inc. Topics included the importance of intellectual property, siRNA and antisense as therapeutics, and life in a start-up company that has become a profitable biotech company. There was much discussion and input from the audience.

Call for Nominations for the Robert E. Davies Student Travel Award

The Robert E. Davies Student Travel Award was established in 1993 by AWIS-PHL in memory of Professor Robert E. Davies whose life was characterized by untiring efforts toward the entry and advancement of women in science.

The Robert E. Davies Student Travel Award supports a female graduate student from the Delaware Valley region to attend a *national meeting* of the scientific society appropriate for her discipline at which she will be presenting *her own research*. Advisors are encouraged to nominate students for conferences which will provide significant exposure for the student and her work.

AWIS-PHL will make one award each year in the amount of \$500.00, to be applied to the costs of transportation, registration, housing, and meals for the student. Should the actual

costs exceed \$500.00, those additional costs must be covered by other resources available to the student. The recipient will present AWIS-PHL with a published or final abstract of the work presented at the meeting and an accounting for \$500.00 of meeting-related expenses.

The application deadline is **December 1** for conferences held any time during the following calendar year.

Submit applications for the 2003-2004 award to: Dr. Angela Steel (see e-mail address on list).

If you haven't joined (or rejoined) AWIS, please consider doing so. Your membership dues help support our section and allow us to present programs of interest to all. Contact Edyth Malin for membership forms.

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AWIS Funding

Anne Marie Inglis, Treasurer

Did you know that almost all of the funding for AWIS-PHL comes from our members? National AWIS provides no financial support for our chapter programs or Awards. With the money we receive from your annual membership dues, we fund our newsletters, the chapter website, and the mailing of any announcements and flyers. Our meetings are self-supporting, with most of the venue space donated by those companies or universities hosting the meeting, and with meeting fees covering our additional expenses (most notably food). The 2002-2003 season included 7 programs, attended by over 300 people! This past year we also hosted a workshop at University of the Sciences in Philadelphia to increase awareness on careers in science for high school students. These sorts of special programs, poster competitions, books for our library, etc., are supported by donations from members or corporate sponsors. In addition, the AWIS-PHL chapter each year grants a travel award, the Robert E. Davies Award, to an aspiring woman scientist to present her research at a scientific meeting. This Award is supported by special donations from members, and we are building an endowment to continue to fund it into the future. Thank you all for your generous support. With your help, we will be able to continue to provide quality programs which support and encourage women in science!