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Check out the news from AWIS National!

An excerpt from AWIS National website www.awis.org

AWIS Fellow to Head NOAA

AWIS Fellow, Dr. Jane Lubchenco, one of the nation's most prominent marine biologists, will head the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the new Obama administration.

AWIS and Colleague Organizations Submit Potential Candidates for New Administration to President-Elect Barack Obama's Transition Team

AWIS and colleague organizations sent a letter of congratulations to President-Elect Barack Obama along with the names of 40 women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics who are qualified to serve in key leadership positions in the new administration. While these nominations will not be published, you can read the letter sent to President-Elect Obama via a link from the AWIS National website www.awis.org ♦

First Event of 2009 for the LA/Ventura County Chapter of AWIS

Come listen as Dr. Cynthia Larive, professor of Chemistry at UC-Riverside, shares her experiences in both industry and academia and offers helpful hints to choosing your own personalized career path. To read a brief biosketch on Dr. Larive see page 4.

“A Twisted Path Makes for an Interesting Journey”

When: **Wednesday, January 21st**
5:30 - 7:30pm

Where: **Amgen Campus**
Bldg 24 Conference Center
One Amgen Center Drive
Thousand Oaks, CA 91320

Cost: FREE

Light refreshments will be served after the presentation. Please join us and network with fellow AWIS members

Please note: you do not need to be a current AWIS member to attend this networking event! Please feel free to invite colleagues who might be interested in such an event.♦

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AWIS Member Spotlight

AWIS Member *Dr. Susan Forsburg* shares her perspective on AWIS in an interview with Dr. Helen McBride

Q: What is your current job?

A: Professor of Biological Sciences Professor of Biological Sciences at University of Southern California College (USC)

Q: How did you end up in your current position? When did you know you wanted to do it?

A: I was recruited in 2004 as part of USC's Senior Faculty Hiring Initiative after being at the Salk Institute in San Diego for 11 years.

I have been focused on a career in academia since I was an undergraduate.

Q: What is the best thing about your job?

A: Freedom. The freedom to work on whatever research question I can get funded.

Q: What is the thing you like least about your job?

A: Grantwriting

Q: How long have you been a member of AWIS?

A: As a graduate student and postdoc, I was an on and off member, but then in 1994 I was asked to participate in the Bi-annual Bioscience Panel discussion for my local San Diego chapter and was hooked.

Q: What benefits do you see from AWIS membership?

A: The two primary benefits are opportunities for career development and for networking. Although there is a focus on "alternative" careers being highlighted (what's so alternative about them?), I like the opportunity to get together with other women scientists to share ideas and tools for professional growth. I joined the AWIS board in 2002 and have interacted with several of the past AWIS presidents. This experience provided me with resources to develop areas of my own career, and I credit my AAAS Fellow status (received in 2004) in part because of the AWIS nomination I received.

Q: Really briefly (a phrase or two), what advice do you have for women in the field of science?

A: First, our own worst enemy is our fear of failure. If women don't try, they will never know whether they could have achieved their goals. Second, be proactive not reactive to situations. Own the situation and be in charge of it. Don't let the situation drive you. ♦

Are you looking for a creative outlet for your IT skills? Do you have experience building and maintaining websites? If yes, then we have the opportunity for you!

The LA/VC Chapter of AWIS is in need of a webmaster. If you are interested, please contact Safura Babu-Khan at safurab@amgen.com or send an email to awis-laventura-county@googlegroups.com

AWIS Member Spotlight

The AWIS Member Spotlight will be a recurring feature in our quarterly newsletter. Future Spotlights will feature national AWIS Chapter Members:

- Dr. Alice Huang
Sr. Faculty Associate in Biology
California Institute of Technology

If you know a member who you would like to see featured, please let us know! If you are a member and would like to be featured, please contact us at awis-laventura-county@googlegroups.com ♦

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NEXT MEETING

JANUARY 21ST, 2009

AMGEN

QUARTERLY MEETINGS

APRIL 2009

PLACE – LA COUNTY

JULY 2009

PLACE – VENTURA COUNTY

“Non-Traditional Careers...Off the Beaten Path...”

OCTOBER 2009

PLACE – LA COUNTY

NETWORKING EVENTS

We will be planning for monthly networking events during months we do not have a quarterly meeting – contact us if you are interested in helping to organize these events!

Questions? Ideas for future meetings/newsletter?
Contact us:
awis-laventura-county@googlegroups.com

First LA/VC Networking Event...good times, good food, good networking

Written by: Jennifer Gordon, PhD; UCLA

What better way to meet new people and share your interests than over pizza? On October 29th, 2008, the AWIS LA/VC Chapter held its first networking event at the California Pizza Kitchen in Pasadena, CA. The event was a success with 18 women, representing 5 organizations, coming together for good food and even better conversation. The event was informal and welcoming and gave everyone a chance to relax and practice those seemingly elusive “networking skills”. Conversations ranged from “how scientists study the birth of a galaxy” to “how informational interviews can benefit your career searches” and pretty much anything in between. In fact, many members lingered to chat well after the pizza and appetizers were only a distant, yet pleasant, memory. The shocking consensus was that networking is not painful at all. In fact, it’s really fun! Networking is about getting a unique opportunity to meet people with similar interests and backgrounds and find out how their personal experiences and skills shaped their career choices. It’s also about having a chance to meet really interesting people that do really interesting things (the birth of a galaxy? I mean come on...)! As our chapter grows in numbers, we plan to have similar networking events, and we hope that you can join us. Stay posted for details about future events. ♦

Unable to attend the first networking event, but still want to expand your professional network?

LA/VC AWIS Chapter members can begin taking immediate advantage of the networking opportunities provided by this organization by getting “LinkedIn”. Note, this opportunity is for members only. If you still need to join, see page 4 for details.

It is easy! Just follow these simple steps:

1. Join the LA/Ventura County of AWIS
2. Go to <http://www.linkedin.com/>
3. Sign in to your account or if you are new to LinkedIn, create your account
4. Search for the group “LAVC AWIS”
5. Select “Join this group” ♦

Interested in Getting to Know More about Dr. Cindy Larive?

A Brief Biosketch

Cynthia Larive received her B.S. degree in Chemistry in 1980 from South Dakota State University in Brookings, South Dakota and an M.S. degree in Inorganic Chemistry in 1982 from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. She was manager of the AA-ICP laboratory at the Engineering and Mining Experiment Station at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology from 1984-1988. In this capacity she performed a variety of analyses including the determination of major and minor elements in rocks and minerals and measurement of water quality for area streams. She returned to graduate school at the University of California, Riverside in 1988 and completed the Ph.D. degree in Analytical Chemistry in 1992 under the supervision of Professor Dallas Rabenstein.

In 1992 professor Larive joined the faculty of the University of Kansas as an Assistant Professor of Chemistry. She was promoted to Associate Professor in 1998 and Professor of Chemistry in 2003. From 2001-2005, she also held an appointment of Courtesy Professor in the Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry. In January 2005 she moved to the University of California - Riverside as Professor of Chemistry.

As a faculty member she has been active in curricular reform and the promotion of undergraduate research. She is the project P.I. and editor-in-chief of the Analytical Sciences Digital Library (www.asdlib.org), an Internet-based resource for instructors, students and practitioners of analytical chemistry. She is also PI of an NSF-funded REU site in Bioanalytical Science at UCR.

Dr Larive is the recipient of a number of awards. In 2005 she received an honorary doctorate from Semmelweis University in Budapest, Hungary and in 2007 was awarded the J. Calvin Giddings award for Excellence in Education from the ACS Division of Analytical Chemistry. In 2008 she was elected as a AAAS fellow. Her other honors include selection as an IUPAC fellow (2004), an award for Teaching Excellence at the University of Kansas (2002), the Eli Lilly New Faculty award (1996) and an NSF Career award (1995).

Dr. Larive's current research in bioanalytical chemistry involves the development and application of microcoil NMR probes, heparin and heparan sulfate characterization and biochemistry, application of metabolomics for chemical genomics studies in *Arabidopsis thaliana* and in rice, and NMR measurements to investigate ligand-protein interactions. She has been married for 29 years and is the mother of two daughters, Erin (24) and Megan (21). ♦

The Election Results are In!

It was not as nearly as lively of a race as the 2008 Presidential Election, but it was a milestone election for the AWIS LA/VC Chapter as it was our First Election of Officers!

The ballots have been tallied and your newly elected officers are as follows:

President: Safura Babu-Khan

A Regulatory Affairs Manager at AMGEN in Thousand Oaks working on regulatory activities regarding communication of benefit: risk assessment on Amgen's products. She also has several years of experience as a drug discovery Scientist in the Neuroscience Therapeutic Area. Her involvement with AWIS is to help promote the interests and to create opportunities for women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Safura has served as the "acting" leader of LA/VC County AWIS during the latter half of 2008.

Vice President: Jennifer Gordon

A postdoctoral researcher in the Microbiology, Immunology, and Molecular Genetics department at UCLA. She has attended AWIS meetings since she was an undergraduate. Jennifer believes that networking and social advocacy are critical components of advancing women in all stages of their careers, including young women that are just considering a future in mathematics, engineering, and the sciences. Her interests include developing mentoring relationships between the members of our chapter, as well as outreach programs that allow us to share our experiences and talents as professional women with the community.

Secretary: Laura Hoopes

Halstead-Bent Professor of Biology and Molecular Biology, Pomona College. She is active in a variety of professional activities including the Inland Empire Branch of the California Writers' Club where she holds the office of secretary. She has been a member of AWIS since 2005 and is a frequent contributor of articles for *AWIS Magazine*. Her interests include outreach activities and mentoring of girls and young women with budding interest in science careers.

Treasurer: Poornima Shubhakar

A Clinical Study Manager in Early Development Oncology at Amgen. Poornima has over 10 years of experience working in the area of drug development. She also holds a Masters in Public Health from Boston University and an MBA from USC Marshall School of Business. Poornima has been involved in the start-up committee of the LA/VC chapter of AWIS and has served as the interim treasurer. ♦