

AWIS

ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE

Los Angeles / Ventura County

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2011 LA/VC Chapter Elections Special Edition

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2011-2012 Board Elections

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(one year terms)

Get involved as a volunteer:

A great way to build your leadership experience



Dear AWIS supporter,

Have you ever been caught in that quandary where you want to apply for a job where you will use leadership skills, but the job description requires previous leadership experience and you say to yourself “I know that I can be a good leader – how do I get that initial experience to prove it?” This is the perfect opportunity for AWIS to help out! Your local AWIS chapter offers plenty of opportunities to gain leadership experience with varying levels of time commitment. Involvement as a volunteer is an efficient and worthwhile way to develop skills in project management, event planning, communication, time management and organization.

Personally, I have gained much more from being involved with AWIS than I ever would have imagined. From the opportunity to meet and work with so many amazing women that never cease to inspire me, to the leadership development I have been fortunate enough to gain as VP and President, my career has benefitted from the time I volunteered with AWIS. And, the opportunity to develop as a leader does not have to come in the form of a Chapter Board position – there are plenty of other areas of an organization with less of a time commitment where leaders are still needed. Chairing an event, making an outreach presentation to a middle or high school classroom, participating on a planning committee conference call, or organizing a networking get-together all offer the opportunity to exercise and develop the soft skills (organization, communication – written and verbal, time management, self-confidence, adaptability, and teamwork) that every employer searches for in their perfect candidate.

I challenge you to consider exploring opportunities that exist in all volunteer organizations to strengthen your soft skill set, build your resume, and develop as a person. Not to mention the chance to work with some phenomenal women linked through the common goal of promoting the success of women in science and inspiring our next generation to be successful as well. Let’s all join together on a quest to inspire each other to be the most successful women in science that we can be!



Your fellow volunteer,

Tracy Blois

AWIS LAVC Chapter President

Executive Board Positions

President: If you are someone who is passionate and enthusiastic about helping women succeed in science and engineering fields, can motivate others, run meetings effectively and are able to commit the time to lead AWIS LAVC chapter, then you should consider this position. As President you will represent this chapter externally and will be called upon to mentor others within the organization to take on leadership positions as well as provide general leadership to the chapter. The President's duties include attending all meetings, coordinating and officiating chapter activities, recruiting committee members and chapter volunteers, liaising with the National association, and connecting with other AWIS chapters and groups.

Vice President of Programming: If you are someone that can lead and motivate and prefers to focus on a specific responsibility then you should consider this position. In this role you will oversee the Event Chairs for all chapter programming. You will have many opportunities to represent and promote the chapter at events. You will support chapter activities, collaborate with the President, and work with the VP Chapter Operations to serve in the absence of the President.

Vice President of Chapter Operations: If you are someone that can lead and motivate and prefers to focus on a specific responsibility then you should consider this position. In this role you will oversee and work with the four Committee Chairs and their committees to carry out all chapter operations. You will support chapter activities, collaborate with the President, and work with the VP Programming to serve in the absence of the President.

Vice President of Finance: The VP of Finance is the fiscal officer for the chapter. The VP of Finance is in charge of funds, securities, receipts, and disbursements for the Chapter. Additionally, this role assumes the responsibility for monitoring and balancing our AWIS LAVC checking account regularly, preparing a simple summary of quarterly financial statements for the Board, submitting the Yearly Financial Summary to the IRS and the Yearly Activity Report to AWIS National. This role requires:

- ❖ Managing a list of LAVC Chapter activities
- ❖ Managing a financial ledger
- ❖ Ensuring that all chapter income is documented and deposited
- ❖ Ensuring that all approved expenses are paid for and tracked

At the conclusion of her elected term, the outgoing VP of Finance transfers all records and accounts to the newly elected VP of Finance. As required by bank policy, current account holders must accompany the newly elected VP of Finance to the bank for the transfer of accounts.

Vice President of Communications: Someone organized and able to maintain clear, consistent documents should consider this position. The VP of Communications for our chapter provides the infrastructure for all of our meetings and ensures that we maintain our chapter's history (i.e. archive). The roles of the VP of Communications include:

- ❖ Coordinating the minutes and chapter materials for all meetings and events
- ❖ Sending and archiving correspondence, documents & reports and making them available as needed
- ❖ Leading the Communications committee to oversee the newsletter, chapter website, and social media connections

Candidate Profiles

Candidate for President

Tracy M. Blois, PhD. Tracy recently transitioned from a Principal Scientist position in Quality Control Method Development and Validation at Grifols Biologicals, Inc. in Alhambra to a position in the Licensing Operations group at Amgen in Thousand Oaks. Combining her scientific expertise with experience she gained while interning in the UCLA Office of Technology Transfer as a graduate student she manages the incoming licensing opportunities at Amgen. In 2010, Tracy completed her Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at UCLA where she developed a novel method to study membrane protein folding.

Tracy began her AWIS involvement two years ago when she attended the Women in Science and Technology (WIST) conference organized by AWIS San Diego. Starting out as a volunteer with the outreach committee, Tracy became Co-Vice President in January 2010 and President in July 2010. Tracy looks forward to another productive year for the AWIS LAVC chapter with goals of:

- ❖ growing chapter membership,
- ❖ increasing member involvement at the committee level,
- ❖ securing corporate sponsorships, and
- ❖ inspiring the next generation of scientists.

Candidate for Vice-President of Programming

Sophia Jan Tsai, PhD. Dr. Sophia Tsai works at UCLA as a postdoctoral scholar in the Institute of Genomics and Proteomics, designing molecular cages that can be applied to biofuels as well as targeted drug delivery. She has also volunteered her free time to creating events and workshops that benefit members of groups she is involved in:

- ❖ Create career development programs for postdoctoral scholars to explore alternative and traditional career paths, bringing over 100 postdocs per event.
- ❖ Plan networking sessions for postdoctoral scholars to meet others at a similar stage in their careers.
- ❖ Organize career mentoring luncheons that allow graduate students and postdoctoral scholars to have an intimate discussion with leaders in various careers, choosing up to 10 participants per luncheon.
- ❖ Plan, advertise, and organize an entire workshop weekend with over 8 hours of classes, out of town instructors, and a team of volunteers. Workshops draw about 50 to 100 participants.

Dr. Tsai has also held an active role in AWIS LA/VC. To highlight a few of her responsibilities, she has:

- ❖ Planned social activities including the 2009 and 2010 Holiday Parties, Swing Dancing, a Full Moon Hike and Halloween Bowling
- ❖ Coordinated and organized monthly meetings for the UCLA Coffee Club since October 2010
- ❖ Coordinated between campuses to bring Peter Fiske to speak at UCLA, USC, and Caltech
- ❖ Contacted and secured panel speakers for the Biofuels Panel Discussion
- ❖ Played a vital role in chapter communications by creating and updating the AWIS LA/VC website, expanding the chapter's social media presence through Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn and arranging chapter teleconference meetings

If elected, Sophia will apply her experience to AWIS LA/VC program planning, meeting management, and chapter communications. Strategic planning for the chapter will start with a chapter survey and planning events for the entire year at the start of the term, according to our chapter needs/expectations. Once a general schedule has been created, milestones will be established for each event, and event leaders will be chosen. As each event approaches, we can then easily populate task lists. Through more planning, we will be able to reach out to members sooner to involve them in the planning process and help them feel more integrated into the chapter.

Candidate Profiles cont.

Candidate for Vice-President of Chapter Operations

Erin Denny. Erin is currently a graduate student in the Tumor Cell Biology department at the City of Hope. Her thesis work focuses on the mechanism of drug resistance in breast cancer. In her first year at COH, she was awarded the Berger Fellowship. She received her B.S. in Biology with a minor in Biotechnology from USC in 2009 and began graduate school the following summer. While at USC, she co-founded the Healthcare in Business Club to bring the life sciences and business students together to provide professional, academic and social activities for those interested in pursuing opportunities in the healthcare and life science industries.

Her first AWIS event was a career panel held at Amgen in the fall of 2009. She was not only impressed by the presentations of the speakers but by the women that planned and hosted the event. She immediately knew that AWIS would be a great organization to join to expand her network and assist with career development. Erin joined the planning committee shortly thereafter and became co-chair of the networking and social committee by the following spring. As an individual who is passionate about furthering the role of women in science and is committed to the AWIS mission, she believes she would make a great candidate for the VP of Chapter Operations position.

Candidate for Vice-President of Finance

Xinzhao Grace Jiang, PhD. Grace graduated from University of California at Riverside with a Ph.D. degree in Analytical Chemistry. She's a published author in Biochemistry and other scientific journals. Her professional experiences include internship at Biogen, NDF file manager at IMS and research scientist at UC Riverside. Grace joined Amgen after graduate school in 2006 as a scientist at Analytical and Formulations Science. Her major responsibility is to provide analytical support to the process development of Amgen large molecule therapeutics and lead technology development. Grace joined AWIS LA/VC chapter in July 2008. She has been an active member of the steering committee and successfully led the speaker event in Jan 2009. She is currently the VP of the chapter. In the past year, Grace has been leading the sponsorship and membership committee. She also co-led several speaker events including the future of biofuel and career opportunity in clinical research. Grace is the recipient of several awards including the Excellent Teaching Assistant Award from Northeastern University, One Star award and several Bravo awards from Amgen.

Candidate for Vice-President of Communications

April Shifflett, PhD. April is currently a post-doctoral researcher in the Microbiology, Immunology, and Molecular Genetics department at UCLA where her research focuses on the human parasite *Trichomonas vaginalis*. She received her BS degree with honors in Genetics from the University of Georgia in 1999 and then spent the following two years working as a technician in a lab at UGA studying *Trypanosoma cruzi*. April began her graduate work with Stephen L. Hajduk in 2001 working on another human pathogen, *T. brucei*. She completed my PhD in 2007 at Brown University as part of the Brown-MBL Joint Program in Biological and Environmental Sciences.

April first became involved in AWIS as a post-doctoral scientist in 2009. Meeting other women scientists, learning about their career goals and trajectories, as well as how they have met challenges that she expects to face as well, has proven to be an invaluable part of her growth as a scientist. The seminars and workshops sponsored by our chapter are diverse and informative, and she has decided to increase my involvement in this dynamic organization. In 2010, she became VP of Communications in the AWIS LA/VC chapter. Serving on the executive board of our chapter has greatly expanded my appreciation for the programs and planning that are involved in maintaining our position as a strong organization. It has also allowed her to develop additional skill sets that will serve me well as my career progresses. She is excited to again be nominated for the position of VP of Communications. If elected, April plans to use her position to help support the goals of this organization.

How to Vote in the LA/VC Chapter Elections

Timeline

Elections: June 1-10

Results announced: Monday, June 20

New officer term begins: July 1

Elections begin June 1! Vote anytime June 1 through Friday, June 10, 11:59pm) for YOUR officers. Terms begin July 1 and last for one year. You will also have the option to write-in a candidate, as well. To access the ballot, visit our website, www.awislavc.org.



Get Involved in AWIS!

Want to get more involved in AWIS? Join one of our committees! Committees are integral to the functioning of our chapter and we are always looking for new ideas to gain membership, provide outreach events and plan networking and social events.



- ❖ **Mentoring, Outreach and Professional Development Committee**
Co-Chairs: Allison Sargoy and Tracy Blois
(outreach@awislavc.org)
- ❖ **Networking and Social Committee**
Co-Chairs: Melina Grigorian and Erin Denny
(networking@awislavc.org)
- ❖ **Communications Committee**
Co-Chairs: April Shiflett and Sophia Tsai
(communications@awislavc.org)

Newsletter Co-Chairs: April Shiflett and Erin Denny
- ❖ **Membership, Sponsors and Funding Committee**
Chair: Grace Jiang (vp@awislavc.org)

Feel free to contact any of the co-chairs directly if you are interested in finding out how you can join or visit www.awislavc.org to read more about the roles of each committee!