



Association for Women in Science - Seattle Area Chapter

June Newsletter 

## ELECTIONS AT JUNE POTLUCK

The annual elections for next year's officers and committee co-chairs will take place at the June 16<sup>th</sup> potluck. The budget for next year will also be voted on. This newsletter includes a copy of the slate of nominees for three officer positions and 8 committees. There are still openings for co-chairs on several of the committees. If you are interested in adding your name to the ballot, please contact Stephanie Namciu ([snamciu@fhcrc.org](mailto:snamciu@fhcrc.org)). We would like to encourage you to become involved in AWIS. It is an opportunity to meet other women and put your leadership and organizational skills to good use.

The proposed budget for 2004-2005 is also included in this newsletter, in addition to the budget for this year and the expenses to date. Next year, we plan to put out two hard copy newsletters instead of just one, making the newsletter the highest item in our budget. Next year's special event(s) will be one or more workshops. We are increasing the budgets for publicity and programs since we plan to increase publicity through local newspapers and better distribution of flyers. The GEMS program budget will be increased to cover supplies and refreshments. We have kept the budget under our expected income from dues and contributions. You will have the opportunity to approve this budget proposal by voting on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

If you cannot attend the meeting to vote, please send your votes, or any questions you may have, to Stephanie Namciu before the meeting.

June Annual Potluck  
Wednesday  
June 16, 2004

*Sharing of good food, good friends, and good ideas. Don't miss our annual potluck event!*

Potluck 6:30 p.m.  
Elections 7:30 p.m.

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research  
Center  
Day Campus (The Hutch)  
Outdoor Courtyard

Main Street Address  
Day Campus  
1100 Fairview Ave North  
Seattle, Washington

## KIOSK AWIS SEATTLE CHAPTER

Congratulations to Amy Springer! She was promoted to the position of Associate Scientist at Seattle Biomedical Research Institute (SBRI).

## Girls in Engineering Math Science



Students demonstrated their scientific expertise for family and friends at the last meeting of the Girls in Engineering Math and Science program (GEMS) on May 18<sup>th</sup> at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. The GEMS used hands-on activities from the program to demonstrate principles of physics (using catapults), environmental health (constructing a dose-response curve), microbiology and biochemistry (metabolism of sugar and CO<sub>2</sub> production by yeast), chemistry and physics (phase changes of dry ice), molecular biology (electrophoresis), and mathematics.

The following girls from seven Seattle public middle schools received awards for their participation in GEMS: Jennifer A. Abrahamson, Rachel Alexander, Kelsey Altus, Kristi Armstrong, Felicea Banks, Rachel J. Barnecut, Rebecca Bornstein, Shantea Cardenas, Ragna Christianson, Kiara Eldred, Nina Estep, Supriti Jaya Ghosh, Kelsey Green, Isabel Harbaugh, Kaaren Harvey, Megan Hillmann, Kristin Hinnebusch, Sydney Hinnebusch, Anneliese M. Irby, Margaret Johnson, Melissa C. Kelly, Jennifer A. Lee, Sarah Masuo, Audra McCafferty, Hannah S. Neill, Amy Nguyen, Alice Opalka, Emily Pierce, Leah Smith, Helene Dannique Viger, Hayley Winninghoff, and Brenna Wyatt.

The GEMS program for 2004-2005 is recruiting mentors and program committee members. Contact the new GEMS chairperson, Natascha Mueller for more information ([tassynat@yahoo.com](mailto:tassynat@yahoo.com)).

### RURAL GIRLS – AND OTHER WOMEN – IN SCIENCE

By Melissa Phillips

Angela Ginorio has a few ideas about why women still do not possess a full presence in the academic sciences. And it isn't because they don't like math. Ginorio is the founder and director of Rural Girls in Science, a program that brings high school girls from rural areas of Washington to the University of Washington to see what it might be like to be a scientist. "Research shows that if girls are encouraged, they will pursue physics and chemistry in high school at the same rate as boys," Ginorio says. She hopes that the Rural Girls program will provide just such encouragement, not only at the high school level but through college and beyond.

Ginorio is associate professor of women's studies at the UW, with adjunct appointments in psychology and ethnic studies. Her research examines data acquired from the Rural Girls program. "We did discover that girls who came in the program were attending college and choosing science at a significantly higher rate than girls from the same schools who had not attended," Ginorio says. She recently discovered that one of her former students has been accepted into medical school at the UW, and another is a graduate student in physics in Oregon. "That's really nice to know, that some of them have gone on," she says.

The Rural Girls program has been funded by a variety of soft-money sources over the years. For several years, they were funded by the National Science Foundation, which gave them the leeway to expand the program into what they had really envisioned: a year-long involvement in rural high schools, not just with the girls, but with their teachers, counselors, and parents. The two-week summer trip to Seattle was just part of the package. Each student also worked on a scientific research project for the entire year. During these NSF-funded years, Ginorio and her colleagues looked at which components of the program made the most difference to the girls' future choices. "There were two main pieces that made a difference," she says. "One was doing the year-long research project, because that allowed them to envision themselves as scientists. And the other was coming to the campus, because that allowed them to envision themselves as college students."

Envisioning education beyond high school is a crucial step for many of these students, particularly the children of Mexican-American immigrants, says Ginorio. Many immigrants in rural Washington are undocumented, and "until this past year, there was basically no chance for them to come to the university."

That is, until a state law was passed allowing these students to receive financial aid for a college education.

While not guaranteeing assistance to anyone, this legislation “made the barrier much lower,” says Ginorio. For some students, cost is only part of the barrier. When Ginorio surveyed the program’s students, she found that 28 percent of the girls did not know any college graduates, except for their teachers and counselors. “We’re talking about people who may have an ambition to go to college, but who have not been exposed up close to that possibility.” Many of Ginorio’s students report that their parents are supportive of additional education for them, but they do not want them to venture as far away as Seattle. “They say, yeah, go to college, go to the community college down the road, where you can commute and come home at the end of each day,” Ginorio says.

And she knows what that’s like. She grew up in the countryside near a small town in Puerto Rico that has now been engulfed by San Juan. Her parents, educated only to the 8th grade themselves, insisted that their children attend college. Her mother was unsure about a masters in psychology at the University of Puerto Rico, though. And when Ginorio wanted to go to New York to Fordham University to enroll in a PhD program in social psychology, her mother was even more nervous. Her father remained supportive of whatever education she wanted, however, and her mother was appeased by Fordham’s only just relinquished status as a Jesuit university. So she went. “I understand that very traditional upbringing, the fear,” Ginorio says. “It turns out it’s okay, but people don’t know that. My parents had only gone to 8th grade, so they didn’t know what college was like.”

Today, Ginorio is encouraged by the disappearing discrepancies between science-educated high school girls and boys, but adds: “Even though girls do well in high school, they still report lower levels of satisfaction and interest” in their science classes. Many studies have shown that this trend continues in college. “What is happening in those classrooms, that young women are being discouraged? And they’re being discouraged not with their grades, because they manage to do as well as the boys. But they’re being discouraged in the sense that they don’t belong.” Ginorio thinks that feelings of exclusion are just part of the puzzle of girls’ abandonment of science careers. “Young women anticipate having a significant relationship in their future,” she says.

They often see a career in science and a complete family life as mutually exclusive. “I know a number of students who have switched to the masters instead of pursuing the

PhD because they see the faculty—especially the women faculty—and the lives they lead and they say—Uh uh. I’m not going there,” she says. “We need to know much more about how that piece plays.”

A third obstacle working against potential women scientists, Ginorio thinks, is the socialization of girls in our culture. “*Still* girls are perceived as being less competent in math, less competent in physics, having ‘*ick!*’ reactions to frogs. That’s still the popularly held image.” And what about the girls who overcome the stereotypes and the prejudices, and stay interested in science, maybe even finishing a PhD? “All those chemistry women that have been graduating in the past fifteen years—they’re going somewhere. They’re not going into academia,” says Ginorio.

Part of the blame for disillusionment with the academic world, Ginorio feels, lies with faculty who do not think that diversity is a serious academic concern. “It’s one thing to consider the concerns of women as important, but they are still only ‘women’s concerns,’ so they are not seen as integral to the department.”

Today, Ginorio is trying to figure out what the next step will be for Rural Girls in Science. They are now funded by several sources, but they have money only to bring students to the UW for three days each year. They no longer have the funds to invest in year-long research projects. “When a program has run for a long time, you need to rethink every so often,” she says. Ginorio sometimes feels optimistic about the progress of women and ethnic minorities in academia—until she actually sees the numbers, she says. Women and people of color comprise a substantial percentage of faculty in very few science departments, and even when they do, the numbers are often still so small that progress can seem tenuous. “There’s too much fluidity still to be able to say we’ve made the gains and we don’t have to worry,” she says. Ginorio also worries that some departments stifle the true potential of their scientists.

Of a Latina scientist she knows, she says: “It was her sense that her faculty members were really caring and wanted her to be there. But when it came to her interest in issues that were not scientific—outreach or education for Latinos—that was seen as peripheral, superficial, not necessary. We academics make a huge mistake when we dismiss off-hand those kinds of interests in our students, because I think they’re pointing to places where we ought to be going.”

## OUTSIDE VOICES: EXAMINING THE WHITENESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Does the field of environmental education in the US alienate people of color? Karen Matsumoto, science coordinator at Islandwood, formerly the Puget Sound Environmental Learning Center on Bainbridge Island, addressed this issue at the May AWIS meeting. Matsumoto began by describing how most environmental education organizations consist almost entirely of white staff members and volunteers. Even at Islandwood, the staff are 96% white but a significant number of the students served by the organization are students of color. Bringing up this issue at environmental education conferences is not very popular, Matsumoto said, but she isn't trying to offend anyone; she believes that the issue is important to address and that it will remain until there are significant numbers of people of color involved in setting environmental education agendas.

Many priority issues in the environmental movement, and environmental education in particular, are more significant to predominantly white, middle class people than to many people of color, especially those living in poverty or in urban areas. These issues include reducing commercial logging and fighting urban sprawl. The focus on such issues Matsumoto said makes environmental fields less attractive to talented young people of color who want to address issues more relevant to the communities where they live. In the early days of the environmental movement, in the 1960s and 70s, Matsumoto said, the movement was closely tied to other grassroots movements addressing poverty and social justice, but over time the environmental movement has become removed from these issues.

There are organizations concerned about environmental justice such as issues of the health of urban areas or impact of pollutants and pesticides in low-income areas, but Matsumoto described that these organizations usually have not had much success in getting these issues to be priorities in the mainstream environmental movement.

Still, Matsumoto says it is critical for environmental groups and social justice groups to work together and see their common interests. "For an environmental education organization's work to be relevant, for it to have lasting value, it has to connect with the lives of [all] children and point to ways that they can make a difference." She believes that, with introspection, the environmental education field can diversify its members and its issues to be relevant to all communities.

Islandwood is a privately funded organization whose purpose is to inspire environmental and community based stewardship, and to integrate arts and natural science. The 250-acre campus contains structures built with sustainable technology; it serves some 3000 kids per year, many from underserved populations. You can learn more by visiting their website at [www.islandwood.org](http://www.islandwood.org). Matsumoto encouraged AWIS members to come visit or sign up for one of Islandwood's many community programs.

### CAREER TIPS FOR INTERVIEW SUCCESS START BY ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Often the greatest interview anxiety focuses on trying to anticipate all the correct answers to interview questions. Equally important, however, are the questions YOU ask the interviewer. If job interviews are getting you no closer to an offer, maybe you are not asking the right questions.

There are three types of questions that help jobseekers gain interview advantage:

- · Questions to uncover the interviewer's top hiring motives
- · Questions to illustrate the candidate's interest and intelligence
- · Questions to uncover the interviewer's unspoken concerns

## 1. Questions to uncover the interviewer's top hiring motives

*You'll answer the interviewer's questions better once you know his/her particular hiring concerns. Here are examples of questions that will help you "get inside the head" of the interviewer:*

- · What do you see as the toughest challenge of this position?
- · What qualities do you see as most important for this position?
- · Why have others failed in this position?

*Once you've asked any or all of the above questions, listen very closely. The first thing the interviewer says reveals his/her truest feelings. Use this information as insight for answering his/her questions to you. After all, what is an interview but a sales presentation? Any salesperson will tell you that you cannot sell until you know what the buyer wants.*

## 2. Questions that illustrate your interest and intelligence

Did you know that an intelligent question can impress an interviewer even more than a snap answer?

The best types of questions to showcase your intelligence and interest come out of your research of the company and industry. You may want to ask questions concerning:

- · Strategy for reaching a specific niche market
- · The company's long-range goals
- · Territorial expansion plans

Granted, some information may be deemed confidential. If you begin your inquiry with, "Can you tell me..." you give the interviewer an out if he/she cannot speak on the subject. Either way, you get the opportunity to impress the interviewer with your intelligent curiosity about corporate goals and plans.

Remember, pre-interview research is the key to forming insightful questions. Never try to "wing your way" through an interview without finding out facts ahead of time. Some good sources for research include:

- · Online searches using search engines such as Google or Yahoo
- · Public library reference materials
- · Company website
- · Press releases

If you've been out-performed in interviews lately, try this strategy and see if you don't get called back for second interviews more often.

## 3. Question to uncover the interviewer's unspoken concerns.

As you sense your interview winding down, don't forget to find out what issues or concerns the interviewer has concerning you as a good candidate fit. Don't make the assumption that the interviewer will volunteer his/her concern. Nine times out of ten they won't. If you don't ask, the interviewer won't tell you his negative perceptions of you. The most straightforward way to find out is just to ask:

"What concerns do you have that prevent you from asking me back for the second interview?"

"What concerns ... that prevent you from offering me the position?"

Once you've asked this question, be still and listen closely to how the interviewer responds. Pay attention to body language as well. If the interviewer says "I have no concerns," while averting his eyes, or touching his

face, it's a sure sign the interviewer DOES have concerns but is reluctant to state them. If so, a little gentle prying is in order as long as you don't make the interviewer too uncomfortable.

Once the interviewer has stated his concerns, use the opportunity to answer with one of your previously thought out success stories that illustrate your ability to meet or exceed his expectations.

If you've done your pre-interview homework and conducted a little role-play practice, using these three types of questions in your next interview will help you reach your career objective faster. Here's hoping you get a chance very soon to try out all three of these types of questions in an interview.

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 Deborah Walker, CCMC  
 Resume Writer ~ Career Coach  
 Find resume and job-search tips in the article archive at [www.AlphaAdvantage.com](http://www.AlphaAdvantage.com)  
 Email: [Deb@AlphaAdvantage.com](mailto:Deb@AlphaAdvantage.com)  
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**AWIS – Seattle Chapter Proposed Budget for 2004-2005**

	Current Budget	Spent as of	Proposed Budget 7/04
Expenses	7/03 - 6/04	May 20, 2004	– 6/05
Newsletter	\$700	\$518*	\$700
Special Events (workshops)	350	350	175
GEMS	500	552	650
Publicity	50	0	100
Outreach/Mentor-Prot.	170	0	125
Program	120	107*	175
Membership	50	16	50
Scholarship	25	0	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1965</b>	<b>\$1193</b>	<b>\$2000</b>

\*more expenses expected

<u>Income</u>	<u>7/03 – 6/04</u>	<u>Proposed 7/04 – 6/05</u>
Member dues, contributions, received	\$1330	\$1370
expected	70	
Microsoft contributions, received	450	657
expected	219	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2069</b>	<b>\$2027</b>

Current Assets

Savings & Checking	\$2497
Outreach Education Fund	\$3312

Scholarship funds are accounted for separately from other chapter funds.

**ELECTION BALLOT FOR THE 2004-2005 AWIS BOARD**

Following are the nominees for the 2004-2005 AWIS Board. Write-in candidates are accepted. Please vote for the indicated number of candidates (in parentheses)

If you cannot attend the June 16<sup>th</sup> AWIS meeting/potluck, you may e-mail your votes to Stephanie Namciu at [snamciu@fhcrc.org](mailto:snamciu@fhcrc.org) before June 16.

President (1)	___	Amy Springer	(write-in)
	___	_____	
Secretary (1)	___	Libby Colasurdo	
	___	_____	
Treasurer (1)	___	Reitha Weeks	
	___	_____	
Newsletter (3) Co-Chairs	___	Penny Kelley,	
	___	Lori Kuo	
	___	Jenny Madeoy	
	___	_____	
Program (2) Co-Chairs	___	Jaime Forbes	
	___	Maralee McVean	
	___	_____	
Membership (2) Co-Chairs	___	Jessemine Fung	
	___	_____	
Web Master (2)	___	Chelsea Leader	
	___	Kristi Martinez	
	___	_____	
Publicity (2) Co-Chairs	___	Jamie Massart	
	___	_____	
Scholarship (2) Co-Chairs	___	Fran Solomon	
	___	_____	
Mentor-Protégée Co-Chairs (2)	___	Noelle Ebel	
	___	Grace Li	
	___	_____	
GEMS (2) Co-Chairs	___	_____	
	___	_____	
	___	_____	

## DIRECTORY OF AWIS BOARD MEMBERS 2003/2004

**President**  
Stephanie Namciu

**Secretary**  
Libby Colasurdo

[snamciu@fhcrc.org](mailto:snamciu@fhcrc.org)

[Lcoloa123@aol.com](mailto:Lcoloa123@aol.com)

**Treasurer**

Reitha Weeks

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**Scholarship**

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**Pub/Web**

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**Membership & E-mail**

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**GEMS**

Susan Amundsen

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**Special Events**

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**Outreach**

Vacant

**Mentoring/Protégé**

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**Newsletter**

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Jenny Madeoy

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**Website Address**

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**Membership/General Business**

AWIS 2410 Dexter Ave N. #102

Seattle, WA 98109

**Scholarship Donations:** AWIS Scholarship Committee 5805 16<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98105

## *June Annual Potluck*

Wednesday

**June 16, 2004**

Potluck will start at 6:30 p.m.  
Elections will be held at 7:30 p.m.

*We hope you can join us this year as we get together and share good food, ideas for next year, and reflect on the successes of this past season. This event is a great opportunity to come and meet the board members, participate in the election of next year's board, or volunteer to help out with one of the committees. As we have some board members leaving and new folks joining us, what better time to come and talk about what activities you would like to see happen for the upcoming year. If you are not a member of AWIS, come join us and find out what this organization is all about.*

***Please bring an appetizer, salad, main dish or dessert to share!***

This year the potluck will be held at the outdoor courtyard of the Fred Hutchinson  
Cancer Research Center.

Main Street Address  
Day Campus  
1100 Fairview Ave North  
Seattle, Washington

### **DIRECTIONS TO THE DAY CAMPUS FROM I-5 (NORTH OR SOUTH)**

<b>Exit</b>	Seattle Center/Mercer St. Move to the far right lane
<b>Right</b>	at light at the bottom of the exit ramp
<b>Right</b>	onto Fairview Ave N.
<b>Right</b>	at Yale Ave N. for Buildings 1-4

*For more information about this event, please contact Stephanie Namciu at [snamciu@fhcrc.org](mailto:snamciu@fhcrc.org) or go to the website at [www.scn.org/awis](http://www.scn.org/awis)*