



The

Windy City Wire

Society of Women Engineers Chicago Regional Section

SWE-CRS President's Letter – June/July 2010

Cathy Pieronek, SWE-CRS FY10 President

Email: swecrs-president@swe.org

Dear SWE-CRS Members:

As FY10 comes to a close, so does my term as president. It's been a challenging year on a number of levels including, but not limited to: my being a president so far removed geographically from the heart of the section, our implementing a new officer structure, and the personal distractions that resulted from the February destruction of my home. Still, I'm happy to report that SWE-CRS is as strong as ever, despite all of this.

We can share the news that we retained almost all of our FY09 membership -- in fact, from March 2009 to March 2010, we were down only a net 15 members out of a section of nearly 350. This is quite a stunning achievement in this economy. The Executive Committee and Committee Chairs deserve so much credit for this. You wouldn't remain a member of this organization if we didn't provide for you things that you need. The fact that you have remained a member gives us the assurance that we are meeting your expectations.

We implemented some new things this year, most notably including: establishing a presence on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn; developing a new e-mail newsflash format that's easier to read; offering a professional development conference with a family-friendly element; hosting tours and talks almost every month; holding two very successful Get to Know SWE Nights (GTKSN); organizing a special SWE 60th birthday party; and beginning a serious strategic planning process. At the awards banquet, we were able to give six scholarships to high school seniors, five of which came from the generous contributions of corporate sponsors. Member circles are also going strong.

At the SWE 60th Birthday Party, which also substituted for the end-of-the-year picnic at the president's home, we had the opportunity to thank our committee chairs and officers for a job well done. It takes about 30 people to put on the range of events we host each year, and this year I was amazed to see the number of members who stepped up with ideas, brought in new sponsors, and added to an already vibrant section.

As I turn the section over to our incoming president, Dayna Johnson, I wish her well. But, if this year is any indication, the success of CRS depends on the commitment of our members. So I hope you will take the time this year to see how you can get involved to make FY11 even better than FY10.

Best,

Cathy Pieronek

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Get To Know SWE Night –March 17, 2010

Submitted by Dayna Johnson

The Get to Know SWE Night, sponsored by Sargent & Lundy, was a blast. We had a beautiful day with wonderful views of the city from the Sargent & Lundy offices. Danielle Folkerts, the Membership Chair, had the SWE information ready and laid out on the tables for the attendees to take home.

Danielle welcomed everyone to the event. This was followed by Dayna Johnson, Vice President of Membership and President Elect for SWE-CRS, welcoming everyone and introducing SWE-CRS to everyone.

Then we had fun with the Ice Breaker activity where we got to know more about one another and everyone's names, with prizes along the way.

This was followed by a delicious dinner, including a wonderful variety of sandwiches, pasta salad, and amazingly wonderful desserts.

Everyone was full and ready to hear what SWE-CRS is all about, so the committee chairs/representative gave information on the following committees:

- Danielle Folkerts –Membership
- Shelly Gould –Programs
- Karen Bireta -2011 National Conference Committee
- Diane Graziano –Finance
- Preetha Thomas –Collegiate Liaison
- Dayna Johnson –Scholarship
- Krystle Nagle –Outreach

We had a sign-up sheet for every committee, leading to new people interested in joining SWE-CRS and becoming committee members!

Thank you to all those who attended, and a big thank you to Sargent & Lundy for generously supporting this event, and in particular Meghan Wihelm. We look forward to seeing these new faces at some of our events!

Year End Banquet

On Thursday, June 10, 2010, the SWE-CRS Awards Banquet was held at the Metropolitan Club at Willis Tower in Chicago.

Did you attend the banquet? Send in your thoughts! How did you participate? Did you or your company receive an award?

Get full coverage of the event in the August Commemorative issue of the Windy City Wire.



Chicago Center for Green Technology By Shelly Gould

- On May 15, 2010, we held our Green Building Tour and Panel Discussion at the Chicago Center for Green Technology. We had about 20 members in attendance. UL Environment generously sponsored the event and also provided a panelist, Mr. Joshua Sanders. Other panelists were Ms. Helen Kessler of HJKessler & Associates and Mr. Sam Miller of JFNew.



Photo: SWE-CRS members at the Chicago Center for Green Technology

Annual Chicago Regional Section PD Conference

By Magala Salvi

The annual Professional Development (PD) conference for the Chicago Regional Section was held on March 27 at the BP conference center in Naperville. The theme of the conference was “Nurturing Diversity – Giving it Roots, Making it our Nature.” The vision and goal behind this theme are – now that diversity is generally accepted in corporate America, what policies and practices will give it roots at an organizational level, and how can we make these practices part of our nature or working style at an individual level. To provide insight and foster discussion on nurturing diversity, we had excellent speakers: Jean Mavrelis was the keynote speaker; Hazel Wagner, Nina Sanyal, Harsharan Bains, Julie Peterson and Beth Baily were the speakers for the three sessions. In addition to the speaker sessions, we had a lunch panel, in which we had representatives from corporate Women’s Networks share ideas and best practices. The representatives were Kelly Sager from GE, Michelle Layman from BP and Wendy Landwehr from Northrop Grumman.

Jean Mavrelis kicked off the conference with an outstanding presentation. Through her educational background in Cultural Anthropology and expertise in diversity research and management, she provided insights to the communication styles, attitudes toward authority and behavioral differences of men, white women and women of color. She showed how these communication styles, attitudes and behaviors are a result of our cultural upbringing and environment in which we grew. The sample videos of workplace situations were extremely helpful in understanding how differences in communication, attitudes and behaviors can affect the success of a team. She gave ideas on how slight modifications in communication and behavior can completely change the outcome of a situation and lead to success. Although we come from diverse backgrounds with differing communication styles, attitudes towards authority and behaviors, we can work together productively toward a common vision through greater understanding of our gender and cultural differences. Jean is a Chief Executive Officer of Kochman Mavrelis Associates, a consulting firm helping companies to engage, recruit and retain a diverse workforce. She is the co-author of the book, Corporate Tribalism: White Men, White Women and Cultural Diversity at Work. She developed “Managing Social and Cultural Diversity in the Schools,” which was delivered to the school systems of Boston, Englewood, Colorado, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Rockford and Chicago. For more information, please see www.kmadiversity.com.

The first session speaker was Dr. Hazel Wagner, who introduced us to the concept of “Thinking Diversity.” There is diversity in the way each one of us thinks and behaves, which is based on the way our brain is structured. Hazel’s approach is that since we all think differently, we acknowledge and appreciate the thinking diversity and apply it to make our teams or partnerships more effective. There are four clusters or quadrants (A, B, C, D) in our brain, which determine how we think and behave. Clusters A & D are associated with abstract thinking, while clusters B & C are associated with concrete thinking. For behavior, Clusters A & B are associated with task oriented personality and clusters C & D are associated with a people oriented personality. We all have each of the four clusters; however, one cluster or quadrant is more dominant than the others. Hazel asked us a set of questions to help each of us understand one’s own thinking style. The thinking style of each person brings a different perspective and different questions. If we have people of different thinking styles on our team, we create a diversity of ideas. By acknowledging and appreciating diverse thinking styles, we can apply or capitalize on these thinking differences to make effective and successful teams. Dr. Hazel Wagner is founder of B9D Inc., a management consulting firm. She is a professional speaker, workshop leader and consultant in Power Brainstorming, Diversity in Thinking Styles and Whole Brainiance Thinking as it applies to business strategy, team building and effective communication. She is the author of the book, Power Brainstorming: Great Ideas at Lightning Speed. For more information, please see www.brainiance.com.

Annual Chicago Regional Section PD Conference

By Magala Salvi

The second session speaker was Nina Sanyal of Achieving Personal Excellence (APEX). Nina introduced us to self-management – achieving our goals and objectives while managing stress. Much of the stress we feel is due to our responses to challenging situations. Nina gave a glimpse into breathing techniques, in which we experience unshakable calmness and inner clarity in the midst of challenge or crisis. A calm mind thinks clearly and creatively with greater concentration. The breathing techniques influence chemical messengers in the brain and immune system, called neuropeptides, resulting in measurable reduction in the stress hormone, cortisol, and an increase in glutathione, an antioxidant. When one is operating at lower stress level, one is better able to communicate and connect to others, especially people of diverse backgrounds. One can certainly envision the effectiveness of a team where its person is operating from a space of greater calmness, clarity and connectedness. Nina Sanyal has been an instructor for empowerment Seminars for adults and youth since 2006. The APEX course is developed by IAHV, International Association of Human Values, an NGO in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Independent research on the APEX Course found significant increases in health, energy, well-being, depression relief and increased ability to be relaxed and yet focused. For more information, please see www.apexcourse.org.

The third session speakers were Harsharan Bains, Julie Peterson and Beth Baily of Chicago Bridge and Iron (CB&I). They introduced us to specific a Diversity Initiative taken by CB & I, in which talented individuals are paired with executive level mentors. The motivation behind this initiative was prior research which showed that diversity in top management results in better company performance. Their presentation also included ideas and tools from Designed for Success by Dondi Scumaci. They gave valuable information about the motivation, outcome and lessons learned through the diversity initiative. This was an example of how diversity is addressed at an organizational level. Harsharn Bains is a Design Safety and Environmental Engineer at CB&I and has eleven years of experience in engineering. She has lived in three continents, is fluent in three languages and has worked with people from countless cultures. Julie Peterson has 14 years of experience in Human Resource Management and was part of the team involved in the Diversity Initiative. Beth Baily is part of the HR team at CB & I.

Special thanks to all the speakers and lunch panel members in making this conference insightful, informative, and reflective. What we learned from the conference is that in order for diversity to take root and be part of our nature, we need to work at both from an individual level and an organizational level. Individually, it starts by reflecting on and examining one self - one's cultural upbringing, communication style, thinking style, and ability to maintain calmness and connect with people. Organizationally, we continue to implement policies and practices by working together with our fellow co-workers, SWE members and community leaders.

Mangala Salvi
PD Conference Co-Chair



JUNE SPONSOR OF THE MONTH:

SWE-CRS recognizes Northrop Grumman for their leadership support; generous sponsorship of a student scholarship, collegiate awards, and Annual Awards Banquet tables; and underwriting many activities and operating expenses.

Northrop Grumman Corporation is a leading global security company whose 120,000 employees provide innovative systems, products, and solutions in aerospace, electronics, information systems, shipbuilding and technical services to government and commercial customers worldwide.

Learn more about the company at www.northopgrumman.com.



FY11 Leadership Announcement

By: Katie Amelio

Following are our election results for FY11:

The Nominating Committee would like to thank the candidates and membership for making this a successful election.



President:	Dayna Johnson
VP Membership/President-Elect:	Krystle Nagle
VP Outreach:	Kari Parsons
VP Professional Development:	Karen Bireta
Treasurer:	Marcia Madrigal
Recording Secretary:	Stephanie Foege
Corresponding Secretary:	Kate Jakubas
Section Representatives:	Halle Brooks
	Iris Caldwell
	Jessica Chouinard
	Jennifer Scullo





Jardine Water Purification Plant Tour

Date: Friday, July 16, 2010

Location: Jardine Water Purification Plant, 1000 E. Ohio Street, Chicago, IL (north of Navy Pier)

Time: 10:00 AM

Who is invited: SWE Members and guests that are 12+ years old are welcome to attend

RSVP: With your name and company affiliation by Wednesday, July 7, 2010 to

Karen.Bireta@swe.org

Cost: Optional Lunch

Come tour the world's largest water treatment plant! The Jardine Water Purification Plant draws raw water from two of the city's water cribs far offshore in Lake Michigan and has the capacity to send 1.4 billion gallons of water per day to consumers in the north and central portions of the city.



Upcoming Correspondence

ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!!

A Year in Review – The Commemorative Newsletter

will be published in August.

Do you have any reflections on the past fiscal year you'd like to share? Ideas for the year coming up?



Contribute to the Newsletter!

The SWE-CRS newsletter depends on your contributions! We'd love to have your articles and submissions!

Rebekah Schulenberg, the newsletter editor for FY11, can be reached at rebekah.schulenberg@swe.org



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