



Society for Canadian Women in Science and Technology

Empowering and Supporting Women in Science since 1981

SCWIST Newsletter

July—October 2007

Message from the President



Dear SCWIST Members,

Thank you very much for your commitment, dedication and support of SCWIST. We are off to a fantastic start for the year with our new team of board members.

On October 6th, the Board held a productive and insightful Strategic Planning Session. We are very excited about maintaining the momentum and are ready to get started on our plans to enhance SCWIST through a variety of events and programs. BrownBag discussions are set to begin in November, and following our office move other events will resume as well.

Please join us— We look forward to seeing you soon!

Suzanne Ferenczi
SCWIST President

Would you like to attend SCWIST events?

Become a member today!

Visit www.scwist.ca for more details.

Is your membership about to expire?

Renew before your expiration date and be eligible for prize draws at next year's AGM. Contact scwist@sfu.ca.

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The Student Biotechnology Network is proud to present in partnership with **SCWIST**:

Creating Connections: "Building Bridges Between Students and Industry"



Thursday, November 29 at 6:00pm
Floral Hall, Van Duesen Botanical Gardens
5251 Oak St

Registration now open at www.TheSBN.ca.

Early Bird Registration: \$15 until November 22nd

\$18 until November 28th Limited seating available!

Despite a significant increase in the number of women graduates at all levels in the life sciences, there has not been a concurrent rise in the number of women holding upper management positions within industry or holding professorships at universities. This may be due to a number of factors that will be addressed at Creating Connections. The topics covered will be of interest to everyone, although there will be an emphasis on the female perspective.

Save the Date! The 2008 SCWIST AGM will be held the evening of Wednesday June 18th. Details to follow.

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Help Women Stay in Science

Excerpt from the January issue of The Scientist where Laura L. Mays Hoopes outlines suggestions for helping men help women scientists. Hoopes is a writer and the Halstead-Bent Professor of Biology and Molecular Biology at Pomona College.

1. Call a woman scientist from time to time, to chat about science, a recent breakthrough, your puzzling results, their puzzling results. Even better, call one once a week.
2. Every time you have to recommend a scientist to speak at your seminar series, replace "young man" in your thoughts with "young woman" or even "old woman."
3. If you're on a hiring or tenure committee, don't start reading the files until after you review the primary literature on unconscious bias. You can access references from Jo Handelsman's site <<http://www.plantpath.wisc.edu/fac/joh/joh.htm>> .
4. Support the development of a child care center at your university or college. Women produce babies and they need the day care.
5. When you are organizing a scientific meeting, invite some women scientists to be speakers.
6. When you walk through the posters, where women who were not invited present their work, stop and talk with them about what they've been doing. When you do, don't look over her shoulder, listen. If it helps, pretend she's a man.
7. When you chat with a woman scientist at a scientific meeting, invite her to join you and your friends for a lunch or dinner. She may eat in her room to avoid eating alone in a restaurant while watching you and your (male) friends laughing at the next table.
8. When you think about someone to appoint to an editorial board or to write a review article, be sure to consider women as well as your particular favorite young men and male cronies.
9. When you are looking for a nominee for an award (I'm not talking about the awards for the BEST WOMAN, I'm talking about research awards in general), replace that "young hotshot man" image with a "young hotshot woman" image. Or even an "old hot-shot woman." If you don't know anyone to consider, email me at lhoopes@pomona.edu and I can suggest someone.
10. When you're spoiling for a fight, call the National Library of Medicine and complain that you can't properly track the publications women have produced for your award committee because they have no way to let PubMed know all of their different names so they can be connected in one list of publications.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

A big thanks to some AMAZING volunteers:

Seedlings Studio continues to donate its services providing web support for the new site. www.SeedlingsStudio.com

Michelle La Haye compiles all of the BrownBag data each month so that we can post concise minutes on the website.

Parisa Zaini served as note taker at a recent Strategic Planning session.

Cindy Chen is currently assisting with event planning.

Hiromi Matsui, Julia Vaughan, Evelyn Palmer, Shauna Paull and Hilda Ching worked tirelessly sorting the materials to be sent to the SFU Archives during this intake year.

Membership lapsed? Renew online today so that we can continue to provide quality programs! Visit www.scwist.ca



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IWIS
update



ms. infinity
update

Have you thought about mentoring? If you are interested in being paired with a scientific woman who has immigrated to Canada to share your experiences and expertise regarding your line of work, please contact iwis2@sfu.ca for further details.

Your Personal safety – Be vigilant!

Following the shocking and senseless act of violence recently at Carleton University, it is a good time to remind all women working alone on campus (or anywhere else for that matter) to be vigilant about their safety and security.

A few things to do/remember:

1. Use a Safe Walk Program
2. Know the location of the emergency phones along your route.
3. Lone Worker Program
4. Security patrols

It is important that everyone takes an active role in ensuring our safety and the security of those around us. Certainly, the nightly lockdown of campus buildings to dissuade unauthorized people from accessing sensitive and non-public areas works toward this goal. You can do your part by exercising the same security practices at school/in the workplace as you do in your own home. Locking doors and closing curtains/windows as applicable may seem like basic instructions, but the positive effect that these steps can have are immeasurable.

Trusting your instincts, being aware of your surroundings and knowing the resources available is the best way for everyone to enhance their personal safety.

At ms infinity a new school year means another Telementoring session! Student applications for the program have been submitted from Peter Skene Ogden Secondary in 100-Mile House and from Chilliwack Secondary. More applications are expected as the deadline approaches.

We are trying some new ways to reach young women in high school and this year Telementoring is being offered through Vancouver Learning Network to their students across BC. Girl Guides of BC is also offering ms infinity's Telementoring program to their more isolated members called Lones, who "meet" over the Internet. Distance education and Girl Guide virtual meetings are a great fit with Telementoring and we look forward to these new partnerships.

Also in the works are a few conferences and some hands-on science workshops. St. Margaret's school for girls in Victoria will be hosting a daylong ms infinity event. They are expecting approximately 500 participants! Students in Grades 4 – 12 will participate in the day's events, which will provide workshops, panel discussions, keynote speakers and a lot of fun.

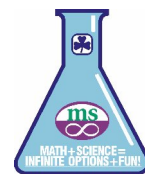
The Northwest Science and Innovation Society is hosting a Quantum Leaps conference this November in Terrace and they have plans to bring a Quantum Leaps to Prince Rupert, Kitimat and Smithers next year. J.L Crowe Secondary in Trail is also hosting a Quantum Leaps conference this spring. Quantum Leaps conferences are for young women in Grades 11 & 12 with a focus on career exploration and educational options.

Girl Guides of BC has invited ms infinity to their resource fair in Richmond. Leaders and volunteers from across BC will be attending this fair making it an ideal opportunity to promote ms infinity! Our partnership with Girl Guides is a strong one and our next planned Girl Guide event providing workshops for Guides Exploring Science and Technology in Prince George.

So, while January 1st may mark the beginning of a new calendar year – it is really September 1st when the real year begins. And ms infinity is gearing up for a busy year.

The current ms infinity committee members are:

MJ Hunter
Nancy Hawkins
Pat Nickel
Caroline Wong
Tessa Strong





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Spotlight on forced retirement

I retired at the end of June 2006 from the Biology faculty at Langara College. I did not want to leave, nor did my students or colleagues wish me to do so, but retirement was mandatory at age 65. Now, after lots of pressure from academic groups and timely support from Premier Campbell, it is a virtual certainty that mandatory retirement at 65 in B.C. will not continue beyond January 2008. This is wonderful news but we now must construct a range of options for work for people in their middle years and beyond. I will return to this point.

Many people look forward to retirement — some so that they can pursue interests long on the back burner, others so that they can “do nothing”. There are many others however — of whom I am one — who love what they do and feel a passion that has not diminished with the years. I loved being part of the academic community, giving and getting stimulation from colleagues and students. Such stimulation wasn't confined to biology; I have friends in several very different departments and at lunchtime we enjoyed wonderful conversations.

As a faculty member, teaching provided me the opportunity to communicate the process, beauty and complexity of biological science and the natural world, and the urgent need to preserve as much as we can by changing those habits that damage that world. It also gave me a window into the culture and outlook of younger generations, and fostered intergenerational understanding. Not to mention promoting what I call the “oh, wow!” factor — new interest in and enthusiasm for the natural world around us — was also special and fun and extraordinarily gratifying. Many of my fellow biologists feel similarly. Committed and passionate teachers should be cherished, not discarded like Kleenex at 65!

Like many other colleagues at small colleges, I also did research (albeit on a modest level), even involving my students in field research abroad. I published papers, attended conferences, and shared the process and results with interested colleagues and students. Mandatory retirement brought all this to an abrupt end, as without connection to an institution it is nearly impossible to obtain grants, and certainly attendance at conferences becomes unlikely. This further illustrates how mandatory retirement has wasted talent and energy.

So what now? Returning to the need for a range of options for people who want to continue working past age 65, one of our tasks as academics (I am restricting myself to the group to which I belong) should be helping to develop those options. As women generally are at lower levels on the academic ladder, they may be more financially affected than men. As SCWIST is concerned with women's careers, why don't those of us interested in this issue meet to discuss the recommendations we would put forward to institutions and to government? We could do this as a BrownBag lunch. I think that as SCWISTers, we have an important role to play. Let's get to it.

Abby L. Schwarz, Ph.D.
Dandelion Environmental Consulting
behavioural ecology
marine biology and conservation
wetland biology

Do you have a story like Abby you'd like to share?

Please send all newsletter submissions to scwist@sfu.ca



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Beat Your Overwhelm!

Wonderful technology! It has automated processes, made them faster, made things smaller and more useable, saved us money, time, stress and hassle and impacted more processes and tasks than we could possibly imagine.

But technology has also enabled us to cram more in to our already busy lives. We can be in constant contact with everyone at all times – via multiple phone-lines, email addresses, the internet and many different forms of instant and text-messaging. And instead of relaxing while the dishwasher is on we simply cram more into our already busy lives. The explosion of automation, possibility and choice means we are constantly over-committed, over-connected, over-informed and overwhelmed!

The good news is that overwhelm is something we largely create for ourselves. We try to manage time better when we really should be managing ourselves better – doing less and looking after our needs more.

7 Top Tips to BEAT your OVERWHELM!

1. What's your overwhelm indicator? How do you know you've gone too far, taken on too much or are pushing yourself too hard? Just starting to notice when you feel overwhelmed is a huge step forward. As people get better at noticing, they learn to stop, think and do something about it.
2. Simply stop and ask yourself the question; "OK, so what's the EASY way to do this?" Listen to your inner wisdom and implement!
3. Identify your Top 5 Priorities and make these your focus. People's top priorities often include things like family/friends, health, financial security and being happy or enjoying life. Next time you feel overwhelmed you can regain calm by asking "What would help my family?" or "What would be best for my health/financial situation/happiness right now?"
4. Create calm in your mind. Place your feet on the floor and focus on your breathing for a moment. Now close your eyes and imagine your thoughts, tasks, "to do's" etc. as a river raging around you. Slowly imagine the river getting calmer and calmer until it is a quiet, gently flowing stream. Once it is a gentle stream, imagine it getting smaller and trickling into a beautiful, quiet, still pond. Now you are ready to continue with your day – one thing at a time.
5. Just make a decision. Sometimes NOT making a decision adds to your overwhelm, as options and possibilities crowd your mind. Simply make the best choice with the information available to you at the time and CHOOSE to be happy with it.
6. Re-learn how to say "No". There will ALWAYS be more to do than time available. Once you know what's REALLY important to you, make that your priority and let go of the rest! Re-learn how to say "No" and you'll feel amazing!

Set yourself up well for the day. People know they cope with daily stresses better when they are well rested. If you go to bed just 30 minutes earlier each day you will start your day feeling more rested and better-fueled. Also, the TV stimulates your brain so turn off the TV at least an hour before bedtime and allow your brain to unwind.



I once read that the harder you push yourself, the harder your self pushes back. So, remember that your life is a never-ending series of choices - make yours wisely!

Information about author:

Emma-Louise is the CEO of Simplicity Life Coaching Ltd. and a certified Life-Coach and NLP practitioner. As a previous IT Project Manager, she loves working with women in IT to help them take back their lives and create a life they love! Call 604-990-9068 or visit

www.simplicitylifecoaching.com for more information.



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Fundraising report — Perveen Biln

The fall season is upon us, and with autumn comes the second annual SCWIST fundraising drive. Last year, SCWIST contacted members over a month-long period, this year we will be instituting an annual SCWIST Day when the SCWIST Board will be calling members to ask if they can donate a financial gift and if they know of anyone else who cares about the work of SCWIST and who might be able to help us financially. The SCWIST Board has set a goal of raising \$10000.00. This money is earmarked toward supporting new SCWIST initiatives such as the BrownBag lunch series and the second Women in Science Roundtable being held in partnership with the Student Biotechnology Network (SBN). This year SCWIST day is THURSDAY NOVEMBER 22nd, so be sure to be home to receive our call as we're looking forward to speaking to our members. If you know you won't be able to receive our call, please visit our website at www.scwist.ca and donate online. If you prefer not to be contacted for this campaign just let our Resource Centre know.

As discussed at the AGM, SCWIST goals for the 07/08 year are to grow and build our organization to meet the needs of our members and to continue the great advocacy work that we've been doing.

Last year, SCWIST had a very successful year. In line with our strategic planning we welcomed new Board members that bring a diverse skill and knowledge set that make for a more effective Board. Additionally, with our renewed emphasis on membership benefits we held a variety of workshops and seminars including the Brown-Bag lunch series, reinstated regular email updates of news relevant to women in science and technology as well as a very successful resurrection of the SCWIST newsletter. Most importantly we held our first fundraising campaign and numerous workshops, seminars and BrownBag lunches. The success of the last year was thanks to our amazing board members, staff and of course the support of our membership.

Another important component of growing and renewing SCWIST is the establishment of a dedicated fundraising committee that can raise the funds necessary to keep our programs (ms. infinity, IWIS) going. If you are interested in becoming a committee member, give us a call or email or let us know when we speak with you on November 22.

SCWIST IS MOVING!!!

Unfortunately our time at the YWCA is drawing to a close. We have greatly enjoyed our time here, but the Y is no longer offering leasing as their own program needs require all available office space.

Happily we are only moving a few blocks away—to the 411 Seniors Centre, a non-profit centre located at Dunsmuir and Hamilton in downtown Vancouver.

411 is a wonderful match for us as we are able to maintain a location that is accessible and centrally located, has meeting rooms and self-contained office space. The fact that we will be surrounded by an exciting and diverse group of non-profit organizations is certainly a bonus!

Moving day is fast approaching. As of November 2nd, our address will be:

471-411 Dunsmuir St

Vancouver, BC

V6B 1X4

Our new digs come to us unfurnished. We are still seeking the donation of office equipment. If you can help, please contact scwist@sfu.ca

United Way campaign

Did you know you can designate your workplace United Way contribution to be donated to SCWIST? Advise your co-ordinator today!

Want to get more involved?

Volunteer at SCWIST!

Contact scwist@sfu.ca for details.

No time to volunteer?

You can still support SCWIST:

Donate online (and receive a tax receipt)



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SCWIST Member Benefits

Are you getting all you can out of your SCWIST membership?

- Workshops for women in science and technology (receive reduced rates for members)
- Leadership opportunities in a supportive environment (telementor a girl interested in science, volunteer for a committee, offer an idea for an initiative or event)
- News from our website (post and learn about events of interest for women in science)
- National communication (contribute articles or ideas to the newsletter)

SCWIST's charitable status

SCWIST is a registered charity and issues tax receipts for all donations.

We invite you to contact scwist@sfu.ca if you wish to make a gift to support our programs for girls and women.

What's the difference between a Sustaining and Professional Membership?

A sustaining membership (\$100) combines a professional membership (\$60) and a \$40 (tax-deductible) donation to SCWIST. Sustaining members truly sustain SCWIST by supporting the charitable programs we run.

Who we are

The Society of Canadian Women in Science and Technology is a non-profit, voluntary association established in 1981 to promote, encourage and empower women working in science and technology.

Our Mission Statement

- To promote public awareness of the opportunities for women in science and technology by providing information and resources which aim to influence public policy and present positive messages about women's achievements and potential in this area.
- To encourage the full participation of girls and women in all aspects of science and technology education, through the provision of programs and activities which are developed and implemented in partnership with relevant community members.
- To increase the representation, retention and status of women in the science and technology workplace by providing networking and mentoring opportunities and advocating for women-friendly workplaces and education policies.

Membership Fees

Fees can now be paid online through: <http://www.scwist.ca>

Student/Retired/Unemployed	\$20/year
Professional	\$60/year
Sustaining (see panel)	\$100/year (including \$40 tax receipt)

Let us know what you think

SCWIST Resource Centre
scwist@sfu.ca

ms. infinity
msoo@sfu.ca

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iwis2@sfu.ca

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