



Members-At-Large

FY14 Newsletter, Issue 3

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President's Corner

One of my favorite parts about SWE is the Awards and Recognition initiatives. I'm so excited that over the past few years we have been able to showcase Members-At-Large through MAL, Region, and Society Level selections. This month's newsletter introduces you to several of this year's award recipients. The Society's individual awards deadline is March 31st annually. The MAL awards package will be published in the next month or two with a deadline at the end of the fiscal year. I hope that everyone took the opportunity to look around at their co-workers and fellow SWE members and nominate someone deserving of recognition. If you didn't get a chance to do it this year, I highly recommend you add it to your list of goals for next year. Just think of the impact you'll make on the person by just telling them you think they are worth nominating.

In addition to giving recognition through awards, SWE provides educational opportunities both through conferences (Society and Regional) and via webinars. This allows members to figure out what fits

best with their schedule and learning preferences. I hope that everyone was able to call in for the MAL-sponsored LCC [webinar](#) on Enriching Relationships Between Mentors & Mentees in SWE that Sarah Kirkish hosted this past month. In case you weren't able to attend, Sarah has recorded the session and has posted the [handouts](#) to the MAL SWE Community.

The closing of the Fiscal year also drives wrap up for many SWE leaders. I encourage everyone (SWE leader or not) to revisit your SWE goals for the year and see if you accomplished everything you had hoped for with this year's membership. If not, start thinking about what you hope to accomplish next year. If you aren't sure where to start, contact any of your MAL leadership members for support. Also don't forget to vote in the upcoming Society, Regional, and Member At Large elections so that you can be a part of selecting our next set of SWE leaders.



New Faces of Engineering – Get to Know Them Personally

By Harsharan Bains



The New Faces of Engineering is a wonderful award to receive, whether it is awarded by SWE or another organization. In the past, the following have received this award:

- Jacquelyn Nagel, Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Award FY12
- Debbie Jacklitch-Kuiken, National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) Award, FY11
- Karen Roth, SWE Award FY12
- Jennifer Vallerio, SWE Award FY13

In my article in the previous to last newsletter, I pulled their experiences together to share with you their journey in getting the award. In this article, get to know more about these amazing women: greatest benefits of SWE, their inspirations and people they inspired, how they plan their career, their hobbies, and if cost was not an issue where would they travel and why?

What do you believe is your greatest benefit of being a SWE member?

Though there were many listed the following are the top three and some quotes:

Leadership Skills: *“Recognition from my bosses that many of my leadership skills and qualities are a direct result of the roles I have taken on in SWE and my dedication to fulfillment of them.”*

Professional Development/Career Planning: *“Being reminded of why the career choice I have made was the right one”, “can reach out to my network of women for my next job”. “SWE has taught me more about my career advancement opportunities than just spending time in my job.”*

Networking: *“I do not feel alone anymore”, “look forward to SWE events and the SWE Society conference every year to be with other women engineers, and recharge my batteries”. “Some of my best friends are the SWE members I met in college”. “Best cross-country network I found”.*

Who inspired you to take engineering as a career and how?

My high school drafting teacher: I took drafting because it was technical drawing - a mix of art and technology. I had two years of pencil and paper and one year of CAD. He informed me that engineers solve problems for a living. That sounded like the best job ever and I decided that I was going to become an engineer. I did not know what type at the time, but I ended up in electrical engineering because I wanted to know more about circuit boards and electronics.

I have always enjoyed solving problems and was curious to how things worked.

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I honestly did not know what I was getting myself into with engineering. I knew I wanted to work with computers, and someone suggested Software Engineering to me as a way to have a career that was better-rounded and not just about programming. It was about the design of a system or a product. The whole package. And that is what I love about engineering, I am glad I found it and it found me.

No one in particular actually. I liked space growing up and I knew I was going to the University of Colorado at Boulder, so Aerospace Engineering was just the natural fit. However, I did end up swapping to Mechanical Engineering in my junior year when I realized the classes I was taking really were not in my passions anymore.

Can you think of someone you inspired so far?

Everyone considered this a hard question, but I got a couple of responses:

This is a tough one. Not everyone lets you know when they are inspired by you. I am sure I have inspired someone before I arrived at JMU, but the one that sticks out in my mind is a rising junior, his name is Brad. I met him in his first semester as a sophomore at JMU, and he took ENGR 231 – Engineering Design, with me that semester. He knew he wanted to take inspiration from the environment around him (nature) and apply it to engineering, but no one around him knew what he was talking about. When I introduced myself to the class and explained my research in biomimicry, we instantly connected. He talked to me after class and we have been working together ever since.

To be honest, I am not sure I can pinpoint a person I have inspired, but what is interesting about that question is that I have never actually thought about it before. So often we get asked who inspires us that I never think about who might be saying my name when they are asked. Hopefully along the paths that life has taken me, there are people that have written my name just as I have recognized others, and hopefully I will continue to live up to that recognition throughout my career and personal life.

Do you plan your career or do you think it is luck? E.g. do you do a 2-yr plan/5-yr plan etc. and review it on a regular basis etc.

The only part of my career that I planned was to graduate with a B.S.E.E. from University of Missouri-Rolla (now known as Missouri University of Science & Technology). The rest was serendipity and following my curiosities.

I think it is a little bit of both. You should have a direction and a goal, but at the same time keep your eyes open for what the world has to offer you. A goal or plan will help keep you on track and progressing, but it is luck and openness that will actually bring that dream job or assignment to you. Recently I made a move to a new job and excited about starting it!

Every day that I feel like I have a plan for my career is a day I realize it is nearly impossible to plan. Generally, I know what I like to do. I know if I want to continue down a management path or a technical path, but how I get to my next steps is really based on timing, circumstances, and people. I am in a business where the environment constantly changes and if I set my mind on a certain opportunity, who knows if it will still be there in 2 or 5 years. I think the key to your career is to just always try your absolute hardest and prove your worth. If you do that, people will recognize your efforts and will reach out to you for your next opportunity. Additionally, I truly believe that if you are good at what you do, all the stars will align and given any circumstance, your career will continue to move forward. I think we owe it to

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ourselves to take risks, follow the advice of our managers, and trust that our career is only as good as we allow it to be.

What are your hobbies and more about you?

Jacquelyn:

Exercise: I love aerobics classes, and scheduling them helps me stay on track. I am a die-hard kickboxing fan and love turbokick classes. My other favorite is step aerobics classes. The high energy classes are the ones I take. My other form of exercise is sports. I play softball and volleyball.

Making things: My favorite craft right now is knitting. I can also sew, make paper cards, and perform calligraphy. The knitting projects I have going right are: Hat for a friend, shell top for myself, and lacy shawl for myself. I have knitted drink coasters, dish cloths, scarves, chair pad, vehicle console cover with matching car emblem, and a sweater. My favorite thing I have knitted was the binary scarf! - <http://knitty.com/ISSUEwinter06/PATTbinary.html>

Travelling: I love to travel and get out of the house, even if it is a short road trip. Actually, short road trips are primarily what we do. Often my husband and I will plan day trips to an orchard, IKEA, a winery or brewery, or historical landmark, and stop along the way if we see something interesting. I like going on adventures and seeing new places! Also, we only use paper maps.

Spending time with my husband: We like to watch TV or a movie together. Or, if we feel like reading, just sitting in the same room while we are both reading.

Debbie:

Partner: Adam Kuiken, and been married for 7 years

Pets: One dog and 2 cats

Hobbies: Car restoration, knitting, and crocheting. Also dance/fitness and Zumba Instructor.

Karen: I do a little bit of everything from knitting and quilting to running and volunteering with the Rotary. Two cats, one boyfriend, one adventure!

Jennifer: I got married in June, but have been with my husband for about 4 ½ years. We have 3 dogs who we consider our children, 2 girls and a boy, and we spend much of our time with them. We find relaxation in updating our home and being Do-It-Yourselfers (DIYers!). I am originally from Denver and my husband is from Pittsburgh, but we both agree that Erie, PA is the place to be! We love living on the lake and taking a boat out in the summer, kayaking through the lagoons, and riding bikes through Presque Isle Park. We got used to the harsh winters, and driving in 3 feet of snow seems like nothing. My sister and I are travel companions and try to go to 2-3 cities every year, and we are hoping to make it to Europe in 2014, which will be a first for both of us.

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If cost was not an issue, where would you like to travel and why?

Japan! I would visit Japan because of the culture, the food, and the geography. The country has both big cities and picturesque country side. I would love to be there when the cherry blossom trees are blooming! The food is amazing and one of my favorite cuisines. Everything about Japanese culture is interesting to me and I want to experience it.

I am interested in seeing Australia and New Zealand, Italy, or Greece. I am a real homebody, so I would love to have a week at home with complete rest and relaxation (with no home projects, and shutting off the cell and internet).

Oh everywhere. I would like to do more camping through the National Parks more than anything I think.

An RV trip through every main city and attraction in the US. My sister and I are suckers for everything tourist from the largest yarn ball to the national parks, so I would love to drive through the US and even Canada, visiting every popular destination spot along the way. It would probably take a year to get through, but it would be an amazing adventure.

Thank you to our four amazing MALs for taking the time to be interviewed for this article. We can all make connections with them through this article and wish them all the best in the ventures, whether professionally, or otherwise.

MALs Offer Assistance For Outreach Activities

By Debbie Jacklitch-Kuiken, MAL Vice President

The MAL organization is pleased to announce the MAL Outreach Assistance Program is available to assist MALs with the cost of conducting local outreach activities.

One of SWE's objectives is to inform young women, their families, and the public about the opportunities for women in engineering. Having an outreach event or activity to introduce people to engineering opportunities for women is one of the best ways to demonstrate this. Such activities or events that a MAL might undertake include, but are not limited to, classroom presentations for students, presentations to or training to educators or other adult influencers of girls, and after-school activities with youth organizations such as Girl Scouts. Sometimes expenses are incurred by the member for materials to conduct these activities, so now MALs can

be reimbursed up to \$50 per activity or event, subject to the criteria and limitations specified in the program procedure.

When discussing this new program with MAL President Maureen Masiulis, she explained the goal of the program is to help offset the cost of conducting outreach activities in MAL locations and to expand our outreach efforts. "We are hoping that the MAL Outreach Assistance Program will enable MALs to be able to have outreach events in their areas, by offsetting the cost incurred by the member. We believe it is important to have these outreach activities in our MAL areas to be able to show the opportunities in engineering to young women and have them meet women engineers, since they might not get this kind of exposure elsewhere."

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The MAL Outreach Assistance Program Procedure and MAL Outreach Program Reimbursement Form are available under the Resources area of the general Members at Large community within

SWE's My Communities site. If you have any questions about the procedure or cannot locate it in the communities, please contact the MAL Vice President Debbie Jacklitch-Kuiken at debbie.jacklitch@swe.org.

San Antonio SWE Members Meet Up with Collegiates at Trinity University

By Crystal Harris

This past October, SWE Professional members in San Antonio had an informal visit with the collegiate SWE members of Trinity University. The purpose of this meeting was to establish a relationship between professional members and collegiate members in the area. Oftentimes, more focus is put on younger students and teenagers to encourage interest in S.T.E.M. curriculum, and the young adults can be left to their own devices, so mentoring initiatives can become extremely important for this group.

This meet up at Trinity University was an awesome opportunity to meet some of the next engineers and scientists that will be ready to pursue advanced degrees and/or join the industry next year. The majority of the Trinity University students at this event were graduating seniors, eager to complete school and join the corporate world. Two excited individuals even



thought to bring their resumes, hoping that Boeing would take this as a sort of hiring event. Though they were sort of disappointed that it wasn't, they stuck around and asked some great questions and engaged in the discussions.

The collegiates had some great questions about career transitions, company culture, options in pursuing

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advanced degrees, and career path options. Overall, the event was great success, we received great feedback and were invited back to hold a similar event as well as attend a Professional Thanksgiving Dinner that will feature more professionals from different companies as well as SWE collegiate members.

Thank you again to the SWE San Antonio members, especially Jennifer Gallegos and Cindy Campbell for taking the time to help support mentoring initiatives.



SWE Announces the 2014 Individual Awards



The Society of Women Engineers strives to advance and honor the contributions of women at all stages of their careers as well as recognize the successes of SWE members and individuals who enhance the engineering profession through contributions to industry, education and the community.

The SWE Individual Awards Program offers 16 different awards:

- Achievement Award
- Distinguished Engineering Educator Award
- Distinguished Service Award
- Emerging Leader Award
- Entrepreneur Award
- Fellow Grade Member
- Global Leadership Award
- Prism Award
- Resnik Challenger Medal
- Rodney D. Chipp Memorial Award
- SWE Distinguished New Engineer Award
- Suzanne Jenniches Upward Mobility Award
- Work/Life Integration Award

- Collegiate Member Award
- Outstanding Faculty Advisor Award
- Outstanding SWE Counselor Award

Award requirements and instructions can be found within the [Individual Awards Packet](#). You can also download the packet from the [SWE website](#) by clicking on 'Awards,' then 'Individual Awards' and the [nomination form](#) here.

The nomination deadline for all Individual Awards is March 31, 2014 at 11:59 PM CST. Awards will be presented in at the WE14 Annual Conference in Los Angeles, CA, October 23-25, 2014.

To assist you with your 2014 award nominations, we will conduct two training sessions. These sessions will familiarize you with the nomination process and bring you up to date on changes for 2014. Recordings of both webinars can be found in the Learning section of SWE.org in the webinar tab. Filter on Governance. For information or specific questions on SWE Individual & Collegiate Member and Advisor Awards, please contact [Dayna Johnson](#), Awards Chair.

Conducting research in an area that you're interested in may help you be more inspired by your work, but if you don't have an advisor who can teach you the right steps, it can lead to much more work for you.

Graduate School—How to Choose a Research Advisor in STEM

By Emily Ongstad, MAL Newsletter Co-editor

If you're considering going to graduate school in one of the STEM fields and you're not sure where to start, this article series is for you. Choosing a graduate school program is much different from choosing an undergraduate program. While this article generally applies to individuals interested in being full-time students, the overarching themes can be applied to graduate school in many capacities.

In the last article in this series we covered graduate school program focus, environment, and resources, student support, and professional development opportunities, all of which relate to the school and program you choose. In this article we'll cover choosing an advisor for graduate school, which may be the most important choice you make. Below are some topics to consider in choosing your advisor.

Work style

Work style encompasses a wide variety of behaviors. Do you like to work autonomously or collaboratively? How do you like to work with your boss? Do you prefer projects assigned, or do you like to take your own initiative? Do you need a lot of direction, or are you an independent worker? Can you handle being micromanaged, or will this reduce your productivity?

And, most importantly, how does your work style mesh with that of your potential advisor? Your lab? Future lab-mates? Talk with everyone who works under your advisor if possible to get their impression of their work environment. Often, if they do not enjoy the work environment, they will not come straight out and say so, but listen for their feedback and read into it as much as you can. Your work style doesn't have to

List of Professor-Approved Holidays

When it's ok to not work:

- Christmas (morning)
- The Apocalypse (but you're still going to check e-mail, right?)
- Your Professor's Birthday



"Piled Higher and Deeper" by Jorge Cham

www.phdcomics.com

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match that of your advisors, but you do have to respect each other's work style.

Communication

A very important part of getting through grad school is communication. Communication with your advisor, your department chair, your thesis or dissertation committee, your professors, etc. An important place to gather information on your advisor's communication style is from people who already work for him. Does he respond to emails promptly? Does he return comments on your work quickly? Is he available after hours and on weekends if necessary?

Schedule

Schedule can be a very important part of graduate school, especially if you're a non-traditional student with a family to think about. What hours do you like to work? Does your advisor expect you to have face time in the lab? Or is he or she happy with you showing up only as much as necessary to get your work completed? If your child is sick, can you leave early?

Funding

Money isn't everything, but it certainly makes things easier. Choosing an advisor who is well-funded not only means you have money to do research, but also means you have a mentor who can teach you how to get funding. This is becoming ever more important in a world where funding for scientific research is becoming scarce. Are there other students or trainees in the lab with their own fellowship funding? Choosing an advisor with funding and strong credentials helps significantly when you are submitting a fellowship application.

Training environment

Choose an advisor who knows how to train students and maintains an open training environment. How many students has your potential advisor graduated and have the graduates successfully placed? Do those graduates feel like they received quality training while in the lab? Are they taught the scientific process, as well as how to become effective writers and presenters? Are trainees encouraged to take their own spin on their projects when they find something interesting?

Your advisor's work style

Does she communicate with the scientific community? Does she get her ideas out there? Does she encourage attendance at scientific conferences and does she offer travel funds? This may not seem like it immediately affects you, but it does. How well your advisor's research is known and respected can affect your job prospects after you finish your degree. How well-published your advisor is will affect how your own papers in the lab are published.

Oftentimes, choosing a great graduate advisor in an area that is not quite as interesting to you is much more of a benefit to you in the long run than choosing a mediocre advisor in an area that you're very excited about. Why? Graduate school is about learning the research process; how to ask and answer questions in an intelligent, unbiased way. Conducting research in an area that you're interested in may help you be more inspired by your work, but if you don't have an advisor who can teach you the right steps, it can lead to much more work for you. Choose an advisor that you're confident can teach you the skills you need.

MAL Society Individual Award Winners

By Debbie Jacklitch-Kuiken, MAL Vice President



The Members-at-Large is pleased to announce that three of our members were recipients of Society Individual Awards at SWE'13. The three award winners are outstanding MAL members and were truly deserving of these awards. Maureen Masiulis and Karen Roth were awarded with the Distinguished New Engineer award, and Linda M.S. Thomas was named a Fellow to the Society.

Maureen Masiulis - Distinguished New Engineer

Maureen Masiulis is currently the MAL president and is a program manager for General Dynamics Advanced Information Systems (GDAIS). She joined GDAIS when she graduated in 2003 with a dual degree in electrical and computer systems engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. While working, she earned a Master's degree in electrical and computer engineering from the University of Massachusetts Amherst in 2006, and an MBA in 2011 from the same university. Maureen has used her strong leadership skills to advance her career at GDAIS, and had some amazing opportunities to work on some interesting projects. Her strong work ethic and dependability has made her a strong leader.

Maureen has held many positions in SWE, since joining in 2005. She has been a MAL Representative, Region

Conference Planning Committee Member, MAL President, Region Nominating Committee Member, Society Awards Committee Member, and Society Awards Committee Chair Elect.

In her downtime, Maureen likes to spend time with her husband and her son, who will be turning one in February, and being with family. She also volunteers her time for various events, engineering and non-engineering related. She also enjoys swimming, skiing, running in charity races, and playing softball.

Karen Roth - Distinguished New Engineer

Karen Roth is currently serving as the Region Senator and Society Audit Chair. She joined SWE in 2001 as a student at Rochester Institute of Technology and was active as a collegiate member. When she graduated in 2006 with her degree in software engineering, she transitioned into her new career and into the Member-At-Large community in SWE. She has held many roles in the MALs including president and representative. She also assists positions in her region including Lt. Governor, committee chair, and senator.

After graduating, Karen started her career with the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) in Rome, NY, where she became an expert in design

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of critical software systems used in military operations centers. She has worked on many projects while at the AFRL, including developing a prototype that greatly reduces the potential for injury to deployed forces. Karen is making a career change starting in March 2014, and will be starting a new job at Sikorsky.

When Karen is not focused on work or SWE, she volunteers for events through MATHCOUNTS, Books for the World, and the American Heart Association. She also enjoys knitting, hiking, spending time with her kitties, and reading.

Linda M.S. Thomas – Fellow

Linda currently works for The Boeing Company as an Associate Technical Fellow and System Safety Engineer. She serves as the chemical risk integration leader for Environmental, Health, and Safety Engineering for all Boeing Defense, Space, and Security programs.

Linda is a senior life member in SWE and has been active since she joined as a collegiate member at Howard University. She has held

numerous positions in the SWE Pacific Northwest Section. She also served as the Region J Governor for four years and Lt. Governor. Linda held the role of Director of Regions in SWE (2001-2012) and is currently the Region J MAL Representative.

Besides earning a degree from Howard University in chemical engineering, she also earned a Master's degree in systems architecture from the University of Southern California. She teaches an engineering orientation class at South Seattle Community College.

When Linda has downtime she enjoys volunteering at Issaquah School District, participating in various events to inspire young ladies to pursue STEM careers. Linda enjoys reading, riding her bicycle, photography, playing the clarinet, and spending time with her husband and son.

You can read more about these amazing women in the [SWE Conference Magazine 2013](#). Congratulations to all our award recipients! Speaking for all the Members-At-Large, we are honored to have you as MALs.

SWE Webinar: Enriching Relationships Between Mentors & Mentees in SWE



Description: Whenever you want to make a change or are not sure where you want to go next, it always helps to have a mentor who can give you another perspective. Within SWE, there is already an established Mentor Program that can help SWE MALs navigate the Leadership Pipeline. If you want to learn more and make the most of your SWE membership through being a mentor or being a mentee, this is the webinar for you.

This hour long webinar with SWE MAL Leadership Coach and Life Member Sarah

Kirkish will take you through the steps to find and establish an effective and enriching mentor/mentee relationship. You can use the skills from this webinar within SWE as well as at work. Ideally this webinar will help you find and establish your mentor/mentee partnership just in time for your Region Conference, where you can meet your mentor/mentee in person.

You can find the replay of this Webinar [here](#), and the handouts [here](#).



Society of Women Engineers

ASPIRE • ADVANCE • ACHIEVE

Stay Connected!



As a MAL, it can be difficult to stay connected to SWE. Find us on social media and online to stay in the know about MAL and the Society!

Find the Members-at-Large on [Facebook](#); find SWE on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn.com](#) (join: "Society of Women Engineers (SWE)") and check out the [Monthly SWE Newsletter](#).

Help Wanted!

Newsletter Contributors: Looking for articles 200-1000 words to include in future newsletters. A broad range of possible topics include but are not limited to your local outreach events, career tips, leadership, mentoring in your workplace, etc. Additionally, the MAL Leadership will recognize their favorite article with the MAL Newsletter Article Award at the end of

FY14! If you would like to contribute, please send your articles to our co-editors, [Emily Ongstad](#) and [Modupe Oluwadiya](#). This is your newsletter!

Awards Judges: If you're interested in judging the MAL Awards packets, please contact MAL Awards Chair [Stacey Culver](#).

MAL Calendar

2014 Region Conferences

Region A—Sacramento, CA	April 4-6
Region E—Blacksburg, VA	March 28-30
Region F—Springfield, MA	April 4-6
Individual Awards Packages due	March 31