



Members-At-Large

FY14 Newsletter, Issue 2

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President's Corner

I hope that everyone has fully recovered from the travel, excess chocolate (sugar) and lack of sleep experienced during the Society Conference. In case you haven't already heard, this year's conference set a new record with over 7,000 people in attendance. LA is going to have a tough time beating those numbers next year. I hope that everyone already has their calendars booked for WE14 A Global Exchange for Change, October 23-25. Next year will be extra exciting as it is a joint conference with the International Network of Women Engineers and Scientists (ICWES).

It was great to see such a mix of new and familiar faces at the MAL Summit and MAL Council Meetings. Thanks again for the thoughtful discussion on MAL Membership Topics, Geographically Disperse Communication Techniques, Succession Planning/Mentoring, and Strategic Plan. Our MAL leadership and Leadership coaches did an excellent job facilitating our discussions. A special thank you

to Beth Posey-Leonhard, Mary Phelps and Debbie Jacklitch-Kuiken for volunteering to turn our brainstorming discussion into a first cut at the MAL Strategic Plan.



This year was a special year for the MALs with several individual award recipients (Karen Roth, Linda Thomas, and I) and the ceremony for the first ever MAL awards. Congratulations to Lindsey Dorsey, Jennifer Tullai, Kelly Smith, and Vi Brown for being selected as the first ever MAL award recipients! Please remember to start thinking about nominees for the 2014 Society individual awards and MAL awards. The Society individual awards package should be released in December and the MAL awards package will be released later in the spring. A special thanks to Stacey Culver for helping us through the growing pains of rolling out a new MAL awards program.

MAL Summit Recap



MAL officers and committee members discussing membership topics at the MAL Summit.

The MAL Summit was held at the Annual Conference in Baltimore, MD. We started off the morning by working

on our creative problem solving techniques to discuss some MAL membership topics. The key questions addressed were 1) What is a MAL? How is being an MAL different from being in a section? 2) How can we raise awareness about MALs within SWE? 3) How can SWE be more inclusive of MALs? Active discussion generated that MALs, while SWE members, have to work a bit harder to stay involved, but their possibilities are unlimited if you take your own initiative. Being a MAL encourages creative avenues of interaction because we're located in diverse geographical locations. This was followed by an update on Globally Disburse Communications

and the techniques MAL uses to reach our members and make them feel welcomed in the organization.

A discussion of succession planning, the leadership pipeline and mentoring was led by Maureen. In SWE or in any organization where you hold an office or chair, the time to look for the person who will succeed you in your position is as soon as you take that position! Also, make sure to keep track of accomplishments and activities in SWE by building a SWE resume (separate from a career resume!).

We worked through the major themes of the MAL organization in the MAL strategic goals, which align with those set by the Society: Professional Excellence, Globalization, and Advocacy. A small committee will work to revise the MAL strategic plan by the end of the year.

We ended the Summit with a joint lunch with the Region Governors.

MAL Meeting Recap



Awards Chair Stacey Culver presenting the first ever MAL Awards.

The MAL Meeting was also held at the Society Conference in Baltimore, MD. The meeting opened with a recap of the MAL Summit from the previous day. Currently, the Outreach and Communications Chair positions are open. If you're interested in filling either of those, please contact any of the MAL leaders. The call for nominations for FY15 elections will go

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out in mid-January, so if you're interested in running for a position, spend some time familiarizing yourself with the position's duties in the MAL Roles and Responsibilities document in the MAL Communities and get in contact with the current officer or chair for more information. Claire gave us a report on membership numbers and a financial assessment. This was followed by a report from the Director of Regions, Colleen

Layman. Stacey then presented the first ever MAL awards! An article on the award winners is featured below. Start thinking about nominations for awards and stay tuned for the updated award packets to be released in January and early next spring for Society Individual Awards and MAL awards! The meeting ended with a Society Bylaws Amendments discussion.

2013 SWE MAL Awards

By Stacey Culver, MAL Awards Chair

The MAL organization is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2013 SWE MAL Award Program. These women are dedicated MAL members who have demonstrated leadership, engagement and commitment to SWE.

Emerging Leader Award

This award is presented to a SWE MAL who has less than ten years of experience and has made outstanding contributions to the field of engineering, the SWE MAL organization and other community activities. This year's recipient is Lindsey Dorsey from Region A. Lindsey is a Senior Migrations Consultant/Software Consultant Team Lead for SunGard K-12 Education. The technical achievements of her career focus on clients demand for accurate and timely configuration of software modules. She has reduced implementation hours for many configuration modules and is the lead consultant responsible for migrating clients to current software versions. Lindsey has a B.S. in Computer Information Systems and a Masters in Business Administration from California State University, Chico. An active member in SWE since college, she has held many leadership positions at the collegiate and regional level. Currently she is the Educator Outreach Coordinator in Redding, CA's proposed Shasta

Cascade Section. This year she was the e-week coordinator and led the first "Wow! That's Engineering?" event in Redding for 60 young girls. She was instrumental in obtaining a \$800 grant for this program.



Outstanding MAL Representative Award

The Outstanding MAL Representative Award is presented to a SWE MAL Rep who has made an outstanding contribution to increasing and enhancing membership within the SWE MAL organization during the fiscal year. The nominees are judged based on the significance of their achievements and on contributions to the SWE MAL membership programs. We are pleased to present this award to Vi Brown from Region B. Vi Brown is a Fellow, past society president and senior life member of SWE. Over her 26-year membership, she has held leadership positions at the section, region, and national levels. She is currently serving as the Society Nominating Committee Representative for Region B. Other professional affiliations include the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, Project Management Institute, Arizona Nanotechnology

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Cluster, Institute for the Advancement of Engineering (Fellow), National Future City Competition, Arizona State University Executive MBA Alumni Council and Howard University Department of Chemical Engineering Advisory Board. Vi is principal and CEO of Prophecy Consulting Group, a provider of engineering, project management, and business services. She also teaches undergraduate calculus and graduate environmental engineering courses as an adjunct-faculty member with California National University. Previous employers include Motorola, Maricopa County Government, Pacific Gas & Electric, CH2M Hill, and Procter & Gamble. Selected honors and awards include City of

Mesa Innovative Water Conservation Award, four finance awards from Arizona State University's Executive MBA Program, and delegation leader for the People to People Ambassador Program's Women in Engineering Tour of China (2005). She holds B.S. & M.S. degrees in chemical engineering from Howard University and an MBA from Arizona State University.

Newsletter Article Award

Communication is vital to the SWE MAL organization and the Newsletter Article Award is presented to a SWE MAL member who has written an outstanding article for the MAL newsletter during the fiscal year. This year's Newsletter Article Award recipient is Jennifer Tullai (Vallero). Jennifer is the Durability Engineering CMR Lead at GE Transportation in Erie, PA. Currently she leads a team in the CMR material modeling process to develop frequency projections for all MSA locomotive customers using statistical tools and is the key voice for the engineering organization in the cross functional CMR process. She has been with GE for over 5 years, including her time on the Edison Engineering Development Program. Jennifer has a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Colorado at Boulder and an M.S. in Mechanical Engineering from

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Congratulations to Jennifer Tullai for winning the Newsletter Article Award! From left to right, Awards Chair Stacey Culver, President Maureen Masiulis, Jennifer Tullai, and Director of Regions Colleen Layman.

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Gannon University. She has been a member of SWE since 2004 actively participating in many leadership roles at the sectional, regional and society levels. She is a 2013 New Faces of Engineering Award recipient and an inaugural recipient of the Outstanding Collegiate Member award. Currently she is on her second term as the Region G representative to the Society Nominating Committee as well as the New Collegiate Section and Collegiate Interest Group Coordinator Elect.

Outreach Award

The SWE MAL Outreach Award is awarded to a MAL member who has demonstrated commitment to outreach over the past fiscal year. This year's recipient of the Outreach Award is Kelly Smith.

Kelly Smith is the Process Engineer at a Lehigh Hanson cement plant in Redding, California. In 2007, she graduated with a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering from California State University, Sacramento. Kelly oversees the production of the kiln and milling systems at the plant. She enjoys troubleshooting and optimizing the equipment and assuring a high quality product. Kelly is also a mom to twin two-year-old boys that keep her extremely busy. In her leisure time she enjoys being active with her local group of SWE MAL's. She has been involved in the group since 2007 and has participated in the growth of their Wow! That's Engineering? Event. In 2013 she took on the challenge of leading the event and enjoyed it so much she already signed up to do it again in 2014.

MAL Outreach Impacts Invent It. Build It.



Last year, the MAL organization gave a donation to the Society's outreach program. According to Randy Freeman, the SWE Outreach Manager, our donation went toward the purchase of Invent It. Build It. kits and enabled the distribution of 45 additional

kits. Each kit serves 4 students, so the donation reached 180 students!

After kits and shipping costs, the remaining money from the donation was used to provide give-aways to middle school girls at the Invent It. Build It. event during the Society Conference in Baltimore.

Invent It. Build It. Is a collaborative event of SWE, Girl Scouts, WGBH/Design Squad Nation and ExxonMobil. It is a hands-on engineering experience for middle school girls with. The event is held at the annual conference. Invent It. Build It. is a hands-on, engineering experience for girls in grades 6-8 a parallel program for parents and educators. Our theme this year was

Invent It. Build It. is designed to showcase the importance of women in engineering and encourage girls to consider pursuing a career in the field.

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Make connections. Make history. The girls worked with SWE members from around the world on Design Squad Nation activities and met SWE member and Design Squad Nation

host, Judy Lee. This event is designed to showcase the importance of women in engineering and encourage girls to consider pursuing a career in the field.



Excited future engineers at Invent It. Build It. in Baltimore during the 2013 Annual Conference.

Being a MAL encourages creative avenues of interaction because we're located in diverse geographical locations.

How To Stay Involved As A MAL

By Emily Ongstad, MAL Newsletter Co-editor

Generally, Members-at-Large are members of the MAL organization because they either live in an area where there is no professional section, are far from the locations where their professional section meetings take place, or do not want to be directly involved with their local professional section. Whatever the reason, staying involved as a Member-at-Large can be challenging. MALs don't have consistent meetings, outreach events, or career development activities they can easily show up to in person. To be involved, MALs take different approaches, like the ones

highlighted below:

Annual and Regional Conferences

The SWE Annual Conference was held this year in Baltimore, MD and is highlighted



throughout this newsletter. Next year's conference will be in Los Angeles, CA. Regional conferences happen every year, often hosted by a

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collegiate section or collegiate-professional section team, within each region. SWE Regional Conferences are smaller, local versions of the SWE Annual Conference, where professional and collegiate members take part in workshops, networking, career fairs and local technical tours. Registration is open for many of the Region Conferences already, which will occur this spring. Check out the calendar on page 10 to find where your Region Conference is this year!

Outreach

Outreach events are tough to run without a sufficient number of people. In the past, MALs have started an outreach event and pulled in other MALs or collegiate sections in their area, or tagged up with a local section to get the numbers of people necessary to run the event. If you're a MAL in a remote area, you might also consider stopping by an outreach event put on by a professional section if you're traveling through their area.



Webinars and Podcasts

While professional section members often have career development, leadership, and other types of events through guest speakers, MALs focus on webinars and podcasts for these activities. SWE Webinars enhance your skills and knowledge on an array of subjects important to women engineers. Some examples are Entrepreneurship 101 for Early

Career Engineering Professionals, MBA Application Tips for Women in Engineering, and 6 Ways for Engineers to Update Skills after a Career Break. You can participate in live webinars or replay at your convenience. Podcasts can be downloaded so you have the convenience of listening to career advancement advice and tips, discussions on work/life balance, and other professional and personal development topics on your own time. The best part: they are free to all SWE members! Click here for a full list of [webinars](#) and [podcasts](#).

Leadership Roles

One of the best ways to become involved as a MAL and to truly feel a sense of community is to take on a leadership role. There are many officer and chair positions available at the MAL level (and also at the Society-level). Our current officers and chairs were highlighted in the previous newsletter and the call for nominations for next year will go out in January. Get to know your current MAL leadership or go online to the MAL Communities to find descriptions of the offices and committee chairs in the MAL Roles and Responsibilities.

Committee Service

If a leadership role isn't right for you, try committee service! Contact the committee chairs to volunteer your services. Get involved as much as possible, even if you have to put a limit on your service time!

Join us on Social Media!

In a world that is increasingly online, get updates on SWE and the MAL community by joining us on social media. See the back page for LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook links to MAL and SWE.

2013 Society Individual Awards

The MAL Organization is proud to announce our society-level individual award winners for 2013. Distinguished New Engineer Awards were presented to Maureen Masiulis and Karen Roth. Fellow was awarded to Linda Thomas. Also Maria

Edwards and Ashley Kellogg were nominated for the 2014 New Faces of Engineering Award. Please look for a feature article on our award winners in the next MAL newsletter!

Graduate School—How to Choose a Graduate Program in STEM

By Emily Ongstad, MAL Newsletter Co-editor

Don't be misled by big-name schools. When it's time for you to find a job after graduation, your potential employer is going to care more about what you know and what you can do and not where your degree is from.

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.

Choosing your research advisor

Your single most important choice in graduate school is who your research advisor is. Graduate school programs often require you to produce original research in the compilation of a thesis or dissertation, in addition to the required coursework. The support and mentoring of a well-trained, experienced advisor is invaluable. Because this is such a critical

choice that involves examining your work personality, as well as gaining information about the person you will be working for (and is no easy task), we'll address the choice of an advisor in the second article in this series.

Program focus

When it comes to choosing a graduate program in STEM, your career goals must fit with the focus of the program. A university may have a highly ranked Electrical Engineering graduate program, but if their coursework and the research of the department faculty is focused on power engineering and you're interested in microelectronics, this program would not be a good fit for you. You'd be doing yourself a disservice by choosing a program that, while highly-ranked, cannot advance you in your field of interest. Graduate school is not only about gaining knowledge in your chosen

field, but also making connections with the experts in your field. So choosing a program with coursework and faculty who do research in your field of interest is key. Note that the faculty doing the research you're interested in may

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"Piled Higher and Deeper" by Jorge Cham

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not always be in the department where the program is housed. A student may receive a degree in chemical engineering while doing a dissertation on fibrous matrices for liver regeneration.

Program environment and resources

Visit the campus and talk to students, faculty, and post docs. Ask for candid answers to all your questions. Is the program environment conducive to productive research? Is collaboration encouraged? Are the researchers generally happy? Make sure you find out WHY the researchers have the opinions they have. Are the labs well-funded and do they publish in good journals? An open, collaborative research environment where faculty are well-funded and produce publications and successful students can help quickly turn you into an excellent researcher. Are the resources for the type of research you want to do readily available? Waiting months to get time on a machine or computer will not help you progress to your degree quickly.

Student support

While the environment of the department is a significant contributor to your graduate school experience, the size and environment of the university as a whole is also important. Make sure that graduate students are valued at the university and are given sufficient support. Contact the program and the admissions office with an important question you don't have the answer to you. How do they treat you when you call or email? Are they timely, friendly, and professional?

"Support" sometimes means dollars! Check for funding available to students. Some programs will provide stipends for the first year, while in other programs students are expected to find fellowship funding or be funded by their chosen research advisor. Make sure the department or program administration is passionate about what they do and truly supports and encourages the students.

Opportunities for professional development

A graduate degree isn't just a graduate degree. Maybe you decided on graduate school because you want to become a university professor, or because you wanted to do R&D at a big company, or because you wanted to go into technology transfer. Each of these aspirations requires unique skills, like the ability to write fundable grants, or the ability to manage projects and people, or knowledge of the regulatory process and intellectual property. Whatever you decide you want your next step to be, make sure the university has programs that can support and develop those skills. You may be able to get teaching experience by being funded as a Teaching Assistant or teaching labs at a local community college. You may be able to gain experience working with industry through collaborations in the lab or department you choose. You may be able to get grant writing experience through coursework or seminars. There may be seminars or workshops on intellectual property and patents. Programs and courses like these may not always be apparent, so make sure to ask for what you're interested in when looking at prospective universities. Service with organizations like Graduate Student Government can improve your leadership skills and your communication skills. Positions like this often also help improve your public speaking skills.

Collect data efficiently and make your decision carefully

Create a spreadsheet to compare and contrast the programs you're interested in. Assess each program in terms of the aspects that are most important to you (e.g. location, financial aid, cost). In most disciplines, there is no best school or program, and it depends directly on what your area of interest is within the STEM field. Don't be misled by big-name schools. When it's time for you to find a job after graduation, your potential employer is going to care more about what you know and what you can do and not where your degree is from.



Society of Women Engineers

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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!

Committee Chairs: There are currently two MAL Committee Chair vacancies. If you’re interested in chairing either the Outreach or Communications Committees, please contact any of the MAL leadership.

Leaders like you Needed!: Want to get some leadership experience? The call for nominations for FY15 officers and chairs goes out in mid-January. Review the MAL Roles and Responsibilities Documents in the MAL Communities and get to know your current officers and chairs in preparation! Self-nomination and contested chairs are encouraged!

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 interesting 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 B—San Diego, CA	February 28-March 2
Region C—Houston, TX	February 7-9
Region D—Tuscaloosa, AL	February 28-March 2
Region E—Blacksburg, VA	March 28-30
Region F—Springfield, MA	April 4-6
Region G—Columbus, OH	February 21-23
Region H—Houghton, MI	February 14-16
Region i—Wichita, KS	February 28-March 2
Region J—Portland, OR	February 28-March 2
Call for MAL Officer and Chair nominations	Mid-January
MAL Webinar	TBD