



Members-At-Large

FY14 Newsletter, Issue 4

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Corner	1-3
Region E Women Defining Their Own Success	4-5
Tips for Succeeding as a Leader	6-8
How To Be More Effective, Successful & Satisfied At Work	8-9
Empower Yourself By Transforming Your Language	9-10
MAL California EWeek Event	10
What is a MAL?	11
Help Wanted!	12
MAL Calendar—Next 3 Months	12

President's Corner

With the closing of the fiscal year at the end of June comes the close of my three terms as MAL president. It has been a great experience working with both the Region Governance Team and the Member-At-Large leadership team. I highly encourage everyone to consider a SWE leadership position at some point to expand your personal network, learn how the Society operates, and better understand the benefits of being involved with an organization like SWE. The start of the fiscal year is a great time to reach out to your region leadership and society committee chairs to see what they have planned in the upcoming year and how you might be able to support them. Some ideas are to get involved with your region conference planning, sign up to present a session at the region conference, volunteer at the society conference, participate in the outreach event at the society or region conference, or to offer to judge society, region, or MAL awards.

At the end of FY13 the MAL leadership team conducted a preference survey to get feedback on how we can better serve you. This year, we developed goals to address some of the key

findings. This involved looking at how to better communicate information within our geographically diverse organization and provide or tailor SWE resources to better align with MAL needs. In addition, we continued to update our leadership resources to make the jobs of our leadership team easier. An example of this is development of a representative communications toolkit, which consists of a schedule of what to communicate when, and sample communications.

In this newsletter we are pleased to announce the FY15 MAL Leadership Team and introduce you to your FY15 officers. I wish them the best of luck next year in continuing to drive the MAL organization.



FY15 MAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

FY15 MAL Officers:

President Fran Stuart
Vice President Debbie Jacklitch-Kuiken
Secretary Jacquelyn Nagel
Treasurer Claire Shortall

FY15 MAL Representatives and Alternate Representatives:

A Vacant
B Mary Isaac
B-Alt Vi Brown
C Victoria Borchers
C-Alt Anique Cooley
C-Alt2 Claire Shortall
D Kenyona Pierre
D-Alt Nancy Manley
E Beth Mellott
E-Alt Jacquelyn Nagel
F Karen Roth
F-Alt Maureen Masiulis
G Olivia Miller
G-Alt Cynthia Reid
H Diane Peters
H-Alt Debbie Jacklitch-Kuiken
I Ramona Venable
J Linda Thomas
J-Alt Modupe Oluwadiya

FY15 Committee Chairs / Coordinators:

Awards Chair Stacey Culver
Website & Social Media Coordinator Jessica Sheleg
Financial Assessment Chair Debbie Jacklitch-Kuiken
Membership Coordinator Claire Shortall
Newsletter Co-Editors Modupe Oluwadiya & Emily Ongstad
Outreach Coordinator Victoria Borchers

Introducing the FY15 Officers

Fran Stuart became a MAL by choice in 2006 and has served as Region B MAL Representative, MAL Secretary, and MAL Teller. Prior to that Fran had been a member of two different professional and one collegiate sections where she served in numerous positions including Section President and Section Representative. Fran served as Society Secretary from 2006-2011 and has been a member of the Society Finance Committee since 2006. Fran has also served as a Region Director, Governor, and Senator and in numerous other positions at all levels of SWE. Fran has served in volunteer positions with *other organizations including the International Science and Engineering Fair. Fran is retired after ten years in small business, twenty years at four aerospace companies, three years in the military, college, and*

FY15 MAL LEADERSHIP TEAM continued

other organizations including the International Science and Engineering Fair. Fran is retired after ten years in small business, twenty years at four aerospace companies, three years in the military, college, and various part times jobs while a student. Fran and her husband live in Rio Rancho, New Mexico.

Debbie Jacklitch-Kuiken is currently working on her Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering at the University of North Dakota, where she is also working as a temporary lecturer when needed for the Mechanical Engineering Department. She has been a MAL representative and alternate representative for Region H, MAL Secretary, and MAL Vice-President. She has also served on and chaired the MAL Finance Assessment committee. She also volunteers for the Grand Forks County MathCOUNTS competition and other engineering outreach events in the community. Debbie is also active in the North Dakota Society of Professional Engineers Grand Forks Chapter, and other volunteering/community organizations. Debbie also teaches fitness classes, and is a certified Zumba instructor. When she is not studying, working, or helping with other organizations, she enjoys knitting, crocheting, and spending time with her husband restoring vintage vehicles.

Dr. Jacquelyn K. Nagel is an Assistant Professor of Engineering at James Madison University. She is the faculty advisor and SWE counselor for the James Madison University SWE collegiate section. Jacquelyn teaches engineering design, systems analysis, and circuits. Her research focuses on bio-inspired design and developing sustainable energy solutions. In 2012, she was recognized by the National eWeek Foundation and IEEE-USA as one of the New Faces of Engineering for her pioneering work in using biological systems as models for sensors, instrumentation and processes. Jacquelyn earned her Ph.D. from Oregon State University, and her M.S. and B.S. from Missouri University of Science & Technology.

Claire Shortall joined SWE as a freshman and is a charter member and past president of three sections – Princeton University, Louisiana (now Baton Rouge), and Greater New Orleans. While a member of Houston Area, Claire led the Gulf Coast Region during SWE's transition to a regional structure. She has been a MAL since relocating to central Louisiana in 1986. Her wealth of experience includes three years as Society treasurer, three years on the board of trustees, and many years on the Society's finance committee. In her roles as MAL membership coordinator and the Society's new professional section coordinator, she has provided guidance to other members who successfully organized more than 30 additional professional sections. A life member since 1983, Claire was recognized as a Distinguished New Engineer in 1984, as a Fellow in 1995, and as a recipient of an inaugural Distinguished Service Award in 2000.

Region E Women Defining Their Own Success *by Jacquelyn K. Nagel*

Traveling to Blacksburg, VA for the 2014 Region E Conference was an exciting time and an experience I was looking forward to. In my four years living in Virginia, I had not visited Virginia Tech, nor had I been to Blacksburg. While it was my third SWE Regional Conference, it was the first time I was attending in Region E and the first time taking a group of students with me. The last regional conference I attended was the 2004 Region i Conference when I was a collegiate member. I attended the Region i conference alongside seven students from Madison University. This was also the first time I was participating in a session at a SWE regional conference. I was both excited and nervous. Once the conference started and I was around my fellow SWE members, I relaxed and fed off of the energy of the other members. It was an event where I felt like I fit in without trying, and the region conference also

was a time of recharging my batteries and celebrating being a woman engineer. I met up with old friends, made new ones, and helped my students get the most out of the conference.

During the 2014 Region E Conference I realized how strong and inspiring women engineers truly are. It was made clear to me that women engineers define success on their own terms and it looks different for each of them. Success was defined based on stage in life or career or field, but what was common was that each defined it for themselves.

The lunch speaker was Dr. Amy Elliot, who completed her Ph.D. in mechanical engineering at Virginia Tech in February. Her research area was 3D printing. Specifically, she was developing a way to ensure that a printed part was an original by developing physical unclonable security features for 3D printed objects. She recently accepted a postdoctoral research position with Oak Ridge National Labs. She is defining her success through cutting-edge technology creation.

Dr. Linsey C. Marr, a professor of civil and environmental engineering at Virginia Tech, shared her viewpoint on balancing a family and career during the Saturday banquet. Her success has come from setting her own rules. Her rules are: get 8 hours of sleep each night, 1 hour of exercise each day, work for an organization with family friendly policies, and find a partner who wants to share domestic duties. From her perspective, having it all requires halving it all. There are career sacrifices with starting a family, but she has maintained happiness and life balance by following her rules.



Dr. Amy Elliott discussing her experience designing a rapid prototyping vending machine for her dissertation project, as well as her experience on the Discovery Channel's 'The Big Brain Theory.'

I participated as a panel member in a session focused on graduate studies and careers in academia. In that session, much of the conversation and questions from the audience were on balancing graduate student life and raising children. Two of the graduate students and one faculty member talked about how being a mother was part of their identity and how that related to the choices they made in their academic career. Their success was defined as family-focused. After my session, I met a collegiate member who was attending Rowan University. I learned about the clinical projects they are required to do and how she was working on research with a faculty advisor. For her, success was defined as gaining experience, and she sought out an engineering program that would help her meet that goal.

There were several sessions given by women in which they shared what has made their career successful and lessons learned along the way that could help others advance in their career. I had the opportunity to attend the session by Colleen Layman on Becoming an Effective and Authentic Leader in the Workplace. In Colleen's session, and the others my students shared with me, these women shared their experiences through stories and talked about how they have adapted to facilitate their success. For Colleen, she defined success through involvement in SWE. Before taking on a new leadership position at work, she leveraged opportunities in SWE to "try on" that leadership role. This process has allowed her to become an authentic and effective leader in the workplace.

I met and heard from some amazing women at the conference. I gained new perspective on what success means to different people and at different stages in life or a career. I believe you should define what success means to you and then go after it. Don't worry what others think or if you are "on the right track." Only you can answer that question and it will be different for everyone. Taking the initiative and working toward your vision of success, while acknowledging those who help you along the way, will take you where you want to be.

What is your definition of success?



Peggy Layne introducing keynote speaker Dr. Linsey C. Marr.



Collegiates from Region E interacting at the opening social event at Virginia Tech.

Tips For Succeeding As a Leader

By Jacquelyn K. Nagel



Director of Regions Colleen Layman giving us tips for being a successful leader.

“Being yourself, no matter the situation, is key to being a leader within engineering. Others will respect you for it.”

At the Region E Conference I attended the workshop entitled Becoming an Effective and Authentic Leader in the Workplace offered by Colleen Layman. Colleen emphasized that empowering women to undertake leadership roles is essential to any organization's success. The value of diversity and inclusion stems from the unique perspectives, challenges to traditional thinking, and different styles that a diverse and inclusive group can leverage. The session focused on how to be both effective and authentic in the work environment through five tips for succeeding as a leader that she has determined through her experience as a working engineer. They are:

- Be authentic

- Understand your organization's culture
- Communicate and connect
- Prepare for the role
- Show your are in it for the team

For each of the five tips she gave an example from her experience of how to leverage your skills to succeed as a leader in a variety of day-to-day settings from group projects to corporate leadership. In the following paragraphs I will recount the stories and advice she shared with the audience.

To drive home her tip to be authentic, Colleen echoed a quote from Betty Shanahan, "If we turn into men in high heels, we'll lose the value of diversity." Her point is well taken. Women who work in a male-dominated field, such as engineering, need to stay true to themselves and be who they are. The fact that we are not men makes us women a valuable and unique addition to the team and company. Colleen followed up on the quote with a story about the "pink hoodie." While on a job site one chilly morning she needed a jacket, but could only find a pink hoodie in her vehicle to wear. Although hesitant to draw attention to herself, she put it on anyway to keep warm. Throughout the day men commented on the color of her hoodie and treated her like a woman who had never been on a job site, until she stood up to one of the woman pipe workers who told her pink is not allowed on the job site.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

After replying that she will wear whatever color hoodie she wants, the other site workers have respected the pink hoodie and have come to know it as her trademark. Being yourself, no matter the situation, is key to being a leader within engineering. Others will respect you for it.

Understanding organizational culture is the next tip Colleen expressed as vital to being an effective and authentic leader in the workplace. No matter the company size or sector, there will be a culture to integrate into as an employee. She provided examples from her own experience, and in particular, compared her company culture to those of her clients'. Culture within an organization includes how and when employees communicate, meeting styles (and start times), dress, and management policies. Colleen emphasized meetings and dress in her examples. She gave a story about working with the government on a project where she learned very quickly that if the meeting starts at 1pm, then you are in the room and ready to begin talking at 1pm. This is not the case everywhere, and you will have to figure out what fits best for you. Same goes for dress. She brought up the old adage of 'dress for the position you want, not the one you have.' Consider what is appropriate for your organization. For some it is suits and heels. For some it is business casual. For others it is steel toes and jeans. Overall, you should feel comfortable within your organization, so consider what fits you and your goals. This will support and foster you to be authentic.

We all know communication is key to any organization, or project, for that matter. Colleen's points about the necessity to communicate and connect revolve around understanding those that you work with, being adaptable, and compromising in order to get things done. She offered a touching story about how she improved communications with her boss. Colleen's boss is a man of few words, and would never provide the feedback she desired on her weekly progress updates. Each week she would send out her update on Friday afternoon. One week she happened to return to the office later than usual and sent her update after dinnertime expecting that her boss would not read it.

Surprisingly, he sent a reply with comments and feedback not too long after. She found out that he checked his mail before going to bed in the evening and that he was in a lighter mood at that time, and more willing to provide feedback. She discussed with him that she greatly appreciated the feedback and continued to send the updates at a time when he was open to giving feedback. In Colleen's example, she learned the habits of her boss and adapted to his communication style, which allowed her to better connect with him and strengthen their working relationship. By understanding your co-workers' communication styles, you can better connect with and support them. She recommends the book [People Styles At Work](#), which will help you to understand your own style of communication and if it is out of sync with those that you work with.

Colleen's fourth tip is to prepare for the leadership role that you might have or be working toward. Preparation can occur through multiple avenues, but Colleen emphasized leveraging opportunities within SWE. SWE offers numerous opportunities to practice leadership skills that are transferable to the workplace, as well as gain new ones, outside your organization. Leadership opportunities exist at local, regional, and societal levels, as well as with professional sections, collegiate sections and the Members-at-Large. Colleen shared her secret to leadership preparation. She will not take on a role within her organization unless she has tried it in SWE first. SWE offers a safe environment to develop into an effective and authentic leader. Take advantage of it! You will not only learn, but also have fun and make connections that were not otherwise possible.

Showing that you are in it for the team is the final tip Colleen expressed as vital to being an effective and authentic leader in the workplace. What she means by this is to be aware of any unconscious bias, such as attitudes and beliefs that you may be unwilling or unable to share. It is possible that you are unaware of your biases. Colleen mentioned that bias often exists within many well-intentioned women and men of all different backgrounds. These can be biases about race, gender, sexual orientation, expertise, age, etc. For example, you may believe that women and men should be equally associated with science, but your automatic

(Continued from page 7)

associations could show that you (like many others) associate men with science more than you associate women with science. Statistics show that the same number of men and women exhibit the same bias trends. You can take [The Implicit Association Test \(IAT\)](#) to examine your own bias.

Colleen's workshop entitled Becoming an Effective and Authentic Leader in the Workplace offered at the Region E Conference was heartfelt and encouraging. Her involvement in SWE has helped her career in many ways, and she encourages all SWE members to get involved, as everything you learn in the organization is directly transferable to the workplace. I second that. I have also found it to be true for academia. She embodies the advice given in her workshop session and I am thankful that I could be a part of it.

How To Be More Effective, Successful, And Satisfied At Work

By Romona Venable

Are you constantly serving others? Do you (figuratively) put the plane's emergency oxygen mask on everyone else before putting on your own? Do you take care of others, give to others, but never receive? Do you have a career plan, or just work from day to day?

In her keynote presentation at the 2014 Region i conference, international speaker, author, and expert in professional and personal development Dondi Scumaci shared some insight and tips on how to be more effective, successful, and satisfied at work-. Dondi has published three books, all of which I highly recommend for professional women:

Career Moves

Ready, Set...Grow!

Designed for Success: The 10 Commandments for Women in the Workplace

Here are just a few notes from her presentation:

Add value to create opportunity.
Commodity type people are

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common. Commodity people think “I’ll do more when I’m paid more.” Strategic people are paid more because they add more value. *Your value* increases as you add value, are user friendly, produce solutions, and have an impact. What are you known as – a person to be given as task list, or someone who is strategic? Seek to strengthen your brand as someone who is strategic.

Some bad moves:

- Avoiding conflict
- Runaway emotions
- Naiveté about office politics
- Failure to act, decide, or accept responsibility
- Overachieving – but as a hamster on the wheel going nowhere
- Down the documentation hole

Some good moves:

- Equip yourself with awareness. Go get your feedback!
- Develop a broader understanding
- Make your results visible
- Make networking a top priority
- Get a mentor (or a board of advisors)
- Develop a career plan. The most successful people have a five year plan.

Some quotes from Dondi:

- “Make your progress visible and your results obvious.”
- “Problems are magnified when you look through glasses of fear.”
- “Every organization has politics. There is a game board and you are on it. You are either playing well or poorly, but you are most certainly playing.”

Dondi’s dynamic presentation style makes listening to her more fun than reading my notes on her presentation, so check out her website for interviews, YouTube videos, her blog, her books, book discussion guides, and more.

Empower Yourself By Transforming Your Language.

By Romona Venable

In the work environment, men and women exhibit distinctly different verbal and nonverbal communication styles. The communication styles used more frequently by women may make them seem less knowledgeable and decisive than men. At the 2014 Region I Conference, speaker Jena Lysen gave examples, and explained how to shed weak words, phrases, and gestures. Empower yourself to win attention & respect, and get ideas across with confidence and power. You can transform yourself by transforming your language!

Here are some of Jena’s recommendations:

Eliminate “I” statements.

- “I” statements weaken your position.
 - You can be blamed for issues that aren’t yours
 - Imply you are not sure of the facts
 - Characterize inadequate leadership
 - Appear immature and childlike
- So focus on the issue, not yourself (unless you intend to be the subject)

Touchy-feely statements indicate weakness. Avoid them.

- I feel...

Hedge words show weakness. Examples include:

- I’m not sure...
- I guess...
- I’m not an expert...
- I don’t know...
- In my opinion...
- Basically...
- ...seem to...

Avoid using such phrases.

Continued from page 9)

Tag weakness, or adding a question at the end.

Examples include:

- ..., isn't it?
- ..., don't you think?
- ..., right?
- ..., OK?
- ..., do you know what I mean?

Adding a question at the end like this diminishes your authority/experience/assertiveness, so don't do it, even verbally.

Unneeded modifiers:

- really
- extremely

Men don't seem to differentiate much between "important", "really important", and "extremely important" – they just get the concept "it is important." So leave out the modifiers.

MAL California EWeek Event

By Modupe Oluwadiya

The California MAL E Week Program was a huge success and the event was featured in Reddings.com news. The workshop taught young girls about the science of engineering and the interpersonal skills needed for a successful engineering career. The Plan it, Construct It Workshop was organized by Proposed Shasta Cascade Section of SWE California. There were 81 girls between 4th and 6th grade. The event was directed by Kelly Smith and supported by volunteers and local engineers.

California SWE MAL EWeek Event



What is a MAL?

By Emily Ongstad

Members-At-Large (MAL) are members of the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) who are members of one of SWE's ten regions (A-J) but who are not members of either a professional or collegiate section. MALs are often MALs because they reside in a location geographically distant from a professional section. Around 5 percent of SWE's professional members are MALs - more than 600 SWE members! The MAL organization provides MALs with a framework for communication, support and representation.

MAL Representatives facilitate communications among the MALs in their respective regions. Each region has one MAL Representative for every 100 voting MALs in the region. The MAL representatives are the voting members of the MAL council, which makes policy and pursues the objectives of the MAL organization. Each MAL representative also represents constituents as voting members of the region council. Vacancies in MAL representative positions may be filled at any time during the year once candidates are identified.

MAL officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) have primary responsibility for the overall MAL organization and are elected to serve for the next fiscal year by the MAL representatives. The MAL officers are voting members of the MAL executive committee, which manages the business and affairs of the MAL organization, and are nonvoting members with the right to participate in the discussions of the MAL council.

Areas of responsibility - awards, communications, financial assessment, membership, newsletter, and outreach—are handled by the MAL committees. The chairs/coordinators for each MAL committee are appointed by the MAL president with the approval of the MAL executive committee. Each year, nominations for elected positions are solicited electronically from the MALs by February 15. Self-nomination is encouraged.

For more information on the MAL organization, check out our website at mal.swe.org and join us on [Facebook!](#)



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 interesting in judging the MAL Awards packets, please contact MAL Awards Chair [Stacey Culver](#).

MAL Calendar

2014 SWE Annual Conference— Los Angeles, California

October 23-25

SWE Membership Renewal Due