



Members At Large

FY18 Newsletter, Issue 4

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President's Corner

Greetings MALs! As we wind down FY18, I'm reflecting on all the changes that SWE and the MALs have gone through this year. As we manage the governance transitions we may be guided by other experiences in which we've encountered change: a company buyout or restructure. While it may be tough to let go of the way things were, we can embrace the change. We will continue to take stock of whether these changes are effective, and make additional tweaks along the way, if necessary.

It has been a pleasure to work with the Region Governance Team and the Members at Large leadership teams this year. With regions dissolved, both the RG team and MAL leadership will look drastically different in the future, and I look forward to working with leaders in the new structure! If you haven't been involved as a leader before, please consider a SWE leadership position at some point. This can help expand your network and learn more about SWE, especially as SWE's structure changes.

If you haven't already, now is the time to start planning your WE18 conference travel to Minneapolis, MN. Registration and housing are open. Please also renew your SWE membership for FY19!

The MAL awards program is accepting applications, so if you or someone you know is deserving of an award, please submit your nomination package before June 15.

Finally, I want to thank all of our FY18 MAL leaders for their hard work this year. These leaders, with a variety of experiences and backgrounds, have greatly contributed to the work on governance restructure and bylaws changes within the MAL organization. I look forward to a fantastic FY19!

Emily Ongstad
SWE FY18 MAL President



Podcasts for Professional Development

By Christi Patton Luks , Region I Representative



I, like many of us, spend a lot of time in my car. My experience is probably a little different than yours because my job and my primary home are more than four hours apart. I only make the drive every two weeks, but it does give me long stretches of time to entertain myself. Podcasts have helped me add some productivity to those hours. I will share a selection of the audio podcasts that you might enjoy or find useful.

One that I particularly like is “The Engineering Career Coach.” These are edited to roughly half an hour. Anthony Fasano and Christian Knutson cover a wide variety of topics that will help you take control of your career at any stage. They

have great tips for job searches, giving better presentations, improving your technical writing, developing project management skills, making career changes, and more. If you want to try one out, I recommend Episode 163 “Getting Involved in Professional Associations.”

You might also like “Career Tools” or its sister “Manager Tools”. They have more than 800 podcasts available. The style is more conversational and the length is typically half an hour. Their topics range from “Talking about Sensitive Topics” to “Working Remotely” or interview questions from the perspective of the interviewer and the interviewee. A recent episode that I found helpful was “How to Deal with Out of Hours Emails.”

Laura McClellan, a lawyer and writer, hosts the podcast “The Productive Woman”. The episodes are generally just less than an hour long. Frequently she simply talks about issues that can help you manage a busy life and career. Sometimes she brings in female guests to discuss their areas of expertise. The Episode 175 on “Delegation” was very helpful to me.

If you have your own business or are considering starting one up, “The Classy Career Girl” has a good podcast. This was started by Anna Runyan and you can check out her blog to get a sense of what is available. The length of the podcasts varies from 10 minutes to more than an hour. Episode 47 “How to Find a Job You Won’t Hate” has some good advice if you are questioning your current job.



Source: <https://engineeringmanagementinstitute.org/the-podcast/>

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"The Engineering Commons" is a group of men that discuss random engineering technical topics such as DC motors or the design process. These are generally over an hour. Episode 133, "Embarrassed Engineer" is about projects gone awry.

If you are stressed and not sleeping well, I recommend "Sleep with Me" where Scooter will tell you "a lulling, droning, boring bedtime story to distract your racing mind." These are typically an hour and a half long. Usually just a few minutes have me fast asleep, so I don't have a specific episode to recommend!

Finally, we all need a little fun. Jolenta Greenberg and Kristen Meinzer host "By The Book". They select a self-help book, try to live by it for two weeks, then report on it in a 30-40 minute podcast. If you don't mind mature language, these can be a lot of fun. You might want to try their episode on *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up* by Marie Kondo.



Source: <http://www.jolentagreenberg.com/by-the-book/>

Dr. Luks is a professor of chemical and biological engineering at Missouri University of Science & Technology in Rolla, MO.

SWE Social Media Announcement

The dissolution of regions impacts the way SWE members communicate on social media starting in FY19. All region based social media pages and accounts will no longer be accessible as of July 1, 2018. The good news is that the MAL Facebook page will not change.

SWE HQ discussions and regularly posted content will be directed to the [SWE Facebook page](#) and [All Together blog](#). Additional Facebook groups include *Society of Women Engineers - SWE Group* and SWE affinity groups if you're looking for a particular focus area. Instagram and twitter accounts are @SWEtalk. The SWE snapchat account is sweorg.

Questions can be directed to marketing@swe.org or governance@swe.org.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Starting July 1, 2018,

there will be **no access** to any SWE Regional Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts.



Bringing Baby to Work

By Ali Anderson, Region G Representative



Before I told my boss that I was expecting, I had played out the worst case scenario in my head 100 times. I worked in the freshmen engineering department of WVU as a graduate assistant, but I was a recent full time hire so I thought she'd be disappointed to learn her new employee would soon be taking a few months off. When we sat down together to have "the talk" I was pleasantly shocked at her reaction. She informed me that she had brought her son to work with her 25 years ago and would love to offer me the same opportunity! She spoke about her experiences as a working mom and the benefit she felt it had for students to see her as a whole person. She's always kept a family-friendly environment as many other faculty

members have kids that may need to tag along for a day when schools are closed. Additionally, the college's Dean and Associate Dean are very enthusiastic about having babies on campus. Another new mom in the college brought her foster son in for several weeks until a spot opened up in daycare. The deans stopped to visit them regularly and were even disappointed when he started daycare.

Fast forward to February where we had a beautiful baby boy: Mark Lewis, 22 inches, 10 lb. 4 oz. (huge, I know!). Maternity leave went by quickly and while I wish I could have stayed him with him longer, it made more sense financially to go back to work since he was coming with me. However as my return date neared I started to question if this would really work. What if he cries too loud? What if I need to nurse in a meeting? Will I miss out on new opportunities because I'll be seen as too busy or distracted? No matter what concerns I had about him coming to work, none were enough to convince me that he'd be better off somewhere else. So I packed up extra diapers and toys, then off we went!

I came back to work at the end of the semester when students are most stressed with final projects and exams. Mark quickly became known as "therapy baby" because of the calming effect he had! My coworkers fight to hold him during meetings, and many stop by throughout the day after receiving a challenging email or working with a difficult student. No matter how stressful the situation, you can't help but smile when a baby coos.

I'm not going to say there weren't bumps; it's definitely an adjustment having him with me. I've learned to give myself extra time to get places, to better prioritize my week, and to accept help when coworkers offer. Some days he takes long naps and I can accomplish a big task. Some days he needs to get up and walk around every hour. But even without a baby, isn't that normal? Before he was with me there were days when I was on fire and days where I went home thinking "what did I even accomplish today?" Baby-less me would have a hard time accepting both of those as good days and might even beat myself up over a less-productive day. Becoming a mom has helped me be okay with that and it has been such a freeing experience.

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I'm fortunate to work where a strong foundation of family-friendly practices have already been established. I didn't have to fight to bring Mark to work with me like many women do. However, I hope my story can help other moms and employers see it is possible to bring your baby to work and stay productive. I believe the leadership within my college see the bigger picture here – if you want to attract and retain the best employees, you have to have a system in place that recognizes them as faculty AND people. This means that when life happens – like the birth or adoption of a child, or the loss of a loved one – you have to be flexible with your staff. I am so grateful to have my son with me every day, and I truly believe I am better at my job because I'm not constantly worrying about him like I would if we were apart.

MAL Awards Nominations Due June 15

By Stacey Culver, Awards Chair

The Members at Large organization is seeking nominations for the 2018 MAL awards program. The awards program strives to recognize MALs for their accomplishments.

Nomination packages, including the nomination form, must be submitted by June 15 for the following awards: Rising Star Award for professional MALs with less than 8 years of work experience; Shining Star Award for professional MALs with between 8 and 15 years of experience; and the Outreach Award for collegiate or professional MALs who participated in outreach activities during the fiscal year. You may nominate another

deserving MAL, or, if you feel you would be a good candidate for one of the awards, please have a friend or colleague nominate you. Self nominations are not accepted. Nominators do not need to be MALs or even SWE members.

Details about the MAL Awards program and requirements for preparing nomination packages can be found on the MAL [Awards & Grants page](#).

If you are available to judge the MAL awards this summer, please contact Stacey Culver, the MAL awards chair. Thank you for taking the time to acknowledge our members for their exceptional contributions.

Lehigh Valley Academy SWENext

By Vidhya Thiyagarajan, SWENext Section Founder and President and Dhanu Thiyagarajan, SWENext Advisor

In February 2017, I started a SWENext club at Lehigh Valley Academy Regional Charter School (LVA). Our organization is for both boys and girls and hopes to inspire students interested in math and science to pursue a career in STEM or medicine. Members of the club have participated in several hands-on activities, experiments and challenges as well as listened and learned from those in the workplace about STEM, medicine and college experiences. We hope to expand our

club through outreach events in the school community to educate others about STEM and what it entails.

After a long process to get the club approved and pitching the club to students, we finally had our first meeting of Lehigh Valley Academy's section of SWENext. With about nine members, we began the year with a tower building competition!

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Right from the start, several members showed their interest in STEM and utilized their potential to understand engineering principles. It was a great way to start the club!

After I began learning more about the STEM interests of the students, I was able to create a plan for activities and presentations based on what they desired. One of our first informational meetings was playing jeopardy, led by our SWENext advisor, Dhanu Thiagarajan. She created a game that introduced the different types of engineering and what they entailed in a fun manner to the students. After the meeting, several attendees told me that they were much more informed about engineering as well as started having ideas of what they wanted to major in at college.

As the year kept going, we had alternating informational and activity based meetings. Some meetings included a Skype call with engineers from an engineering company and an egg drop challenge between members of our club. I was excited in the direction the club was going in and when school ended, I had several ideas on what to do for the 2017-2018 school year.

Some of my goals for the 2017-2018 school year were to have more informational sessions with the members, as many were beginning the process of thinking about their future as well as to be more engaged with the community. To achieve this, the club advisor and I decided it was necessary

to hold elections to better delegate responsibilities. As a leadership team, we were able to bounce around ideas and get things done at a much quicker and more effective pace!

Within one year, our club has now expanded to 15-20 regular members (we have a small school)! Over the past few months, we have hosted speakers about balancing a rigorous college life with a STEM major, listened to presentations from nurses from a local hospital, and several more activities! More recently, our focus has been on planning an outreach project for Engineering Week. We hosted a race car building activity with second graders from LVA during E-week! The event introduces STEM to second graders and shows them how many different cool and fun things one can do with STEM! We know this is very important because the younger kids are introduced to STEM, the more likely they are to consider it as a possible career choice which is important for female equality in STEM. We have also created several fliers and announcements with interesting facts about engineering to put up around our school! Our next outreach events include a panel discussion comprised of different STEM and Medical professionals as well as a Hidden Figures movie night! I am really happy with the direction that LVA's section of SWENext is heading in and hope that the students and community are inspired to join STEM!

My WE Local Experience

By Alicia B. Kiremire, PE, PMP

By now you have (probably) heard of SWE's [WE Local conferences](#). With volunteer exhaustion on the rise and inconsistent programming varying from region-to-region, SWE Headquarters (HQ) in partnership with a group of SWE Members began exploring the idea of HQ regionally operated conferences. Through the work of this task force came the launch of the WE Local Advisory Board (LAB) and WE Local Host Committees (LHC) – thus WE Local was born!

Since the launch in July 2016, WE Local has hosted 11 conferences worldwide! You could say WE Local conferences are replacing what used to be known as region conference. And I have attended SWE region conferences, annual conferences (WE16, WE17, etc), and now WE Local. Here's how I'd compare them:

- WE Local was **less overwhelming than WE17**.

Fewer sessions, a more intimate feel, and a smaller and more focused career fair. It still packed all the same benefits – networking, professional development, outreach, career fair, and social events – just on a smaller level.

If you are a first-time conference attendee or are looking for a job in a specific area, WE Local may be a great fit for you.

- WE Local is **convenient travel-wise**.

There is more of a chance you can drive and save money on airfare, and the conference is shorter, so you have fewer hotel nights. **WE Local is good for those on a budget!**

However, if you have the budget for it and are looking **for the big experience**, [annual conference](#) **can't be beat!**



- **Compared to region conferences**

WE Local was similar in that sessions, speakers, and tours were chosen by a local group of members. The conference really showcased the **local vibe**. However, I found WE Local to be more consistent than region conferences, with **more streamlined processes**, because the same HQ staff takes care of those logistics at all WE Locals.

- There are **outreach events at every WE Local**.

Check out [SWENext DesignLab!](#) Not every region was able to offer outreach events at every region conference, and this is a way SWE members enjoy giving back. Both professional and collegiate members can volunteer for this huge, hands-on event showcasing our profession to the next generation of women engineers.

On to my experience at WE Local Tulsa in January 2018!

As Region C Secretary and member of the Society Curriculum Committee, I usually attend conferences for SWE business; but this time I was only there to attend and present.

I was able to **attend a variety of sessions**, includ-

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ing:

- A keynote about personal experiences as a woman in engineering,
- A plenary panel on the importance of positivity in the workplace,
- And a technical presentation on water recycling projects.

I also attended the **SWE Town Hall**, where Society leaders answered questions from members about everything from SWE's current growth strategy to diversity within SWE to a new website implementation. It gave me a real sense of where the Society is, what its strategies are, and where it's heading.

I did not attend the WE Achieve Awards Ceremony, but I saw great pictures from friends showcasing the fun, formal event, and all the individual and section awards presented.

Throughout the conference, I enjoyed seeing a lot of the same people I had met at WE17, plus **meeting new friends**.

As I said earlier, WE Local was **good for my budget**. It was a six-hour drive (no flying required!), and five meals were included in the registration cost. The conference hotel was considerably less expensive than the "big city" conference.

Overall, WE Local was an encouraging, challenging, inspiring, and connecting experience. I would encourage you to try out a WE Local if you haven't already. Check out this list of [2019 WE Local locations](#) to see which one is closest to you!

For another great perspective on WE Local, see this All Together blog post by Marta Wicke, "[Why I Love WE Local](#)." I had the opportunity to meet Marta at WE Local Tulsa and was excited to see her article!

Alicia is a MAL in Ruston, LA, where she owns FlowStream Management. She is also SWE's Region C Secretary/Webmaster and a sub-committee lead in SWE's Curriculum Committee.

FY19 Membership and WE18 Registration

By Jacquelyn Nagel, Newsletter Editor

LET'S
BREAK
BOUNDARIES

Make your plans to attend WE18! New this year, the hotel reservation and conference registration portals have been merged to simplify the process. This also requires attendees to be registered for WE18 before a hotel booking can be completed. By July 19, 2018, all rooms booked by housing must be finalized in order to prevent a one-night penalty. To register for WE18 at the member rate, ensure that your membership is renewed. Professional members renewing dues online prior to June 30 are eligible for a \$5.00 discount using the code EBIRD.

All MAL Representatives should plan to attend WE18. The MAL Summit (all MAL leaders are strongly encouraged to attend) will occur from 12:30pm to 4pm on Wednesday, October 17. The MAL Meeting (all reps or alternates are required to attend) will occur from 10am to Noon on Thursday, October 18.

MAL Leadership Contacts

MAL Officers

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| President | Emily Ongstad | emily.ongstad@gmail.com |
| Vice President | Erin Culver | eaculver@gatheringwaters.com |
| Secretary | Debbie Jacklitch-Kuiken | debbie_jacklitch@yahoo.com |
| Treasurer | Claire Shortall | claire.shortall@yahoo.com |

MAL Representatives

| | | |
|-------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| MAL-A | None elected | |
| MAL-B | Lorna Holt | lornaholt@me.com |
| MAL-C | Victoria Tinsley | tori04@gmail.com |
| MAL-D | Jennifer Seals Cooper | jennifersealscooper@gmail.com |
| MAL-E | Beth Mellott | beth.mellott@gmail.com |
| MAL-F | Brianna Sporbert | bsporbert@boydtech.com |
| MAL-G | Alicia Anderson | akowalsk@mix.wvu.edu |
| MAL-H | Rebecca Reck | swe@rebeccaee.com |
| MAL-I | Christi Patton Luks | luksc@mst.edu |
| MAL-J | Sara Hough | hough.sara@gmail.com |

MAL Alternate Representatives

| | | |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| MAL-C | Claire Shortall | claire.shortall@yahoo.com |
| MAL-H | Anne Lucietto | anne.lucietto@sbcglobal.net |

MAL Committee Chairs/Coordinators

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Awards Chair | Stacey Culver | staceyc@gatheringwaters.com |
| Financial Assessment Chair | Sara Hough | hough.sara@gmail.com |
| Leadership Coach | Beth Posey-Leonhard | bethpl07@gmail.com |
| Leadership Coach | Debbie Jacklitch-Kuiken | debbie_jacklitch@yahoo.com |
| Membership Coordinator | Claire Shortall | claire.shortall@yahoo.com |
| Newsletter Editor | Jacquelyn Nagel | Jacquelyn.kay.nagel@gmail.com |
| Outreach Coordinator | Heather Tedder | Heather.tedder@gmail.com |
| Website/Social Media Coordinator | Jennifer Cooper | jennifersealscooper@gmail.com |



Society of Women Engineers
Aspire / Advance / Achieve

Stay Connected!

As a MAL, it can be difficult to stay connected to SWE. Find us on Facebook and our website (mal.swe.org) to stay in the know about MAL and the Society!

Help Wanted!

Region A Representative: There is currently a vacancy in the Region A Representative position. If you are interested in filling this position, please contact the President, [Emily Ongstad](#).

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. The MAL awards committee will select the best newsletter article award each fiscal year. Additionally, authors of all published articles are eligible for the newsletter contributor drawing. If you would like to contribute, please send your articles to our editor, [Jacquelyn Nagel](#). This is your newsletter!

MAL Calendar

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|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| MAL Award Nominations Due | June 15, 2018 |
| Renew your SWE Membership | June 30, 2018 |
| Regional Social Media Pages Close | July 1, 2018 |
| WE18 in Minneapolis, MN | October 18-20, 2018 |
| MAL Summit | October 17, 2018 |
| MAL Meeting | October 18, 2018 |

To register for the WE18 Conference visit: WE18.swe.org