



SOCIETY OF WOMEN ENGINEERS
Kansas City Section

NOVEMBER 2006 NEWSLETTER

Calendar of Upcoming Events:

November

- 18 Joint Meeting with College Students
- 21 Webinar: Decision Making Under Uncertainty
- 30 Webinar: Virtual Leadership: Leading Dispersed Teams

December

- 8 Christmas Party and Adopt-A-Family

January

- TBD Career Enhancement Event
- 26 Shrimp Bingo

February

- 18-24 Engineering Week

March

- TBD Work/Life Balance Panel Discussion

April

- TBD Technical Tour

May

- TBD Celebrate 25-years for SWE-KC
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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear SWE Members and Supporters:

Congratulations to the Society on yet another successful National Conference! Kudos goes to everyone who contributed to making this a great event. The attendance numbers are not yet final, however, we know more than 4,000 persons registered. Kansas City, the Heart of America, proved a lively and popular venue for our annual conference.

At the SWE leadership level, we completed our second board of directors meeting as well as our annual membership and COR meetings at conference. We re-energized our committees/FIGs/task forces and members during our face-to-face meetings. We emphasized the 2007 goals and objectives, and introduced early thoughts for '08. The health of the Society was vividly displayed through our events and programs.

- First conference program that was combined with the SWE Magazine conference issue*
- First Upward Mobility Award given to an international based recipient*
- Recognition of graduating seniors at Celebrate SWE*
- Record number of exhibitors at our Career Fair*
- Revision of the Society BHAG statement and vivid descriptions*

As we move into our second quarter, the board has a number of activities on its agenda. Please use the new tools, ideas, and best practices you gained at conference and apply them in your regions, sections, and committees. For a successful FY07, the next several weeks are very important time. The more we get done before the holiday season is upon us, the better positioned we are to accomplish all the FY07 objectives.

*Jude Garzolini
SWE President FY07*

THANK YOU

SWE-KC Members,

Please join me to thank the SWE-KC National Conference Committee for a successful National Conference 2006 here in Kansas City. I hope everyone enjoyed the conference, the camaraderie and the fun as much as I did, and learned from all the seminars and discussions that the conference offered.

A Special **THANK YOU** to Michelle Mahoney, Chairwomen of the SWE-KC National Conference Committee, who took tons of pictures throughout the conference.

Michelle Mahoney, graduated from the University of Missouri - Columbia in May 1992 with a BS in Civil Engineering. She then completed her Masters of Civil Engineering at the University of Kansas in December 2003. She has been an ACTIVE professional member of SWE since 2001 and has served on the Conference Programming Board since 2003. She is the current Treasurer of the Kansas City Section of ASCE and a member of the Fort Leonard Wood Post of SAME.

Michelle enjoys gardening, photography, basketball, reading and sewing in her spare time. She is a Past President of the Kansas City Kappa Delta Alumni Association and served on the Board of Trustees at the Liberty United Methodist Church in Liberty, MO.

Michelle Mahoney has been assigned to a new job in Louisiana for the next two years. She will be leaving the KC area soon. We all wish her the best in her new job and relocation! We hope to see you again soon.

**MICHELLE,
THE SWE-KC SECTION WILL MISS YOU...**

Confessions of a Stay-at-Home Mom (or How I spent my time at the 2006 SWE National Conference)

By Susan Thomas Schlett
(SWE-WI Member)

I have to confess, I did not originally plan to attend the SWE National Conference in Kansas City last month. The last time I had attended a SWE National Conference was 2004; it was held in Milwaukee (about one hour from my home), I was SWE-WI president, and 8 months pregnant.

Today, in 2006, I was not looking for a new job, I was not on a fast-track career path, I was not a national SWE officer. In addition, I was busy at home with a house, three kids, ages 6, 4 and 2, and a husband. Why should I bother to attend? Then I remembered back to the several SWE conferences I had attended while I was single and I recalled how great I felt after attending. Maybe this was just what I needed to “recharge my batteries”.

I started to reconsider attending. My first step was to try and pick out apparel to wear at the conference. My two-year-old watched as I tried on clothes I had from seven years ago when I was working outside of the home in an engineering job. I found many of these outfits outdated due to their built-in shoulder pads. After finally finding just enough items that would keep me off the “fashion don’t” list, I searched for a purse. I can’t remember the last time I owned a real purse. I have been donning a black fanny-pack forever and did not think it would be appropriate to wear to *the Achievement Awards Banquet*. My husband and sons actually went out and bought me a new purse...what great guys I have!

The next step was to arrange daycare for my youngest...something I had never done before. Along the way I met a lot of great people in my town who offered to help while I would be away at conference. It looked like all the logistics needed in order to attend the conference were falling into place. I typed up a daily schedule for my husband and booked my flight.

The first evening I was in Kansas City, I attended a hospitality suite sponsored by people from Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE) and engineering friends of theirs from Hawaii. We had a great time networking, but I must confess that when we all brought out our cameras for group photos and my film camera was three times as big as everyone else’s digital camera, I did feel like a dinosaur and somewhat out of place.

My feet were killing me the entire conference, (I had been used to wearing sneakers or going bare foot, so all my other shoes needed breaking back-in badly). But despite the foot pain and the moments of doubt, I was having a great time seeing old friends and making new ones. Seeing my friend Jonna from Region F move up to SWE National Membership Chair and receive one of the Distinguished New Engineer (DNE) awards was terrific. Being there as my friend Alyse from the Minnesota SWE Section also received the DNE award that I had the pleasure of nominating her for, was very exciting

and gratifying. Cheering our Wisconsin Section on as the Section received awards for BEST NEWSLETTER and E-WEEK activities was a high point during the Celebrate SWE! Event. I also mourned the passing of SWE friends who are no longer with us. The mix of emotions, tears of joy and sorrow, were all part of the conference experience for me.

I sat in on some wonderful sessions with very accomplished women speaking about the various stages of their careers. I must confess that I kept saying to myself...”why couldn’t I be sitting here 20 years ago”...”where was this advice when I could have used it!” After feeling sorry for myself, I said to myself “snap out of it, you can’t change the past. Decide what things you and SWE can do from this day forward that will help make a difference in your life and those of others!”

Other lasting images that will remain with me include: my new friends and conference roommates Deanna and Erin and I dressing up for the Celebrate SWE! event, donning SWE tattoos and pretending to pose like Charlie’s Angels! Hearing about the closing off of the main street in Kansas City so that a real cattle drive could go through...something I would not have believed if it weren’t for the pictures of cattle on our friend Rita’s picture phone! One of the most touching moments came when I was walking through the airport in Milwaukee heading for home. I spotted a man with two little children...one in a baby-carrier and one running around him in circles...he had a cardboard sign at his feet that read “ Thank God Mommy is Home”! I was so touched, I stopped to take a photo with this family and their Mom who has just returned home also.

Yes, it was good for me to attend the conference. One of the beauties of SWE is its diversity and inclusiveness. SWE offers something for everyone. SWE helps you realize that you do have lots to contribute at any age, and at any stage of your life.

I plan to attend the 2007 SWE National Conference. –Hope to see you in Nashville!

Susan Thomas Schlett
SWE-WI Member

JOINT MEETING WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS

JOINT MEETING WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS

November 18 at 11-1pm

Join us for two hours of networking and mentoring collegiate section members.
Share your stories with the student section members from
KU, K-state, and UMKC

Answer their questions and give them tips on:
How you got to where you are today,
What you do at work,
What opportunities are out there,
How you balance your life

Join us for round table discussion

Location TBD

RSVP to Michelle Wirth at michelle.wirth@swe.org



A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Friday December 8, 2006, from 6pm to 8pm

Our Annual Christmas Party and Adopt-A-Family
get -together is around the corner

How about being Santa Clause for a couple of hours and
give a gift for SWE-KC Adopt-A-Family family?

If you are interested in helping out, whether buying a gift or wrapping gifts,
please join us for a fun evening at **Jane Knoche's** on:

23535 West 74th Street
Shawnee Mission
KS 66227

If you decide to attend, please email michelle.wirth@swe.org



WEBINARS

Decision Making Under Uncertainty

November 21, 2006

5pm (EST)

In engineering school, we learn how to quantify and analyze. Yet increasingly the demands of the global marketplace are anything but predictable. In addition, the pace of business is growing exponentially. Even a correct decision made too late can lead to failure. This Web seminar will discuss the following topics: Technical tools available to help make decision making more objective; Ways to practice making decisions that refine your abilities; Practical guidance in evaluating the relative importance of speed vs. detail; and Knowing when to use your intuition.

Rachel S. Hutter is Director, Facilities Systems & Process for Walt Disney Parks & Resorts. In this position, Rachel is responsible for creating and maintaining the systems and processes that support maintenance and engineering at Disney Parks across the world.

Among her notable responsibilities are supporting the Computerized Maintenance Management System, knowledge management, training, contract strategies, process analysis, and professional development for the Facilities Operations Services Division. Rachel was the recipient of SWE's 2005 Emerging Leaders Award in quality assurance.

This Web Seminar is free for SWE members; \$49 for non-members.

Virtual Leadership: Leading Dispersed Teams

November 30, 2006

5pm (EST)

All of us have experienced significant changes as more and more work teams become global and virtual. We have the opportunity to hear how one experienced leader, Kari Barbar, has adjusted her leadership style to manage high performing globally dispersed teams. Kari will discuss best practices she has learned through her experiences leading large global, matrix organizations at IBM. She will share tips and hints that are easy to implement, as well as technology that enables this virtual environment. Please join us and learn how your leadership style might be adjusted or modified to be more successful in a global, virtual world.

Kari Barbar is Vice President, Client Relationship and Technology Exchange for IBM Corporation. Kari currently manages executive relationships for the IBM global account, the largest account for IBM Global Services, and leads the commercialization of IBM internal assets.

Kari has more than 20 years with IBM in operations, project management, hardware development, procurement and manufacturing positions. She is an industrial engineer that enjoys energizing teams to be creative to take complex problems and turn them into methodical execution excellence for success with our clients.

This Web Seminar is free for SWE members; \$49 for non-members.

JOIN SWE

All new professional members who join SWE between **November 2 - 30**, 2006, will receive a SWE engraved business card holder with mirror.

A special link will be sent to all non-member Web seminar attendees to join SWE and receive a gift.

So, share this email with your colleagues.

Encourage them to join SWE and receive the many SWE benefits, including free Webinars.

INTRODUCE ENGINEERING TO HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS

The students at the Leavenworth High School are interested in math and science and would like to find out more about what an engineering job is really like. They are looking into visiting workplaces of women with careers in engineering and mathematics, meet these women, and learn more about the woman-engineer's career. They are asking for SWE members in the Kansas City area (or slightly further) who would be willing to host them for a Wednesday afternoon, after 3:00 pm, show them around their offices, talk about their educational background, about how they decided on this specific career path, describe a typical working day, other job prospects in the field, etc.

KC-SWE members: This is an opportunity to introduce high-school girls to engineering and offer some guidance and advice when they are ready to pick a career path.

If you are interested, PLEASE contact Ginger Riddle at GingerR@lvksch.org to schedule the visit at your earliest convenience.

SWE-KC is looking for **VOLUNTEERS** to help work on the programming for January, February, March, and April.

January - Career Enhancement Event

February - Volunteer event associated with National Engineers Week

March - Annual Work/Life Balance Panel Discussion

April - Technical Tour

May - Celebrate SWE KC 25 years! SWE-KC turns 25 in May. We will be planning a special banquet/ If interested in helping with this event please contact Jane Knoche at jane.knoche@swe.org

Interested in helping out? Please contact Michelle Wirth at Michelle.wirth@swe.org