



**SOCIETY OF WOMEN ENGINEERS**  
**Kansas City Section**

**SEPTEMBER 2006 NEWSLETTER**

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**Calendar of Upcoming Events:**

**September**

- 15 Early Bird SWE National Registration Deadline
- 26 National Conference Planning Committee Meeting (TBD)
- 29 Volunteer Registration Cut-Off Date

**October**

- 9 Dinner and Fresh Ideas (and Conference Bags)
  - 12-14 SWE National Conference 2006
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## A Word from your SWE-KC President

I am Michelle Wirth, SWE Kansas City Section President, and I am writing to tell you about an amazing opportunity to join us at the National Conference right here in **Kansas City (Oct. 12-14)** at a **reduced rate** simply by volunteering a half a day of your time. Detailed volunteering information is provided in the following pages. In addition, there is a volunteer "training session" on **Tuesday, October 11 evening from 5pm - 7pm**. Those coming from out of town will get a speed training session the morning or afternoon you are volunteering.

**Volunteering is a great way to meet people and to contribute to the conference. Questions on volunteering?**

Please contact  
Jaci Gruber, PE  
SWE - Kansas City Section  
[jaci.gruber@swe.org](mailto:jaci.gruber@swe.org)

The KC Section also needs some additional support from our members.

### KC SECTION MEMBERS:

**YOU ARE NEEDED**

- The KC Section needs your help! As part of hosting the conference, we need to stuff conference bags. SO how about joining the National Conference Planning Committee on **Monday, October 9**, anytime between 5pm and 8pm, for a meet and greet, network, have fun and stuff conference bags!! Come ready to share your ideas, and help us revitalize the Section. Food will be provided along with a lot of laughter and camaraderie. Location to be determined in the October Newsletter. No conference rate discount will be provided but you will be supporting the KC Section. **We need you.**
- On Thursday and Friday (**Oct 12-13**) the KC Section needs help selling merchandise at the SWE-KC boutique. Two-hour time slots are available 8am-4pm. No conference rate discount but the sales will help support the KC Section. <http://o.web.umkc.edu/obannond/SWE/shirt.html>

EMAIL: [michelle.wirth@swe.org](mailto:michelle.wirth@swe.org) for supporting SWE-KC opportunities.

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# REGISTRATION QUESTIONS

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION FOR THE CONFERENCE ENDS

**SEPTEMBER 15.**

Go to [www.swe.org/2006](http://www.swe.org/2006) and Click Registration.

Professionals can save an additional \$50 if you register by September 15, 2006!

Please direct questions to SWE Registration

Phone: 312-596-5223 or Fax: 312-596-5252

Email: [registration@swe.org](mailto:registration@swe.org)

## On-Site Registration Hours

Tuesday, 10/10: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, 10/11: 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, 10/12: 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Friday, 10/13: 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, 10/14: 7:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

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## SWE - KC BOUTIQUE

How about attending the SWE Conference in your new polo shirt with the 2006 SWE Conference logo!! Or how about taking a souvenir to the hubby or the kids by grabbing a stuffed cow or a box of edible tools??!!

The SWE-KC Section will be selling memorable polo shirts, cute stuffed animal cows with SWE bandanas, and yummi chocolate tools at our Boutique at the 2006 SWE National Conference.

Go to <http://o.web.umkc.edu/obannond/SWE/conference2006.html> to view these cool items and

# Preorder

On Thursday and Friday (**Oct 12-13**) the KC Section needs help selling merchandise at the SWE-KC Boutique. Two-hour time slots are available 8am-4pm. No conference rate discount but the sales will help support the KC Section. <http://o.web.umkc.edu/obannond/SWE/shirt.html>

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## **Volunteer at the 2006 SWE National Conference**

Volunteers make the SWE Conference run smoothly,  
which creates an enjoyable experience for our attendees.

### **Why Volunteer?**

You can be an SWE ambassador for our conference as a volunteer. In appreciation for your efforts, you can earn registration credit! The conference will need more than 200 volunteers. Below are some examples of the responsibility for volunteer roles. Note that detailed instructions will be provided by the volunteer leader.

### **Technical Tour Coordinator**

- Leads the tour group from the Conference pickup point to the facility.
- Acts as the liaison between the conference staff and facility staff.
- Ensures that each attendee returns to the facility.

### **CES Coordinator**

- Minimum 5 hour time commitments for sessions in the morning or afternoon on Wednesday or Saturday.
- Acts as liaison to attendees, speaker and logistics coordinator.
- Ensures attendees have tickets.
- Ensures all evaluations, speaker gifts, and continuing education unit (CEU) forms are delivered and picked up.
- Ensures room requirements are correct.
- May introduce speaker, if requested.

### **Logistics Coordinator**

- 5-6 hour time commitment from 7:00 a.m to 12:30 p.m. or 12:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, Friday or Saturday.
- Acts as a liaison to Daily Volunteer Leader and either the Session Coordinator or the CES Coordinator.
- Floats in a designated section of the convention center, troubleshooting potential problems and making sure all Session Coordinators and/or CES Coordinators are on duty.
- Reports logistical problems on behalf of these coordinators to the Daily Volunteer Leader, or Conference Manager where appropriate.

### **Session Room Monitor**

- 5-6 hour time commitment from 7:00 a.m to 12:30 p.m. or 12:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, Friday or Saturday.
- Liaison to speaker, as well as the logistics coordinator.
- Ensures all evaluations, speaker gifts, and any other speaker forms are delivered and picked up.

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- Ensures room requirements are correct.
  - May introduce speaker, if required.

### Arrangements Helpers

- 1.5 hour time commitment per event. Shift times based on event times.
- Helps staff with the many details involved with arrangements of a major event. These duties may include placement of event programs, place cards, tent cards, flower arrangements, and other decorations.

### Ticket Taker

- 1.5 hour time commitment per event. Shift times based on event times.
- Ensures that all attendees enter paid functions with tickets.
- Arrives to event early – to ensure doors remain closed while staff and hotel are setting event.
- Provides welcome to all event attendees.
- May help with other duties as requested.

### SWE Help Desk

- 5 hour time commitment from 7:00 a.m. to noon or noon to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, Friday or Saturday.
- Staff desk to answer attendee questions and provide assistance.

### How Do I Earn Registration Credit?

- Any collegiate member who pre-registers as a volunteer and works five or more hours will earn a **free conference registration (\$80 value)**.
- Any professional member who pre-registers as a volunteer and works five or more hours will earn a **free daily registration or the value of a daily registration applied to a full conference registration**.
- All positions are assigned and registration credits are awarded by the volunteer leader. Your volunteer leader will confirm your position, date and time, and assign an online registration discount code.
- However, you must register before the registration **cut-off of September 29, 2006** to receive a discount and you must be present and perform the volunteer work, or you may receive an invoice for the balance due.

For more specific volunteer duty information click on [www.swe.org/2006](http://www.swe.org/2006) Click on "Registration" and scroll down to "Volunteers" section or click here [http://www.swe.org/conference/home/conference.aspx?id=swe\\_004481](http://www.swe.org/conference/home/conference.aspx?id=swe_004481)

**Sign Up to Volunteer Now!**

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# SWE-KC BOARD MEMBERS

## **Michelle Wirth** – SWE-KC Section President

Michelle grew up in Rochester, Minnesota. She joined SWE in college (1995) and graduated from North Dakota State University in 1999 with a degree in Civil Engineering. She then moved to Kansas City because of a job offer at Black & Veatch. She worked for Black & Veatch for 7 years designing wastewater treatment facilities. In the meanwhile, she worked diligently to complete her MS in Engineering Management from KU. She is a registered PE in Missouri and Kansas. Last December, she decided to make a career change and now works for the City of Olathe as the Utilities Systems Engineer, planning for the infrastructure needs of the City. She finds her new job very rewarding.

Michelle has been married for 6 years to her high school Sweetheart. Together, they have adopted a dog named Zoe who is obsessed with playing frisbee.

Michelle has been serving as the SWE Region I membership coordinator for several years. As current SWE-KC President, she is looking forward to helping the KC Section revitalize while hosting the National SWE Conference in October.

“I did not know the power of SWE until I attended my first national conference. I hope that everyone will take advantage of this unique opportunity to enjoy Women Blazing Technology Trails right here in Kansas City!”

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## **Casey Elsten** – SWE-KC Section Treasurer

Casey joined SWE as a professional member about 3 months ago. While at the University of Kansas, she was a SWE student member for 2 years. She really enjoyed it during college and wanted to continue her membership as a professional. Her schedule did not allow her to be part of the SWE student committee in college because she was involved in Division I athletics (Women’s Rowing).

She received a B.S. in Civil Engineering from KU in 2005 and then she started working as an Airport Design Engineer at Bucher, Willis & Ratliff Corporation in

Kansas City, MO. She mainly works on small airports located in Kansas, Missouri, Colorado, and Nebraska. On occasion, she gets the chance to work on larger airports, like KCI or the Downtown Airport.

Casey is originally from St. Louis, MO. She enjoys outdoor activities (mountain biking, running, rowing, hiking, etc., etc.), traveling, antiquing, and sports (playing and watching). Casey will be celebrating her first year anniversary this coming October.

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### **Jennifer Wright** – SWE-KC Secretary

Jennifer graduated from Purdue University in 2003 with a degree in Materials Science and Engineering. She was involved with SWE during her entire time at Purdue. During her senior year, she was the chapter Treasurer.

“My involvement with SWE was the most enriching and enjoyable activity while at Purdue. “

After graduating, she went through GE's Operations Management Leadership Program (OMLP) with GE Rail, and upon finishing the Program, took a job with GE Transportation Systems Global Signaling as a Quality Technical Advisor in Grain Valley, MO. Jennifer supports all aspects of manufacturing from a quality perspective; The facility specializes in manufacturing printed circuit board assemblies which are used in railroad signaling products.

Jennifer is originally from the Chicago area. She currently lives in the Plaza area, and has an orange tabby cat named Colin. She enjoys listening to music, reading, exercising, shopping, and traveling.

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### **Samar El-Khoury Maalouf** – SWE-KC Newsletter Editor

Well since I'm editing this Newsletter I will introduce myself in the first person! My name is Samar (Pronounced "Summer") and I am your current Newsletter Editor. I have been a professional member for the last 3 years and your last year KC Section President and Newsletter Editor.

I was born and raised in Lebanon. I went to Jesuit French school and switch to the American system when I attended the American University of Beirut (AUB) for my bachelor's degree in civil engineering.

I decided to come to the US to get MS degree in Environmental Engineering at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA. That's when I got involved with the SWE student section at UMass. I graduated in January 2003 and I currently

work for Carollo Engineers as an environmental engineer in their Overland Park office, KS.

I mainly work on water and wastewater treatment plants hydraulics and design processes. I am currently the project engineer on the Wentzville WRC Expansion Project, City of Wentzville, MO.

I met my husband here in KC (he is also Lebanese) and we got married at the end of last May. I love to travel and I have already checked out quite a few places around the States and Canada. So far my favorite season in the Midwest is the fall: not too hot, not too cold, just perfect to sit outside, grab a good book and sip some flavored coffee, or just go for a run. I like hiking, shopping (it is 'fancy hiking' after all), and dancing.

If you have a story you want to share, an article, some womanly advice (professional or personal), please don't hesitate to contact me at [selkhoury@carollo.com](mailto:selkhoury@carollo.com) and I will include it in our Newsletter.

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### **Isabel Solano** – Membership Chair

Isabel graduated from UMKC in 1999 with a BS degree in Civil Engineering. She then obtained her MS degree in Environmental Engineering from KU. She currently works for Black and Veatch as a project engineer.

Isabel is originally from Colombia, South America. She has been living in the US for the past 12 years. She got married 3 years ago. Her husband is also from Colombia, even though they actually met in KC... I guess it was meant to happen, right?

Isabel is a yoga fan, and loves scrap booking. She is now learning Italian. Isabel was the past Newsletter Editor, and has been the Membership Chair for the last few years.

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### **Ellen Jordan** - Section Representative

Ellen received her BST in Construction Engineering from Missouri Western State College in 1984 and her Mini MBA from Wichita State University in 1995. In 2003, Ellen got her MEM Engineering Management from Kansas State University.

Ellen is currently the QA manager at Midland Steel Company and an adjunct faculty in the construction engineering program at Missouri Western State University.

Ellen and her husband Phillip have been married for 23 years now. They are blessed with two kids: Lee, 14 years old, who's a freshman at Mid-Buchanan, and Lynn, 11 years old, who's a 6th grader at Mid-Buchanan as well. Ellen and Phillip were married for almost 10 years before they had kids. So now is their time with them. Being a "soccer mom" for hockey, cross country, golf, football, marching band, academic team, cheerleading, softball, basketball, girl scouts and dance takes all of Ellen's free time. "It won't be long and they will be gone on their own and we can pursue our other activities then" Ellen says melancholically.

Originally from St. Joseph, Ellen spent 10 years in Wichita, KS after graduating from college before choosing to move back to the KC area to raise the kids in a rural atmosphere near both families.

Ellen has been a SWE member since 1991 after learning about SWE while working on her Masters degree at Wichita State. She was treasurer, newsletter editor, and certificate of merit coordinator in Wichita before moving back to Kansas City. This is her 3rd year as section representative for the SWE-KC Section.

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#### **Joelle Latimer** – Certificate of Merit Chair

Joelle graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Michigan Technological University in 1999, and is currently pursuing her Masters of Civil Engineering at the University of Kansas.

Joelle is currently employed by Boice-Raidl-Rhea Architects, Inc., as a structural coordinator. She is a licensed professional engineer in the state of Kansas and is a member of ASCE, SEAKM, NAIWIC and SWE.

Joelle is married to Timothy Lattimer and they are expecting twins at the end of December. Congratulations ☺

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#### **Michelle Mahoney** – 2006 SWE National Conference Local Chairwoman

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. Do you think she is a Jayhawk or a Tiger?

She has been a 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.

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**Deb O'bannon** – Web Page Editor

**Hope Piuck** – JEC Representative and Alternative Section Representative

**Jaci Gruber** - Career Guidance Chair

**Pat Murrow** - Science Fair Chair

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### **NATIONAL CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

If you haven't heard yet, the 2006 SWE National Conference will be held in **KANSAS CITY!!**

**OCTOBER 12-14, 2006**

In preparation for the BIG event, the National Conference Planning Committee meets every first Tuesday of the month. The group is deciding what merchandise to sell at the convention, coordinating the volunteers for the convention as well as developing ways to inform as many companies and organizations with female engineers to join SWE. If you are interested in working with this committee, please contact Michelle Mahoney at [mmahoney@hntb.com](mailto:mmahoney@hntb.com).

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**YOU HAVE COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS? CONTACT US BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE:**

**[Http://o.web.umkc.edu/obannond/SWE/SWE-KC.html](http://o.web.umkc.edu/obannond/SWE/SWE-KC.html)**