Welcome to the Spring 2016 Women Chemists Committee (WCC) Newsletter! We have been quite busy attracting, developing, promoting, retaining, and advocating for women chemists.

Given the importance of diversifying ACS National Awards, I would like to challenge you to think seriously about who you could nominate this November, particularly for the technical awards. Your nominations will complement WCC’s ongoing involvement in activities focused on the “How to” for ACS National Awards nominations. Together, we can increase the number of women being nominated for and potentially receiving these and other prestigious awards. To paraphrase the lottery slogan “Gotta be in it to win it” - “You gotta be nominated to get selected!”

As the WCC Roadmap for the 251st ACS National Meeting indicates, we will celebrate the recipients of many different awards.

- Annie B. Kersting, recipient of the 2016 Francis P. Garvan-John M. Olin Medal
- Recipients of the 2016 Spring WCC-Eli Lilly Travel Award
- Carol A. Fierke, recipient of the 2016 ACS Award for Encouraging Women into Careers in the Chemical Sciences
- Recipients of the 5th annual WCC Rising Star Award

If you will be in San Diego, join us for all of these events, as well as for the Women in the Chemical Enterprise Breakfast featuring social media expert Jennifer Maclachlan, who will share with attendees how to use personal branding and social media to advance their careers in the chemical sciences.

A diverse and inclusive collection of success stories will be in the second edition of “Mom the Chemistry Professor,” offering insight and inspiration to young women considering undertaking the combination of professor- and mother-hood. WCC and some of its members are involved as contributing authors and editors for this book being published by Springer.

The WCC is committed to encouraging conversations around difficult topics that often effect women. This year Linda Wang of Chemical & Engineering News (C&EN) courageously covered the very taboo and sensitive topics of miscarriage and infertility (http://cen.acs.org/articles/94/i6/Chemists-Struggle-Infertility-Miscarriage.html). These topics are difficult to open up about, but women need to know that they are not alone. Another important topic is sexual harassment in academic chemistry departments. If you’ve experienced sexual harassment or know someone who has, please contact Linda at L_Wang@acs.org to share your story with C&EN in total confidentiality. Thank you for speaking up; together we can make a difference.

Amber Charlebois
2016 WCC Chair
Merck Symposium  
**By: Amy Balija, Cecilia Marzabadi & Kelly George**

On Wednesday, August 19, 2015, Merck and Company held the Merck Women in Chemistry Symposium at the Boston Merck Research Labs (MRL) in conjunction with the Fall National ACS meeting. The symposium provided an opportunity for women chemists from Merck and graduate students and postdoctoral associates at academic institutions to present their research through oral presentations and at poster sessions. In addition, the event offered attendees the opportunity to speak with the upper management within Merck and allow the students to learn what is necessary to pursue a career in pharmaceutical research.

**Dr. Ann E. Weber**, Vice President of Chemistry at Merck, kicked-off the morning session, which highlighted the research of several graduate students and postdoctoral fellows at US and Canadian institutions. **Dr. Michelle Machacek**, Associate Principal Scientist in Medicinal Chemistry at Merck, shared the case study for the design of small molecule inhibitors of the HDM2-p53 Protein-Protein interaction target.

The afternoon session began with keynote Merck speakers, **Dr. Milana Maletic**, Director of Chemistry, and **Dr. Becky Ruck**, Director of Catalysis and Automation, who gave overviews of their careers and the projects they have collaborated in while at the company. To relate to the audience, Becky utilized a baseball analogy, comparing how her career mirrors baseball players that get traded and how one needs to work with other players to succeed. Becky ended her talk with some sage advice, “Never stop learning; be bold — sometimes you just need to throw yourself in the deep end; be flexible because some of the greatest learning opportunities come from working across groups, teams and other areas; grow your network; and follow your passion!”

Following the presentations was a poster session featuring 55 graduate students, postdoctoral associates, and Merck women chemists. Topics ranged from natural product total synthesis to automated high-throughput screening to chemical biology. The poster session also provided opportunities for attendees to talk science and network. To end the symposium, Becky Ruck presented awards to the three best posters as selected by the attendees.

Starting in 2016, Merck and the ACS WCC are joining together to recognize women chemists through the new Merck/WCC Research Award. This award, which will be given yearly, will recognize up to eight 3rd and 4th year female graduate students who will present their research at a half-day symposium held during the Fall ACS national meeting. Besides earning a $1,500 travel stipend, the winners will be recognized at the Awards Symposium Luncheon and the WCC Luncheon and encouraged to network with WCC members and Merck scientists. This award is open to:

- 3rd & 4th year female graduate students with a research focus in one or more of the following areas: Organic, Medicinal, Analytical, Chemical Biology, Computational or Structural chemistry and related disciplines of focus.
- US citizens or students attending a graduate program in the US.
- Those who have not previously received an award under this program.

Additional information can be found at the WCC website: [http://womenchemists.sites.acs.org/](http://womenchemists.sites.acs.org/).
# Women Chemists Committee

## Events Schedule

### Sunday, March 13, 2016

**ACS Award in Organometallic Chemistry: Symposium in honor of Karen I. Goldberg**  
Sponsored by INOR  
9:00 am–12:10 pm, 2:00 pm–5:30 pm  
San Diego Convention Center, Room 30E

**ACS Diversity Reception**  
5:00 pm–7:00 pm  
Hilton San Diego Bayfront, Aqua Salon D

### Monday, March 14, 2016

**WCC Women in the Chemical Enterprise Breakfast** (Ticketed Event)  
7:30 am–9:00 am  
Hilton San Diego Bayfront, Indigo Ballroom C/G

**WCC 2016 Rising Stars Awards Symposium**  
Sponsored by WCC  
9:30 am–11:35 am, 1:30 pm–3:35 pm  
San Diego Convention Center, Room 12

**Women in Innovation: Science & Technology**  
Sponsored by PROF  
9:30 am–12:00 pm  
Marriott Marquis San Diego Marina, Marina Salon E

**Women Chemists of Color Networking Event** (Ticketed Event)  
10:30 am–12:00 pm  
Hilton San Diego Bayfront, Aqua Salon A/B

**LGBT Chemists' Symposium on Chemical Biology**  
Sponsored by PROF  
1:45 pm–5:00 pm  
Marriott Marquis San Diego Marina, Marina Salon E

### Tuesday, March 15, 2016

**ACS Award for Encouraging Women into Careers in the Chemical Sciences: Symposium in honor of Carol A. Fieke**  
Sponsored by WCC  
9:30 am–11:55 am  
Hilton San Diego Bayfront, Cobalt 520

**WCC—Eli Lilly Travel Award Poster Session**  
11:00 am–12:00 pm  
Hilton San Diego Bayfront, Indigo Ballroom D/H

**WCC Luncheon** (Ticketed Event)  
TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2016  
12:00 pm–1:30 pm  
Hilton San Diego Bayfront  
Indigo Ballroom D/H

**Keynote Speaker**  
Annie Bernadette Kersting, Ph.D.  
Sponsored by the Francis P. Garvan-John M. Olin Medal Endowment, the 2016 Garvan-Olin Medal is presented by the American Chemical Society to Annie Bernadette Kersting

### Wednesday, March 16, 2016

**Gabor A. Somorjai Award for Creative Research in Catalysis: Symposium in honor of Donna G. Blackmond**  
Sponsored by ORGN  
8:00 am–12:00 pm  
San Diego Convention Center, Room 6A

**WCC Program Chair:** K. Woznack, California University of Pennsylvania  
Visit [http://womenchemists.sites.acs.org/](http://womenchemists.sites.acs.org/) for more information about the Women Chemists Committee

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**ACS Presidential Events**

**Sunday, March 13**

Discussions with the President's Task Force on Employment  
1:30 pm–4:00 pm  
San Diego Convention Center, Room 2

*My Comments to the President's Task Force on Employment*  
8:00 pm–10:00 pm  
San Diego Convention Center, Hall D

**Monday, March 14**

Diversity-Quantification-Success?  
1:30 pm–4:00 pm  
San Diego Convention Center, Room 3

*Sci-Mix*  
8:00 pm–10:00 pm  
San Diego Convention Center, Halls D/E

*Visit Poster Press Line: Women Chemists Committee (WCC) efforts to support chemists in the workforce*
Meeting Highlights—Fall 2015 Continued

Presidential Symposium 21st Century Chemistry Education: Formal and Informal
By: Ellen Keiter

This Presidential Symposium, cosponsored by the WCC, featured speakers from across the chemical education enterprise. The first presenter, Barbara Sitzman of Calabassas High School, traced the development of the Association of Chemistry Teachers (AACT) from formation of an ACS Task Force in 2009 to the organization’s launch in 2014. Using the Chem Club activities of her E. Syracuse Minoa Central High School chemistry students as examples, Sally Mitchell emphasized the value of informal learning both for the students and for the general community. Jesse Bernstein, who teaches at Miami Country Day School, stressed the importance of in-service professional development for chemistry teachers at all stages of their careers. Laura Slocum made a number of recommendations for high school teachers, among them: join the Division of Chemical Education, which does not require ACS membership; and explore Modeling Instruction, a system she has used successfully in her Columbia, South Carolina high school chemistry courses. William Hunter from Illinois State University gave a comprehensive overview of his institution’s online professional development graduate courses and degree programs for high school chemistry teachers.

Women in Innovation, Business & Commerce
By: Lisa Kemp

If you missed the Women in Innovation symposium, then you missed a great event! The first in a series of three Women in Innovation symposia, this event focused on “Women in Innovation: Business and Commerce” and the panel of experts included: Marcia Stone (Co-founder and Managing Partner, GGS Venture Partners; Golden Seeds); Dawn Mason (Manager, Portfolio & Special Projects, Eastman Chemical Co.); Bonnie Fendrock (Co-founder and CEO, Cyta Therapeutics); and Marta Piñeiro-Núñez (Director, Open Innovation Drug Discovery, Eli Lilly & Co.). The event was an interactive format moderated by Judy Giordan (Principal ecosVC). Judy asked each panelist a few questions before inviting questions from the audience of 75 attendees. A lively discussion was sparked by their questions. Following the questions, Judy asked the panelists if they would hold “office hours” for the final 30 minutes of the allotted symposium time to allow some one-on-one time with individual panelists. The energy level in the room was great and the open “office hours” went well past the remaining time.

The Women in Innovation series continues in San Diego at the 2016 Spring ACS National Meeting with focus on “Women in Innovation: Science and Technology.”
WCC Luncheon; Boston  
By: Tina Leaym

In keeping with long-standing tradition, the WCC Luncheon at the 250th American Chemical Society National Meeting was once again excellent and truly inspirational!

The WCC-Eli Lilly Travel Award recipients were honored first. See Page 8 in this issue for full details on the award winners. The IUPAC Distinguished Women in Chemistry and Chemical Engineering Award was presented to two well-deserving women:

- **Professor Karen Gleason** of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA
- **Professor Roberta Sessoli** of Universita degli Studi di Firenze, Florence, Italy

The final award given at the WCC luncheon was to the 2015 Overcoming Challenges Award recipient, **Ashley Neybert** of Rockhurst University. Ashley gave a brief acceptance speech that was both inspiring and infused with humor. Her disability is what led to her decision to become a chemist rather than a biologist, "an obvious benefit". She reminded us all that we can hide from a challenge, or overcome it.

**Dr. Kathryn Uhrich** of Rutgers, Professor of Chemistry and Chemical Biology, gave the keynote address, "It's about I: Invention, Innovation, Inspiration, and Inclusion." **Dr. Uhrich** earned her BS degree from University of North Dakota and her PhD from Cornell University. She earned her position at Rutgers following post-doctoral positions at both AT&T Bell Laboratories and MIT. **Dr. Uhrich**'s research accomplishments with biodegradable and biocompatible polymers have been disseminated in hundreds of publications and patent filings, as well as tens of millions of dollars in grant funding, multiple industrial collaborations and several start-up companies. Her innovations in research have impacted nearly 200 students and scientists. **Dr. Uhrich** was inducted into the National Academy of Inventors and is an American Chemical Society Fellow.

**Dr. Uhrich** gave a fascinating talk that included many personal anecdotes to illustrate her points. She began with I is for **Invention**. Invention, of course, is the creation of something new, for example a polymer that can break down into a drug. Bioactive polymers such as poly-aspirin could enable localized and sustained delivery of actives. But **Innovation** is invention that has been put into practice; and this was the catalyst that led **Dr. Uhrich** to start her first company. She describes her husband Jeff as her **Inspiration**; they were co-valedictorians in high school. With respect to **Inclusion**, **Dr. Uhrich** stresses that those with ability and drive in science and engineering deserve to be included. She left us with some final advice and one more "I" for **Intrepid**. Her formula for success: "be bold, brave, and fearless."

It is true; there is no such thing as a "free lunch." How about a lunch that can help set a career path, make you a better scientist, and refresh your whole outlook? Now that would be a great value! The WCC Luncheon is an amazing opportunity for networking with participants at all career levels who have chosen many different career options. There are ACS presidents and former presidents, board members, fellows, award winners and volunteers. The speakers are always amazing. We will see you in San Diego!
IUPAC Awards Presented at WCC Luncheon
By: Carolyn Ribes

Every biennium, the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry presents awards for Distinguished Women in Chemistry and Chemical Engineering. This award series was initiated during the International Year of Chemistry with strong leadership from the American Chemical Society and the Women Chemists Committee members. The purpose of the awards program is to recognize and promote the work of women chemists/chemical engineers worldwide. Awardees are selected based on excellence in basic or applied research, distinguished accomplishments in teaching or education, or demonstrated leadership or managerial excellence in the chemical sciences.

Two of the 2015 recipients were presented their award at the Women Chemists Committee Luncheon in Boston on August 18. The Award Committee appreciates the enthusiastic support of WCC in recognizing these recipients and also raising awareness of the program in the US. The other ten 2015 awards were presented at the August 2015 IUPAC World Chemistry Congress in Busan, South Korea.

WCC Women in the Chemical Enterprise Breakfast Features Maya Ollson
By: Kim Woznack

WCC, along with support from the Division of Professional Relations (PROF), was happy to feature guest speaker Maya Ollson from Kokopella Career and Business Consulting at the Women in the Chemical Enterprise Breakfast, Monday August 17th, 2015 in the Commonwealth Ballroom inside of the Sheraton Boston Hotel. Maya’s presentation, “The Value You Bring: Why should I hire you? Why should I give you a raise?” was both powerful and interactive. This well attended breakfast allowed attendees the chance to immediately begin to consider Maya’s advice and share with others some of their own personal selling points.

Maya described the importance for each person to have prepared a personal PARM story. The acronym includes P for the Problem that existed, A for the Actions you took, R for the Results achieved, and M for the Meaning of the result to your employer. Volunteers shared their PARM stories in front of the large group, and Maya asked more questions to help volunteers further refine and better articulate how their contributions are valued by an organization.

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Meeting Highlights—Fall 2015 Continued

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Maya suggested participants stockpile their accomplishments by keeping completed stories that can be used on resumes, interviews, or other negotiations. At the conclusion of the breakfast, Maya was available to sign copies of the book she has co-authored, “Crack the Job Search Code: The Art of Job Hunting”. More information about Maya Ollson and Kokopella Consulting can be found at www.kokopella.com.

Just Cocktails
By: Lisa Houston

The Women Chemists Committee (WCC) “Just Cocktails” Open Meeting and reception, sponsored by the WCC and ecosVC, was held on Tuesday, August 18, 2015 at the Sheraton Boston. The “Just Cocktails” event was very well attended and enabled many chemists to network and learn more about the WCC.

If you are interested in learning more about the WCC mission and the programs and resources we offer, please join us at the next “Just Cocktails” event, to be held on Tuesday, March 15, 2016 from 4-5 pm at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront, Aqua Salon D. This free, informal event allows people to network with the members of the National WCC as well as other ACS members. Tell your friends and colleagues and we look forward to seeing you at the next Just Cocktails event.

Managing Transitions
By: Samina Azad

A half-day panel discussion co-sponsored by WCC, PROF, YCC and CMA on Managing Transition - “Life’s Ups and Downs: Changing Directions, Switching Companies, Altering Directions, and other Mid-career Challenges” was held on Monday August 17th. The panel included: Maya Ollson, author of Crack the Job Search Code; Sibrina Collins, now a science historian after transitioning from a scientific writer and a college professor role; Kathy Lee, who works in pharma in the Boston area and survived a merger and acquisition; patent lawyer Heidi Erlacher; and Heather Tierney, who was trained as a physical chemist and now works in publishing. Also on the panel was Kelly George, associate principal chemist in the consumer product industry and a WCC member.

Kelly talked about her experience with a lay-off from a large pharmaceutical company. She networked and found the role she is in currently. Kelly worked with coach Maya Ollson as she prepared for the interview and negotiated the salary and benefits. Maya and Kelly’s advice for us:

- Look at the bigger picture and learn from the setbacks
- Take time to celebrate success and look for the silver lining
- Network, network, network
- Bounce ideas off of people Step outside of your comfort zone

Sibrina talked about mid-career transition into a new role. She said:

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Meeting Highlights—Fall 2015 Continued

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- There is a steep learning curve and stress
- Keep in mind that you are learning but you also bring your own expertise to the table
- You don’t have to be an expert to lead a project – rely on people

*Kathy* talked about the merger and acquisition she went through and how she was one of the lucky folks who were selected to stay on with the merged organization. *Kathy’s* lessons learned were – keep learning as you progress down the career path.

*Heidi* said in graduate school she knew she didn’t want to be a professor. She talked with people who were patent attorneys. She likes attention to detail and logic. She left graduate school and started working at a law firm. For four years she went to school after work to accomplish her goal.

*Heather* also did not want to be a professor or be in the lab. After she got her PhD, she took on the managing editor role with ACS Publications – this role is heavy on the managing and light on the editing. *Heather* likes the behind the scene activities that ensure new materials are in the pipeline and publications go out on time.

*Kathy, Heidi* and *Heather’s* advice for us:

- Be prepared to deal with uncertainty and difficult people
- It’s important to be able to stay calm/collected and thank people for their comments
- Learn how to work in a team and resolve conflicts
- People hire PhDs because of their creative problem solving skills
- Soft skills and logic are equally important

Finally, the panelists asked that we keep an open mind when making career transitions and continue to learn and acquire new skills as we progress down the career path.

**WCC-Eli Lilly Poster Session**

*By: Amy Balija*

Twice a year, the WCC and Eli Lilly co-sponsor the WCC/Eli Lilly Travel Award to fund a select number of undergraduate, graduate, and/or postdoctoral female chemists to travel to their first national or major meeting to present the results of their research. On Tuesday, August 18th 2015, the WCC celebrated the achievements of the winners of the fall award at the WCC/Eli Lilly poster session at the Sheraton Boston Hotel. The awardees recognized were: *Samantha Johnson*, California Institute of Technology; *Ashley Modell*, New York University; *Stephanie Barros*, University of Pennsylvania; *Kalli Catcott*, Northeastern University; *Marissa Civic*, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; *Samantha Clarke*, Northwestern University; *Cristina Dubceac*, University at Albany, SUNY; *Danielle Hirsch*, City University of New York; *Cassandra Joiner*, University of Michigan; *Kimberly Maize*, University of Minnesota; *Debra Rooker*, New York University; and *Kailey Soller*, University of Minnesota.

During the hour long session, the well-attended event allowed the winners of the travel award to discuss their research results and network with attendees. The topics ranged from developing novel nucleic acid junction binders to assembling light harvesting arrays for dye-sensitized solar cells to preparing new magnetic materials using rare-earth metals for sustainable energy technologies. Many of these award winners will go on to win future awards and hold prestigious positions in their chosen field.

The WCC is continuously looking for applicants for the WCC/Eli Lilly Travel Award. Additional information regarding eligibility and the application process can be found on the WCC website under Awards and Recognition ([http://www.womenchemists.sites.acs.org/awardsrecognition.htm](http://www.womenchemists.sites.acs.org/awardsrecognition.htm)).
Dr. Krista Walton - Georgia Institute of Technology
By: Samina Azad

Dr. Krista Walton, 2015 Rising Star Award Winner, is an Associate Professor and Marvin R. McClatchey and Ruth McClatchey Cline Faculty Fellow at Georgia Institute of Technology.

She received a BSE degree from the University of Alabama-Huntsville (UAH) and PhD from Vanderbilt University, both in chemical engineering. While at UAH, she worked as a process engineer at Solutia, Inc., in Decatur, AL, for 2 years as part of the cooperative education program. Graduate advisor, Prof. M. Douglas LeVan, is a friend and mentor who encouraged her to consider an academic research and teaching career.

Krista was the Tim and Sharon Taylor Assistant Professor of Chemical Engineering at Kansas State University for three years and then joined the faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology in the School of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering in 2009.

Her research focuses on design and synthesis of functional porous materials for use in applications including adsorption separations, air purification, gas storage, chemical sensing, and catalysis. Krista’s group employs a combination of molecular modeling techniques and experiments to develop a molecular-level understanding of adsorption and diffusion properties of the materials. This approach allows them to fully characterize these novel systems and work toward enabling a more rational design of functional materials for adsorption applications.

Krista received many awards for excellence in her research work, including the PECA (Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers), National Science Foundation CAREER Award in 2009, and Army Research Award in 2007.

Krista was born in Florence, Alabama, and grew up on a farm in nearby Elgin. She goes back there often and helps out at the farm. When asked about “work-life balance”, Krista advised that it is better to think of this as “integration” instead of “balance”. It is not easy to separate work from life as we spend a significant amount of time at work. She includes music and sports into her group activities, for example. Krista has two nieces with whom she is obsessed and she visits them often as they live within driving distance from her.

Suzanne Bart - Purdue University
By: Lisa Houston

Dr. Suzanne Bart, 2015 WCC Rising Star, has had a number of inspiring women mentors including her mother, grandmother, and sister, as well as a high school chemistry teacher, who set her on her future path. Suzanne received her bachelor’s degree in Chemistry from the University of Delaware and her master’s and PhD degrees in Chemistry from Cornell University under Prof. Paul J. Chirik, with whom she championed the use of redox-active ligands for carrying out catalytic transformations with earth-abundant metal ions. She was awarded a Humboldt Postdoctoral Fellowship at Friedrich – Alexander - Universität Erlangen -Nürnberg, in Erlangen, Germany. In her postdoctoral work, she worked with Prof. Dr. Karsten Meyer, where she learned actinide chemistry and published a number of research articles on uranium chemistry including one in Nature. She co-authored 17 papers before beginning her independent career.

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Suzanne came to Purdue University in 2008 and is currently an Associate Professor of Chemistry. She is a synthetic inorganic and organometallic chemist focusing on understanding how to facilitate fundamental multielectron organometallic processes at organouranium species using redox-active ligands. To date, she has 24 publications and received a number of awards including a National Science Foundation CAREER Award and more recently named a 2014 Young Investigator Fellow by the ACS Journal Organometallics.

She has shown a high commitment to education and outreach with her current and past group of graduate and undergraduate students with the creation of Purdue’s “Chemteens” Conference through which junior and senior high school girls have the opportunity to interact with leading female faculty in chemical sciences to learn about careers, college majors as well as the benefits and challenges of a career in the sciences. She is also very active in ACS as Councilor for the Purdue Local Section.

Suzanne is married to a very supportive husband, and they have twin boys. However, she finds it challenging to juggle work and a family. She says “Every day is different, so I have to figure out how to reallocate my time daily. I think it is a good idea to establish a daily or weekly routine for consistency, and then adjust it accordingly. Babysitters and a cleaning person also contribute to our sanity!”

Suzanne’s advice to those coming up in a chemistry career is to “work hard, and work smart. A strong work ethic will impress your superiors and be a great example for the people that work for you. Working smart will allow you to spend your efforts where they are needed most, ensuring forward progression. Learn from your colleagues, they have been through many of the challenges you will face. And of course, surround yourself with talented people and be invested in their education and training. You can learn as much from them as they will learn from you.”

Dr. Jaime Curtis-Fisk – Dow Chemical
By: Tina Leaym

Dr. Jaime Curtis-Fisk, 2015 Rising Star Award Winner, is an associate research scientist and STEM program manager for the Dow Chemical Company. Through this unique dual role, she leads both technical projects and community outreach initiatives. As a scientist, Jaime’s work focuses on formulation development for the delivery of active ingredients. Jaime also leads the Dow STEM Ambassadors program and the company’s initiatives to support teacher professional development.

Jaime holds a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Grand Valley State University and PhD in chemistry from Michigan State University. She lives in Michigan with her husband, also a scientist at Dow, and their two children.

Jaime’s arrival at Dow was not exactly traditional. “I left my teaching position to follow my husband to his dream job, and I ended up with a position that I love more than I could have ever expected. When presented with the opportunity to split my time between traditional R&D and corporate citizenship, I again took a leap of faith and it has paid off. I love my job!” It is very apparent that Jamie thrives on being able to bounce between the two worlds. She says, “Each helps keep the other in perspective, and each has helped me to develop a different set of skills that will be to my benefit no matter what the next step is.”

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Although the dual role is one of the things she appreciates the most about her job, it also brings challenges in the area of work-life balance. Jamie says, "I balance work and life by being very intentional about the commitments that I take on and being clear upfront about my limitations. Along with that I take on the responsibility of ensuring that I can still deliver on what I've committed to, even if I have to do that in a non-conventional way. My colleagues know that I work a flexible schedule, I start my workday early so that I can pick my kids up from school, and they typically don't request meetings with me after 3 or send urgent requests at the end of the day, but the trade-off is that I am often catching up on things after my kids are in bed in the evening. Some may say that blurring the line between work and life in this way is not a good work-life balance, but for me it is the best solution that works for me and my family."

When asked if she had any advice for early-career, women chemists, Jamie had this to say, "Develop a strong network of mentors, and make sure that at least one of those mentors has the potential to develop into a sponsor. Make time for building these relationships; it will often be tempting to cancel these meetings because they never seem as urgent as other work responsibilities. Follow what makes you happy and works best for your personal life. I've taken some risks in this way, done things that didn't seem like the best for the upward trajectory of my career path, but each time that I thought I was sacrificing my career it has turned out to be the opposite. When I'm comfortable in my role and love what I'm doing, I shine so much brighter and perform so much better at my job, and that has paid off."

Dr. Marina Ramirez-Alvarado, winner of 2015 Rising Star Award, is currently a faculty at Mayo Clinic in Minnesota.

Dr. Marina Ramirez-Alvarado, winner of 2015 Rising Star Award, is currently a faculty at Mayo Clinic in Minnesota.

How did she get started in her field?

Stan Prusiner won the Nobel Prize for his work on prions around the time Marina was finishing up her PhD work. The prion form of the protein adopts a beta-sheet structure to form amyloid, and Marina had been studying beta-sheet structure in her PhD work, so it was a natural progression for her to work with Professor Prusiner.

Marina started her own research work in 2002 and moved from model systems to a disease model (light chain amyloidosis). Although this was more challenging experimentally, the direct application of her basic research to cure a devastating health problem gave Marina a great sense of accomplishment.

How did she make the transitions to get to where she is now? What was difficult?

Marina moved to a new city and lived away from her parents for the first time when she started a MSc program. She moved to another country with a new language, culture, and climate for graduate school. She had to move to yet another country and also started married life when she began her postdoc position. The most significant transition was when she started as an assistant professor. This time she was pregnant, initiating a new research program, and building a house with her husband!
As she looks back, she would do it differently if she could because it had been such a chaotic time! Her research and science was the common thread in all of these roles and places, and this made the transitions less difficult for Marina.

**How did mentors help her?**

As a new assistant professor, Marina was frustrated when many of her publications and proposals were rejected. Her mentors advised her not to take rejections and bad reviews personally. They also asked her to learn from her male colleagues, who would get upset at first at rejections but then calm down and look at the critiques objectively. They do not feel inadequate when they get bad reviews.

Another mentor advised her not to spend too much time on one proposal to try to make it perfect. In the end, the imperfect proposals are the ones that were funded.

**What does she like to do outside of work? How do she balance work and life?**

Marina has a 12-year old son. She tries to find time to spend with him. They both practice Tae Kwon Do. They sing and play the guitar together. She likes biking and spending time outdoors in beautiful Minnesota. She realized recently that exercise and meditation can actually be part of medical treatment to cure tough health issues.

Marina thinks of work and life as integration/satisfaction rather than balance. We spend most of our time at work and that is the reality – it is the quality of the time she spends at home that is important, not the quantity.

**What advice does she have for women interested in pursuing career paths in technical fields?**

Women in science still face many barriers everyday. Some of these are self-imposed while the rest may be from prejudice and judgement of others. It helps to be aware of the barriers.

Women in science should find a solid support system and rely on them. It is a sign of strength to be able to ask for help. Remember to include in your day things that recharge you and make you laugh. It is also important to find a partner who is your most supportive cheerleader and also shares responsibilities at home.

Learn to say no in a strategic way – prioritize your workload. Not everyone will like you and it is OK, but do try not to burn bridges.

**Spring 2016 National Meeting - San Diego**

**Women in the Chemical Enterprise Breakfast**

**By: Amy DeBaillie and Ean Warren**

7:30 am - 9:00 am – Monday, March 14, 2016, Location: Indigo Ballroom C/G, Hilton San Diego Bayfront.

The Women in the Chemical Enterprise Breakfast will be held on Monday, March 14th in San Diego during the 251st National Meeting of the American Chemical Society. In keeping with the overall meeting theme “Computers in Chemistry”, the title of the breakfast will be “Coupling personal branding and social media to advance your career in the chemical sciences”. Attendees will learn from social media expert, Jennifer McLachlan, how to leverage social media tools to develop and maintain a meaningful digital presence on the web. Through an exploration of professional social networking sites such as LinkedIn, Google+, Researchgate and/or ACS Network, participants will experience how these platforms can lead to powerful networking and ultimately, career advancement in the chemical sciences.
The ACS Women Chemists Committee (WCC) has named the recipients of its 2016 Rising Star Awards, which recognize exceptional early- to mid-career women chemists across all areas of chemistry on a national level. The awards were established in 2011 to help promote retention of women in science. The 2016 winners are:

**Karelle Aiken, Ph.D.** - Georgia Southern University  
**Anastassia N. Alexandrova, Ph.D.** - University of California – Los Angeles  
**Rongjuan Cong, Ph.D.** - The Dow Chemical Company  
**Elise B. Fox, Ph.D.** - Savannah River National Laboratory  
**Susan Halpern Chirch, Ph.D.** - L'Oreal USA

The winners will attend the Spring 2016 ACS national meeting in San Diego, where they present their research/stories at the WCC Rising Star Symposium on March 14 in Room 12, San Diego Convention Center. Congratulations again to the 2016 WCC Rising Stars.

**Amanda B. Hummon, Ph.D.** - University of Notre Dame  
**Mindy Levine, Ph.D.** - University of Rhode Island  
**Jin K. Montclare, Ph.D.** - NYU Polytechnic School of Engineering New York University  
**Jennifer A. Prescher, Ph.D.** - University of California, Irvine  
**Rebecca T. Ruck, Ph.D.** - Merck Research Laboratories

The ACS Symposium Book

**ACS Symposium Book of Interest to WCC Released**

By: Kim Woznack

The WCC is happy to announce the publication of, “Jobs, Collaborations, and Women Leaders in the Global Chemistry Enterprise”. This book is the third in a series of ACS ACS Symposium Series #1195, and was edited by H. N. Cheng, Marinda Li Wu, and Bradley D. Miller.

The book is based upon the initiatives and symposia of Marinda Li Wu (2013 ACS President). WCC was honored to be the primary sponsor of the “Women Leaders of the Global Chemistry Enterprise” symposium at the 248th ACS National Meeting in San Francisco, California. The symposium featured the personal accounts of sixteen successful women scientists from around the world. The speakers have written their accounts in manuscript form and these are included in the ACS symposium book, along with other chapters on international collaborations.

The ACS Symposium Book, “Jobs, Collaborations, and Women Leaders in the Global Chemistry Enterprise” is now available at:

[http://pubs.acs.org/isbn/9780841230675](http://pubs.acs.org/isbn/9780841230675).
Social Media

Social media plays a large role in every day communication. Keep up-to-date on the latest ACS WCC news by liking our Facebook page, following us on Twitter, and checking our website. Make sure to like our posts, share the information and re-tweet our tweets! Facebook has started to limit organic shares of posts unless you pay to boost your post. Please like and share the ACS WCC information to help spread the word!

WCC Facebook
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Just Cocktails ACS Network

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Thank you for reading the WCC semiannual newsletter. We hope that you find the articles inspirational and informative! If you have an article or an announcement that may be useful to our readership, please feel free to send it to acsnationalwcc@gmail.com. We welcome all suggestions.