

East Bay Chapter of the Association for Women in Science**ebAWIS Newsletter Highlights**

September Meeting Info 1
Upcoming Meetings 2

September 2006

May Meeting Review 2
2006 Board Members 3

Volume 14, Number 4

Meeting Directions 3

September Meeting of the East Bay Chapter of the Association for Women in Science

Environmental Impacts From Hurricane Rita

Lynda Deschambault, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Thursday, September 28, 2006

NOVARTIS*, Room 4.104, Emeryville

6:30 – 8:30 pm

Light supper at 6:30 pm, meeting begins at 7:00 pm. For directions, see page 3 or visit www.ebawis.org,

Suggested donation to cover cost of food: \$10 non-members, \$5 members. Men and Women are welcome!

Ms. Deschambault will speak on the topic of the efforts of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) partnership to address environmental hazards from Louisiana hurricanes Katrina and Rita. These agencies have been tasked with assessing the damage, testing health and environmental conditions, and coordinating cleanup efforts. In emergency situations such as this, the EPA serves as the lead Agency for the cleanup of hazardous materials; with a staff of over a thousand from all regions of the U.S.— water, soil, sediment, and air samples have been gathered and analyzed. Both hazardous household and commercial waste have required removal. She will recount her field experiences surveying the damaged areas as well as clean up and management of this endeavor. Removal of large industrial-sized chemical containers have required high-end technology field equipment: chemical assessment tools, hand-held computers, GPS, GIS and flyover helicopters have been used to assess the extent of contamination and remove hazardous materials. Difficult field decisions have been required in order to minimize the impact to sensitive wetland environments and habitat refuge areas. In southwestern Louisiana parishes, the EPA and LDEQ have disposed of more than 450,000 pounds of chemical waste as of April 3, 2006. In response to community concerns, unusual partnerships have been formed to help locate missing caskets, firearms, and explosives. The widespread release of chemicals and other hazardous materials continues to be scrutinized and the results will be used to assess the long-term environmental impact.

Lynda Deschambault holds an MBA degree in business, two Bachelor's degrees (chemistry and soils), and a California Teaching Certificate. She has 17 years in the commercial laboratory business, five years as an enforcement officer, and is currently a Project Manager for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and President of a non-profit environmental education organization. She is serving as a city councilwoman for the Town of Moraga.

* Chiron Corporation is now NOVARTIS. There are new security procedures in place, so please check in at the guard station prior to parking. See Directions section at the back of this newsletter for details.

May Chapter Meeting Review

by Claire Kinlaw, Ph.D.

Cathie Magowan, Director, Science and Technology Programs and Research Initiatives, University of California Office of the President, has her *ideal job*. A founding member of the East Bay AWIS chapter, Cathie shared her personal career story with chapter members in an informal presentation.

After achieving a PhD, working through 2 postdoctoral positions, and spending 15 years as an academic research scientist, Cathie realized that while she had entered her career path motivated to study malaria to “save millions of children worldwide” she was experiencing low job satisfaction. She was committed to the goals of her work but not enjoying the work itself. At that point, she decided to seek a new kind of position. She knew she wanted to use her science knowledge but not personally carry out lab work. She evaluated her strengths: problem solving, attention to detail, focus, organization, communication, and tenacity to follow through.

She applied for many jobs before she was even offered an interview, but her entire job search took 6 months. Early in her search, Cathie identified the University of California science administration structure as a desirable employer. While she knew she possessed the strengths and skills being sought in candidates, she initially got no recognition for having these qualities.

Along the way, she learned a number of important lessons in the process, and she made good use of her AWIS experience to demonstrate she possesses the skills, abilities; qualities that search committees were seeking. As an AWIS member she held an elected position on the board, engaged in extensive networking, worked on the newsletter, and developed a scholarship program.

What did Cathie learn from her successful experience in combination with her previous failures?

- Do homework on any hiring organization where you seek a position to determine if it is a good fit for one’s personality, values, goals, etc. Find out who works there and what the professional environment is like.
- Find out who is on the selection committee and describe your skills and abilities in terms that make sense to those hiring.
- Be persistent but do not become a “desperate pest”.

Upon being hired, Cathie began creating and continues to develop her ideal job, looking around for projects to jump into, committees to join, and connections to make. She recommends thinking about the next job to stay focused on developing new value for oneself and one’s organization. Take the time to identify what leaders are moving ahead and what new trends are developing. Cathie has built a collaborative relationship with her closest colleague to the point where both have advocated for each other. Results have been a promotion, salary increase, and greater authority and impact. What does Cathie do? She:

- Manages a portfolio of science and technology research projects that extend across multiple campuses.
- Stays current in science via meetings and connections so to better analyze trends and opportunities for the University.
- Connects people within UC research community with each other and administrative resources like seed funding to get projects launched.
- Contributes her understanding of the academic scientific research environment including graduate study, postdoc research, and grantsmanship to all her endeavors on the job.

Participants also welcomed Cathie’s mother, Claire, at the meeting. Claire shared a few of her own experiences as a woman bumping up against the “concrete ceiling” a generation before her daughter. Her experience as a founding member of NOW and some of the battles she took part in on behalf of women’s professional and employment rights underscored the distance that professional women have come in the last 40 years and provided a lively addition to Cathie’s personal story.

Cathie is looking for ebAWIS members to work with her on behalf of the next annual scholarship program that she created. Contact her at 510 987 0377, Cathie.magowan@ucop.edu.

Upcoming Meeting

2007 American Society for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Annual Meeting

When: February 15 – 19

Where: Hilton San Francisco & Towers

Note: NCC-AWIS is sponsoring a breakfast speaker and panel discussion on Monday the 19th.

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Interested in helping out but don't have time to take on one of the positions mentioned above? Perhaps an event-specific task offering networking opportunities might be the best fit for you. Your help greatly appreciated. Please contact Laura McDevitt for more information.

Directions to Novartis**Room 4.104, 4560 Horton St., Emeryville**

From San Francisco: Take 101 North/I-80 East towards San Francisco. Continue on I-80 across the Bay Bridge. I-80 then joins I-580 (left lanes). Immediately move to the far right lanes and take the Ashby Avenue exit, which is the next exit past Powell Street. Exit at Ashby Avenue and proceed under the railroad overcrossing, then turn right on 7th Street at the stoplight. Turn right on Folger Avenue and follow the road as it turns left and becomes Hollis Street. Continue on Hollis, across Powell Street, and turn right on 53rd Street. Novartis entrance is the third driveway on the left.

From Oakland: Take I-880 North. Continue past Oakland to the I-980 interchange towards Walnut Creek. Proceed to I-580 West to San Francisco then to I-80 East. Keep to the right and proceed towards Berkeley on I-80 East/I-580 West. Exit at Powell Street and turn right on Powell at the stoplight. Continue on Powell over the overpass to Hollis Street. At the stoplight at Hollis, turn right and then right again on 53rd Street. Novartis entrance is the third driveway on the left.

From Highway 80 Westbound, and/or Highway 24, 80 Eastbound, exit at Powell Street and make a left on Powell at the stoplight. Continue on Powell over the overpass until Hollis Street. At the stoplight at Hollis, turn right and then right again on 53rd Street. Novartis entrance is the third driveway on the left.

From Walnut Creek: Take Highway 80 East toward Berkeley from Highway 24 Westbound, Exit Powell Street and turn right on Powell at the stoplight. Continue on Powell over the overpass to Hollis Street. At the stoplight at Hollis, turn right and then right again on 53rd Street. Novartis entrance is the third driveway on the left.

From the South Bay: Take I-880 North. Take I-980 exit towards Highway 24/Walnut Creek. Take the I-580 exit towards San Francisco/Hayward. Take the I-580 West exit on left towards San Francisco. Merge onto I-580 West. Turn slight right at the intersection of I-80 West Ramp to stay on I-580 West. Take the Powell Street exit towards Emeryville and turn right on Powell at the stoplight. Continue on Powell over the overpass to Hollis Street. At the stoplight at Hollis, turn right and then right again on 53rd Street. Novartis entrance is the third driveway on the left.

Park for the AWIS meeting: Check in at the guard shack you will see immediately after turning off 53rd Street into the Novartis entrance. State that you are attending the AWIS meeting. They will direct you to parking. Our meeting takes place in Building 4, the large brick façade building with purple and yellow stucco located across 53rd Street from visitor parking. Enter at the doors nearest the big yellow stucco ball. We meet in Building 4 (5300 Chiron Way), room 4.104. Please sign in at the front desk.

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