A Summary from the Panel of Issues on Engineering Students with Disabilities

Betty Preece
Science Education Consultant

Panel members discussed resources available and unique programs in operation from a variety of viewpoints.

Virginia Stern described the NSF programs which serve disabled scientists and engineers and their employers as well as students in these disciplines. Her office provides extensive resource and curriculum materials and staff for planning, training and implementing such programs. It conducts workshops to train educators and counselors in techniques to use, interest and prepare students of all ages in science, technology and engineering careers. It also disseminates a directory of disabled scientists and engineers willing to assist as mentors and role models. Contact her for information on how you may access all of these resources.

At the University of Texas in Austin, Meredith Ross-Chong is establishing the Engineering School's first program for students with disabilities. She outlined the steps she has taken to get the program under way, offering many suggestions for ideas that worked and those that did not. Schools seeking to establish such a program are invited to contact her for assistance.

Dinah Cohen's office provides electronic assistive devices as well as career and employment counseling for civilians who either work for the Department of Defense or would like to do so. Through her office, computers and other electronic devices and training programs are provided to enable the handicapped to perform their jobs. Ms. Cohen counsels the handicapped to determine the kinds of jobs they can fulfill and then searches for possible suitable openings. She often travels to universities to interview prospective students for these programs. Inquiries are welcome.

After these presentations, lively discussion among the panels and between them and the audience followed.