

APPENDIX B

WEPAN Interest Group Meetings

Women in Engineering: Retaining Women in the Workplace

Paula Leventman, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean of Engineering
Northeastern University

Collecting and Analyzing Retention Data at Your Institution

Suzanne Scheff
Director, Women in Engineering Program
University of Kentucky

MentorNet Information Session

Carol Muller, Ph.D.
Executive Director, MentorNet

Faculty Issues

Karan Watson, Ph.D.
Associate Dean of Engineering
Texas A&M University

Assessing the Experience of Women in Engineering: Lessons Learned/Things to Share

Gloria Rogers, Ph.D.
Vice President for Institutional Research
Rose Hulman Institute of Technology

29

WOMEN IN ENGINEERING: RETAINING WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

Paula Leventman
Assistant Dean of Engineering

Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts

Participants shared their concerns about low numbers of women in the engineering workforce. There was general dismay that despite gains in WIE enrollments in recent years, females continue to constitute less than 10 percent of the engineering workforce. It was agreed that accurate data is needed:

- 1) to determine the extent of the apparent leaky pipeline problem,
- 2) to discern the reasons women leave engineering career pathways in larger numbers than their male colleagues,
- 3) to design and implement appropriate intervention strategies.

Paula Leventman called for a coalition of interested parties and groups to draft a proposal for major funding. Gail Mattson and Kathy Weaver said that the Society of Women Engineers wanted to replicate their 1992 study. Leventman assembled a list of interested participants to continue this important discussion.

| First Name | Last Name | Title | Organization |
|------------|------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Cynthia J. | Ekstein | SBIR Program Manager | National Science Foundation |
| Linda M. | Scherr | Program Director | IBM Women in Technology |
| Jill S. | Tietjen | Director | Univ. of Colorado at Boulder |
| Gail | Mattson | S.E. Region Director | Society Of Women Engineers |
| Kathy | Weaver | Assistant Director | Women in Science Project |
| Becki | Venzke | Coordinator | Texas Woman's University |
| Stephany | Compton | Coordinator | Texas Woman's University |
| Lewis | Shumaker | Manager | DuPont |
| Elizabeth | Riesz | Coordinator | The University of Iowa |
| Victoria | Friedensen | Program Officer | National Academy of Engineering |
| Roberta | Ritcheske | Development Associate | Texas Woman's University |
| Linda M. | Davis | Director | University of Michigan |
| Gloria | Rogers | Vice President | Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology |
| Inger | Gruftman | Ombudsman | CivilingenjorsForbundet |

CREATING A GLOBAL ENGINEERING COMMUNITY THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

1998 WEPAN National Conference

MENTORNET: THE FIRST YEAR, AND BEYOND

Carol B. Muller, Ph.D.

Executive Director, MentorNet, San Jose, California

This information session focused on MentorNet, a new WEPAN venture -- a national electronic industrial mentoring network for women in engineering and science which pairs undergraduate and graduate women studying engineering and related sciences with mentors in industry via e-mail.

MentorNet represents a growing partnership among universities, corporations, and professional societies, and is funded in its start-up year by grants from the AT&T and Intel Foundations. Its operations are based at San Jose State University, in San Jose, California, where office space and infrastructural support is being donated by the College of Engineering; staff members include the part-time executive director, a full-time mentoring specialist, part-time systems administrator and part-time administrative assistant.

MentorNet's web site, located at www.mentornet.net, provides a great deal of further information about this project. The web site serves as a source of information for prospective participants, and also offers on-line applications for participation, as well as general descriptive information about the program and related resources. Students and mentors are matched by MentorNet, and provided with training and ongoing coaching throughout the course of one academic year. They are expected to exchange email on a weekly basis. Formative and summative evaluation is being conducted by the Ithaca Evaluation Group.

The program was officially launched in February 1998 and its first trial run was conducted between February and May 1998. 280 students from 15 universities applied to participate, along with 241 mentors representing 93 different companies; 225 students were matched with mentors in this trial semester. Of these, 73% were undergraduate students, about evenly split between first year/sophomores and juniors/seniors, 8% were masters students, and 19% doctoral candidates. Of the mentors, 73% were female, 27% male.

MentorNet's growth plan calls for expansion from the first year to 500 mentoring pairs in 1998-99, 1,000 in 1999-2000, 2,500 in 2000-01, and 5,000 in 2001-02. Controlled growth allows for responsible development of the program and its services. Two factors limiting rapid growth are the development of financial resources for the program and developing the pool of mentors. Prospects for both are encouraging, but slower to develop than the pool of prospective student-proteges. For that reason, we are initially limiting the numbers of universities participating, with 15 in the pilot year, 25 in 1998-99, 35 in 1999-2000, 50 in 2000-01, and 100 in 2001-02. Universities will be selected based on the interests of the financial backers of MentorNet; as the number and diversity of financial backers grows, we expect the number and diversity of participating universities to grow. We welcome collaboration in identifying companies and other organizations particularly interested in supporting MentorNet and specific universities' participation in the program.

In addition to assisting the retention of women in engineering and related science fields, MentorNet aspires to develop and implement a model for best practices in electronic mentoring, setting a model for emulation by other organizations.