



SWIGS 2015-2016 NEWSLETTER

SOCIETY FOR WOMEN IN GRADUATE STUDIES IN CHEMISTRY & BIOCHEMISTRY

YEAR IN REVIEW

Hello, everyone! Welcome to the third annual newsletter of the Society for Women in Graduate Studies in Chemistry and Biochemistry (SWIGS). This year, we expanded again to include seven officers to lead and organize the many events that made this past year even more active than all previous years!

In pursuit of our mission, we hosted various events for professional development, networking, outreach, and community building in the department.

Some of our biggest changes included keeping track of SWIGS membership as well as adding informal monthly coffee, brewery, and quarterly hiking meet-ups so that our members had a chance to relax and get to know one another. These

events, as well as all of the events put on by SWIGS this year, were a resounding success. In numbers, SWIGS ended the year with: **35** official members, **99** mailing list subscribers and **51** events, with an average of **12** attendees to all events and activities! It was a truly amazing year in terms of



(left to right) Principal Members Faith, Jessie, Melissa, Katherine, Yanice, and Gwen (not pictured, Lisa).

participation, and I have had a wonderful time helping to lead a group that serves to benefit so many graduate students.

We obviously do not have enough space in this newsletter to talk about everything we did, so we hope to provide the highlights and themes. We are truly thankful to everyone in the department that has graciously given their support to make SWIGS a success, and we look forward to seeing everyone at upcoming SWIGS meetings and events. ~ Melissa

MEETING TOPICS

August

Speaker Carol Rogers, "Crucial Conversations"

September

Career-Life Balance

October

Negotiation Tactics: "Getting to Yes"

November

Women's Center Workshop "Feminism 101"

December

Panel Discussion from five Female Pfizer Scientists

January

Privilege

February

Micro aggressions and mental health

March

Giulia Hoffman "Finding & Applying for Non-Academic Positions"

April

Prof. Katja Lindenberg "My Life Outside of Academia"

May

Coping Mechanisms and Graduate School

SPECIAL THANKS

Stacey Brydges, Partho Ghosh, Seth Cohen, Erica Lennard, Jeanine Sun, Melanie Fernandes, Jeff Rances, Richard Thomas, Bob Continetti, Cliff Kubiak, Josh Figueroa, AND the Dept. Chemistry & Biochemistry, GSA and ChemGSA for financial support.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Speakers, Panels, and Tales of Non-Traditional Career Paths

To start off, we hosted our two recurring annual networking events in the department. The department-wide summer networking event in July had **76** attendees and gender pay gap-themed activity to raise awareness for some of the challenges women in STEM face. Our Women in Chemistry mixer was in November, with guest speaker, Undergraduate Dean, Barbara Sawrey. Her inspiring academic journey lent perspective to our own nascent careers and the event itself was widely attended by our department's women

faculty members, resulting in scintillating conversations with our grad student attendees.

This year, we also heard from two speakers in non-traditional post-STEM career paths. Science artist, Mary O'Reilly, spoke to students in September about her path from her PhD to starting her own business, giving great advice alongside anecdotes. In March, ACS lobbyist Ryan Davison regaled us with his experiences in communicating science to Capitol Hill politicians, and spoke about ways that STEM grad students can transition into policy

positions. Thanks to Lisa Adamiak and Alissa Sasayama for spearheading those events!

We also assembled two different panels of local industry professionals to share their experiences in the job market. The first, organized by Katherine Nadler, consisted entirely of women from Pfizer, who shared their career paths in the pharmaceutical industry. Later in the year, SWIGS and the department co-hosted a panel of a variety of recent grads in local positions, providing a broad range of experiences and advice.
~Jessie

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Amongst Members & Friends

SWIGS strives to create a community for graduate students, especially women, to share stories, find inclusion, and have fun. Last year one of our biggest requests from members was to increase the number of informal events to have more time simply to get to know one another and build a strong community. So for the 2015-2016 year, we started monthly coffee meet-ups, monthly brewery visits, and quarterly hikes. Over a dozen different people took initiative to lead these events! We went

to Mandeville coffee cart, Muir woods coffee house, and ate delicious home baked treats provided by the event coordinators. We tasted beer at Green Flash, Societe, Rough Draft, White Labs, St. Archer, and many other local breweries.



We hiked once each quarter, including great locations such as Iron Mountain and Torrey Pines. Grad school is stressful, and it's easy to get stuck in a work routine and not interact with people outside of your own lab. But for me, when I get to know students from other labs, I realize that we share the same struggles. I am encouraged by the success of the senior students, and I am inspired to mentor the next generation of women scientists entering UCSD.
~Faith

OUTREACH

Inspiring the Next Generation of Scientists

This year, SWIGS hosted two additional new workshops! One of the new workshops was an interactive science demo session as part of the *Comienza Con Un Sueno* event at UCSD, coordinated by Thomas Bussey. This event brought 6th-11th graders of primarily first generation, low socio-economic, and under-represented minority backgrounds to the UCSD campus to help integrate and prepare them for the UC system. Our workshop worked to promote science by engaging the students in the various activities that we did as well as share what we like about science. We also encouraged the students to pursue science education by discussing the chemistry involved in the demos.



Our second new workshop was at Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) conference, which we attended for the third consecutive year. EYH is held at the University of San Diego and it engages young girls in STEM by introducing them to topics through hands-on activities. This workshop was entitled "Magic Show" which demonstrated the "magic-like" outcomes that chemistry/biology experiments can have. The girls observed fluorescent fish, learned how to collapse a can, and make an assortment of things like elephant toothpaste, a cloud, and a non-Newtonian substance! We also continued our popular "Molecular Gastronomy" workshop at EYH, where the girls learned about the chemistry of food by making lemon spaghetti, juice caviar, and instant sorbet.



Earlier in the year, SWIGS held a "Smells" table at the ACS ChemExpo at Miramar College, which aimed to increase public awareness of the importance of chemistry in everyday life and in the community. At the "Smells" table, we displayed jars containing various hidden fruits, spices, and extracts labeled with the characteristic chemical structure responsible for each smell. People of all ages lined up to smell each jar and guess which food item each smell corresponded to. Our involvement in outreach this year was a fun and collaborative experience.

~ Yanice

INTERCLUB CONNECTIONS

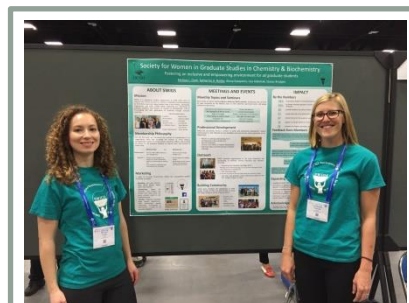
SWIGS Teams up with the ACSSA and Women in STEM

This year, SWIGS was involved in many co-led events with the undergraduate ACS chapter on campus. We attended several mixed student-faculty lunches and shared our perspectives on graduate school. In March, we hosted lab tours of the Continetti, Cohen and Komives labs for undergraduates to get exposure to a variety of lab atmospheres from different fields of chemistry. Finally, in May we organized an inaugural 'Women in Chemistry'-focused event with the ACSSA, in which a panel of

five SWIGS members gave mini-presentations focusing on their successes thus far in their career paths.

In addition to our connection with the ACSSA, we have also been a part of a coalition of graduate student women's groups on campus. Our coalition includes the Women in Physics, Women in Materials Science & Engineering, and Women & Minorities at SIO. Each quarter one group hosted a speaker, followed by mingling over snacks and drinks. This year we hosted the other groups at our

science policy talk (lobbyist Ryan Davison). We look forward to continuing our partnerships with these groups in the coming months. ~Jessie & Melissa



Melissa and Katherine presented a poster about SWIGS at ACS San Diego

PLANNING AHEAD

Getting Ready for SWIGS 2016-2017

We had an extraordinary past year with a full schedule and growing membership, and have already begun planning for the next! Building on the success of 2015-2016, we welcome four returning officers, **Katherine Nadler** (President), **Faith Heffernan** (Secretary/Marketing), **Jessie Moreton** (Professional Development Coord.), and **Yanice Benitez** (Outreach Coord.), and three additions: **Naneki Collins** (VP), **Joey Palomba** (Interclub Liaison), and **Katia Charov** (Outreach

Coord.). During the summer, we will carry on with our monthly meetings as well as coffee and brewery meet ups as we undergo officer transitions and begin setting goals for the coming year to achieve continued growth. For the upcoming academic year, we plan to host a number of member-initiated events related to the SWIGS mission, while also focusing on interfacing with local biotech and industries. UCSD's prime location situated among the incubator of technology start-

ups provides a fairly untapped market for career networking and opportunities. As always, we are certainly open to new ideas and recommendations, so please feel free to join our meetings or e-mail us with your thoughts. Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter and to hear about the successes of our hard working graduate students! We hope to see you at our **Summer Department-wide Networking Mixer!** ~Katherine