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## Message From The President

### Dear members of INWES,

As we approach the end of the year, I would like to thank all of you for making 2012 another fruitful year for INWES. I am very thankful that the 2012 INWES Regional Conference, which took place on 12th and 13th of October in New Delhi, India was a great success. I would like to especially congratulate Sangeeta Wij, President of WISE-India and her organizing team for hosting their first international event.

For those who were in India, I am sure you enjoyed the two day meeting and its themes of "Women in Science, Engineering, Architecture, Technology and Consultancy" and "Green Infrastructure and Projects", as well as the exotic cuisine, warm hospitality and rich culture of India. For those who could not make it to the meeting this time, you will find information in our newsletter as well as on the website of WISE-India ([www.wiseindia.org](http://www.wiseindia.org)).

In addition to the regional conference, our first INWES regional network, the 2012 APNN (Asia

and Pacific Nation Network) was held in Kuala Lumpur on June 13th, hosted by IEM (Institution of Engineers, Malaysia). I am happy to say that our regional network in Asia and the Pacific is developing well, thanks to the Chair organization, KWSE and our members in Asia and the Pacific. We look forward to the 2013 APNN which is to be held in Taiwan next year, hosted by the newborn organization TWiST (The Society of Taiwan Women in Science and Technology).

The board members of INWES have had a busy year too. At the INWES board meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of October in New Delhi, India, important decisions about for the 2013 regional conference were made and we look forward to meeting many of our African members in Nairobi, Kenya next year, hosted by the AAWSE.(Association of African Women in Science and Engineering). In the meantime, an African regional network is actively being pursued. The board is also putting their best efforts into the preparation of ICWES16, which is planned for 2014 in Los Angeles, USA.

This year, there has been a change in the executive body of INWES. We are fortunate to welcome Liette Vasseur and Sangeeta Wij as our new Vice Presidents and Jung Sun Kim as our new Secretary General. They are taking over from Marlene Kangga, who has resigned due to her duties as the National President of Engineers Australia, and Pam Wain's current health problems. However, both Marlene and Pam will remain as board members. We offer our congratulations to Marlene and best wishes for a fast recovery to Pam.

Other changes include the appointment of a new membership committee chair, Kayako Sugahara, and co-chair of programs and projects, Margaret Ajibode. Sue Bird (past president), Monique Moutaud (president-elect) and Joan Graf (treasurer) remain as executive members. As board members, Roseni Dearden (chair of communication), Rufina Dabo Sarr (chair of advocacy), Uduakobond Okon, Ewa Okon-Horodynska and Nageen Aindudin continue working for INWES.



I look forward to having more of you involved in INWES activities, and welcome any suggestions and ideas any time of the year. INWES will try to support as much as we can. I hope to have another good year to work together to make changes for a better world.

Wishing everyone Happy Holidays and a Peaceful New Year!!

Warm regards,  
**Kong-Joo Lee, Ph.D.**  
INWES President

## News from INWES Members

### EVENTS IN TAIWAN IN 2012 AND 2013

The 2012 Taiwan Women in Science and Technology Forum was held on September the 15th and 16th 2012 in Taipei, Taiwan. This exciting forum was organised by the Project on Mainstreaming Gender in Science and Technology and the Centre for Condensed Matter Science and Physics, with the help of the Society of Taiwan Women in Science and Technology (TWiST), the Committee on Women in Physics (PSROC), and the Taipei-based Working Group on Women in Chemistry Society.

Upcoming events in Taiwan include the 2013 Asia-Pacific Nations Network (APNN) meeting to be held on the 14th and 15th September 2013 and the 2013 International Conference on Women in Science and Technology (ICon WiST) on the 15th to 17th of September. They are organised jointly by TWiST and by the Project on Mainstreaming Gender in Science and Technology, which is being sponsored by the National Council of R.O.C. Taiwan. Both events will be held in the Howard Civil Service International House in Taipei, Taiwan and are eagerly anticipated.



*2012 Taiwan Women in Science and Technology Forum*

### AFRICAN REGIONAL MEETING HELD IN NEW DELHI, INDIA ON OCTOBER 13th, 2012.

The African Regional meeting was held on the 13th October 2012 with the main agenda of constituting an INWES African Regional Network. The meeting was attended by sixteen delegates from four African countries. The president elect, Monique Moutaud, opened the meeting by making clear its purpose as a forum for the constitution of an interim working committee for the establishment of the INWES African Regional Network. The INWES president Dr. Kong-Joo Lee stressed the need for Africans to have a viable network that will facilitate the hosting of regional meetings in Africa.

After all the delegates in attendance agreed to the establishment of an INWES African Regional Network (INWES Africa), a list was drawn up of both individual women engineers and scientists and those representing related organizations and associations, across the two African sub-regions (English and French), who would constitute an interim committee for the INWES African Regional Network.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ANGLOPHONE AFRICA REGION

In light of a recognised need to create a network of African women engineers and scientists among the African Anglophones, and to publicize INWES, relevant organizations and individuals have been identified and been brought into the INWES network within the Anglophone Africa region.

The Association for Promoting African Girls in Engineering, Science and Technology Education



(APAGESTE) is a non-governmental organization in Nigeria. At a recent event in which hundreds of people participated including the APAGESTE Team, girl students from STEM and school teachers, the APAGESTE president, Dr. Uduakobong Okon delivered a sensitization lecture on STEM Outreach Programmes in Africa and in Nigeria in particular. She encouraged the teachers to use girl-friendly strategies when teaching. Dr. Eboro Umoren delivered a talk on "Building Foundations for Science, Technical and Engineering Careers". APAGESTE also visited different STEM practical workshops where teachers shared their experiences with the APAGESTE team on teaching girls technical and engineering subjects.

On the 6th to the 8th March 2012 a three day event to celebrate International Women's day celebration was hosted at the University of Uyo, Nigeria, by the Vice Chancellor of the University – Professor (Mrs). Comfort M. Ekpo. A debate session between different Nigerian schools was held at the event, coordinated by Dr. Uduakobong Okon and her team on the topic: 'Is connecting girls inspiring?'. Concurrently, free medical services were provided on the first two days by women in the medical profession. The event was rounded off on the third day with a launch of the University of Uyo, Gender Study Centre by His Excellency, the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Dr. Godswill Akpabio. Prizes were also presented to winners of the debate by the State Governor, the Honourable Commissioner for Women Affairs and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Uyo respectively. Dr. Val Atta, the chairman at the occasion presented the consolation prizes.

APAGESTE was proud to attend the INWES Regional Conference in New Delhi, India with Dr. Okon leading a delegation of twelve and ten research papers of members reviewed and accepted for presentation and publication.

Despite facing the challenge of limited funds available for outreach programs and website management and the need to better approach and identify with international organisations in the region, great strides have been made. Indeed over the coming year, APAGESTE can look forward to various upcoming events. The next regional conference has been approved for Kenya and a three-day

INWES/APAGESTE STEM outreach event has been planned for 2013, as well as a series of STEM mentorship and outreach sensitization campaigns for schools.

Dr Okon, has led APAGESTE efforts in expanding the network of women scientists and engineers and related organizations among Anglophone African countries, as well leading a team in building contacts within the region, with the University of Uyo, and internationally, at the INWES Regional Conference in Delhi. Her leadership role has been recognised both by her recent appointment as the Vice Chair of Gender Studies and Development and to the Committee of the University of Uyo, and by her appointment to collaborate with the UN Women Division in Nigeria on gender policy.

**Follow us on Facebook "Udyanieok Okon"**

## **INWES PRESENTS ITS ACTIVITIES AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF SWISS ENGINEERING**

With over 13,000 members, Swiss Engineering (SE) is the largest professional association of engineers and architects in Switzerland. For over a hundred years, Swiss Engineering has been representing engineering interests in the political, economic and societal arenas, working to further technical education and professional development. As a major voice of engineering in Switzerland, SE is committed to improving the reputation of the technical professions, encouraging the entry of new generations, and making sure relevant policy is considered from a gender perspective at all levels.

SE is composed of twenty-two professional groups and twenty-six regional committees, Geneva being one of them. The Geneva regional committee is currently being chaired by the first woman elected in the region in over a hundred years: Yvette Ramos, an active member of INWES since 2003.

With over four hundred women engineers as SE members, we are proud to announce that we can now celebrate a year of INWES organizational membership. Yet a long road lies ahead of us in our goal of creating a better gender balance within

engineering businesses in Switzerland. That is why, at the recent President's General Assembly held in Olten, SE decided that one of the three priorities within its new three year plan will be to take the lead in designing Swiss policy related to the training and the promotion of women in engineering and architecture professions and businesses.

## NOTES OF A PERIPATETIC NEUROSCIENTIST

In the summer I was invited to attend the Telluride Neuromorphic Engineering workshop held in Telluride, Colorado. This was an invitation-only event, spread over three weeks with lectures and hands-on project work, and I was notably the only person from India invited to attend it. For those not in the know, neuromorphic engineering is a branch of engineering which tries to build devices based on the principles of neural circuits or the brain. One of the earliest examples of such engineering is the silicon retina, where a chip containing light sensors and circuitry mimics the function of a real retina.

In order to create a silicon retina, a model of the

real retina and its neurons and circuitry was first created and this was then replicated on a chip using 5760 silicon phototransistors which replace the retinal neurons. These are connected to 3600 transistors (of 13 types) which enable the processing of this information and its transmission to the brain. Remarkably, all of this powerful technology measures just 3.5 by 3.3 mm and, after clinical trials, can be implanted in the eyes of a human beings.

This device was an eye opener for me as it showed how we can use the fundamental work done in the neurosciences to create practical applications which help people. I came back from the workshop very excited to be able to move into this new area of work. If that move had gone smoothly, then perhaps I would not be writing this piece.

But that's not what happened. Firstly, I was never funded to attend the workshop despite the sponsors giving me some money as well as writing a very positive letter recommending me. Three months later I am still chasing one source which made some promises to reimburse me but is now finding many reasons why they might not be able to help me. Meanwhile, my colleagues show absolutely no interest in anything I did there and some



*Swiss Engineering president and national councillor Laurent Favre, with SE women presidents and secretaries.*

*Yvette Ramos, first woman president of the SE Geneva committee since its creation 102 years ago, is second left, front row.*

*She presented INWES activities at the General Assembly of Presidents in Olten, Switzerland in November 2012.*



senior ones have made it very difficult to work in my institute.

I write this not just to highlight my own predicament, but to describe an experience which I know many women here have gone through. At least I was fortunate in having been given "permission" to go and attend this workshop. Many others are denied this opportunity on false pretexts while senior men make sure their visibility grows nationally and internationally.

It is important to keep these factors in mind while evaluating women for jobs, grants and awards. They say women publish less than men. But has anyone actually done a real micro level study to find out the myriad reasons why this is so? I look at job advertisements which come with a clause "Qualified women and minorities encouraged to apply". What does this mean in reality? Is the playing field level and can women and minorities - unless given the same work conditions, environment and structural support - ever compete with men?

I see more and more new institutions starting up in India; but most of the jobs go to young men. How does that happen? Are there no qualified women? Or do they only want young men with families, who will become old men with families... and keep all the old boys' values and traditions intact? Yes, I was denied campus housing (and a job) in one of India's premier scientific institutes by the director who told me that, "Our housing is meant for families, people with children, women with children, single women with children. People will wonder what you are doing here". Another ex-director of an IIT wanted to know if I was married or ever had been, even though the topic of our conversation had nothing to do with marriage or families. I could cite many examples of misogyny and blatant sexism, both of which remain unchecked. Why are there no provisions to remove directors, deans and other important people in power who practise overt and covert sexism? Why are no real attempts made to recruit individuals who are committed to changing the culture of institutions and making them more diverse and friendly?

It seems appropriate here to mention the recent study by Moss-Racusin *et al.* published in PNAS

(Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences) on September 17th, 2012. This double blind study concludes that both male and female faculty rated men as being more hireable than women for a laboratory manager post, simply for being men, and men were willing to offer them both a higher salary and more mentoring. They say this is subtle gender bias. I see both subtle and not very subtle discrimination around me every day.

Meanwhile, I am still hunting for a positive environment to do my work in. If anyone can offer me one, do get in touch with me at the email below.

**Asha Gopinathan, India**

**Email: dendron.15@gmail.com**

## 'INNOVATIVE GENDER' RESEARCH PROPOSAL

I'm happy to announce that my team at Jagiellonian University have just finished a research application to the Norwegian Economic Instrument, which we hope will be successful. The title of the project is: *'Innovative Gender' as a New Source of Progress.*

The project's main focus is the concept of 'innovative gender', which encompasses two research problematics - the position of women and men within the economy and society, and the process of innovation and creativity. This research looks at the process of innovation and its gendered institutional, structural and policy environment as well as the nature of gender diversity in different countries in order to examine the way in which ideas of 'innovative gender' can be brought to bear when evaluating policy effectiveness and pursuing smart growth and social progress.

**Ewa Okoń-Horodyńska, Jagiellonian University  
Krakow, Poland, INWES Board Member**

## 2013 SOCIETY OF WOMEN ENGINEER'S (USA) CONFERENCE

Next SWE Conference announced - save the date!  
The next SWE conference, WE13, will be held in



Baltimore, Maryland USA from the 24th to 26th October 2013.

With the theme of 'Make Connections Make History', this will be a great place to network, advance your career and experience some great professional development events, so plan now to attend. The SWE website will continue to update the in-

formation on this conference.

**Joan Graf, SWE Representative to INWES**

**Website: <http://tinyurl.com/csot3w3>**

## INWES Activities and Events

### RECENT INWES ACTIVITIES

#### **2012 INWES Regional Conference held from October 12th to 13th, 2012 in New Delhi, India.**

The meeting was hosted by WISE-India and attended by about 200 delegates from 20 countries. The themes were: "Women in Science, Engineering, Architecture, Technology and Consultancy"



BM14

and "Green Infrastructure and Projects"

100 abstracts were received (1 poster session, 9 technical sessions where 40 technical papers and 30 posters were presented)

#### **BM15, held from October 14th to 15th, 2012, in New Delhi, India, hosted by WISE-India**

### UPCOMING INWES EVENTS

#### **2013 INWES Regional Conference**

Nairobi, Kenya

Dates to be announced

#### **2013 APNN**

Taiwan

Date: September 14, 2013 (in conjunction with IConWIST, September 14~17, 2013)

#### **ICWES 16**

Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles, California, USA

Dates: October 20-25, 2014 (in conjunction with SWE's WE14)

## INWES Members

Recently two new organizations were created under INWES APNN :

#### **WiSTEM (Women in Science, Technology, Engineering in Mongolia):**

Established December 17, 2011 by Ariunbolor Purvee (President)

•37 members

•Website: <http://womens.ifa.mn>

#### **TWiST (The Society of Taiwan Women in Science and Technology):**

•Established in October 30, 2011 by Chia-Li Wu (President)

•87 members

•Website: <http://www.Twist.org.tw/>



## INWES BOARD MEMBERS

### I. Executive Officers:

*President:* **Kong-Joo Lee (South Korea)**  
*President-Elect:* **Monique Moutaud (France)**  
*Past President:* **Sue Bird (UK)**  
*Vice President:* **Liette Vasseur (Canada)**  
*Vice President:* **Sangeeta Wij (India)**  
*Secretary General:* **Jung Sun Kim (South Korea)**  
*Treasurer:* **Joan Graf (USA)**

### II. Other Board members:

**Nageen Ainuddin (WESTIP, Pakistan)**  
**Margaret Ajibode (WES, UK)**  
**Marlene Kanga (Engineers Australia, Australia)**  
**Uduakobong Okon (APAGESTE, Nigeria)**  
**Ewa Okon-Horodyska (Individual, Poland)**  
**Rufina Dabo Sarr (AFSTech, Senegal)**  
**Pamela Wain (Individual, UK)**  
**Roseni Dearden (Individual, UK)**  
**Kayoko Sugahara (INWES Japan, Japan)**

### III. Committees and Chairs

*Advocacy Committee Chair:* **Rufina Dabo (Senegal)**  
*By-Laws Committee Chair:* **Liette Vasseur (Canada)** *Communications & Web Portal Committee Chair:* **Roseni Dearden (UK)**  
*Conference Committee Chair:* **Sangeeta Wij (India)**  
*Finance Committee Chair:* **Roseni Dearden (UK)**  
*Fund Development Committee Chair:* **Monique Moutaud (France)**  
*Membership Committee Chair:* **Kayoko Sugahara (Japan)**  
*Nominating Committee Chair:* **Sue Bird (UK)**  
*Programs Committee co-Chairs:* **Liette Vasseur (Canada), Margaret Ajibode (UK)**

## INWES Member Newsletter

Deadline for Issue #13: 28/02/2013

Contact: Roseni Dearden, Communications & Newsletter Committee

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[inwes@rosenidearden.net](mailto:inwes@rosenidearden.net)

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**Past Sponsors:** *Canadian International Development Agency, IDRC, Nortel, IBM*

**Affiliated with:** *UNESCO*

## Contact INWES

### International Network of Women Engineers and Scientists

[www.inwes.org](http://www.inwes.org)

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### INWES in social media:

[www.facebook.com/groups/inwes/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/inwes/)

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/INWES/122144834530387?ref=hl>

Twitter: @INWES\_Engineers