

SOCIETY OF WOMEN ENGINEERS NEW YORK SECTION

Email: swe-ny@swe.org

Website: www.swe-ny.org

September 2009

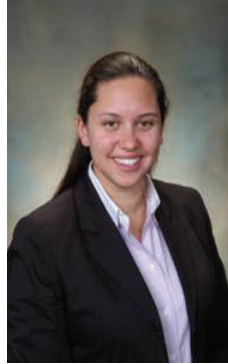
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Don't forget to
renew your SWE
FY 2009 - 2010
membership!

Upcoming Events at a Glance

- ◆ Wednesday, September 23 - Wine Tasting in NYC (Members Only)
- ◆ Saturday, October 3 - Pumpkin Picking on Long Island
- ◆ Monday, October 5 - An Evening with Florence Hudson Seminar in NYC
- ◆ Wednesday, October 7 - Board Meeting
- ◆ Wednesday, October 14 - Happy Hour at Gaslight in NYC
- ◆ Saturday, October 17 - New York Cares Day
- ◆ October - Professional Development Seminar on Long Island

President's Message



Kyrsten Bréa

My first six weeks as President of the Society of Women Engineers' New York Section have been both exciting and busy. The executive board has met as a group, the co-VPs and I have already begun brainstorming innovative ways to keep SWE relevant in the current market. It is my fervent desire to make our organization a vibrant part of our profession, increasing our membership along the way.

It is my hope for this fiscal year to be a period of growth both for the section as a whole and the members individually. You will soon notice an update to our website and SWE-Bits, which will keep our look and feel in line with that of SWE National. Also, the standardization of our communication efforts will afford our members more consistent updates as scheduling develops.

Additionally, we hope to continue our partnership with other engineering societies for both social networking and professional development purposes. In doing so we will be building upon the success of this past spring's networking happy hour co-hosted by SWE-NY and SHPE.

With nearly half of our E-Board consisting of new members, there are plenty of fresh ideas, and with plenty of support from our more seasoned board participants, SWE-NY members can rest assured that we have a winning team. While the Professional Development group will continue to provide the seminars our membership have grown to appreciate, we will explore avenues by which PDH's and CE credits can be earned at our seminars. Community and Professional Outreach, while always an important part of our section, will take front stage this coming year with a series of diverse opportunities for members to connect with each other and other organizations and to give back to the communities which they are a part.

What's on the agenda for the coming months? Some of the fall's anticipated activities include: an evening with IBM Energy & Environment Executive, Florence D. Hudson (October 5), Pumpkin picking in Melville, Long Island (October 3), and the first ever SWE-NY team participating in New York Cares Day (October 17).

The success of our organization is dependent upon the kind contribution of ideas and efforts from all our members. To that end I remain open to your ideas on how we can make SWE a more vibrant organization. I hope to see and hear from you soon to discuss your ideas. To share your ideas with our board and for more information about upcoming events, visit us on the web: www.swe-ny.org.

I thank all of you for allowing me to help make SWE a more meaningful organization for us all.

Kind Regards,
Kyrsten Bréa

President SWE-NY FY2009 - 2010

SWE MISSION:

- ◆ To stimulate women to achieve full potential in careers as engineers and leaders.
- ◆ To expand the image of the engineering profession as a positive force in improving quality of life
- ◆ To demonstrate the value of diversity

Meet the 2009 - 2010 Board!



Kyrsten Bréa
President



Kelly Schumacher
Treasurer



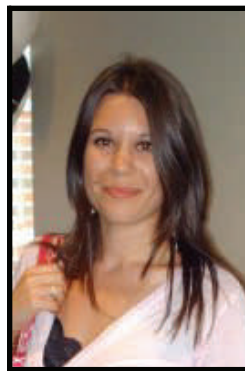
Jing Du
Professional Development Chairperson - New York City



Alicia Licata
Vice President - Long Island, Alternate Section Representative, Student Section Representative and Newsletter Editor



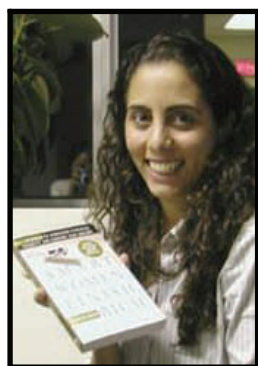
Lauren Pellegrino
Section Representative



Maja Niksic
Volunteer Coordinator, Professional Organization and Community Outreach Liaison



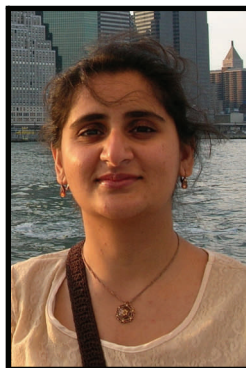
Margaret Tang
Vice President - New York City



Lorena Moschetta
Section Representative



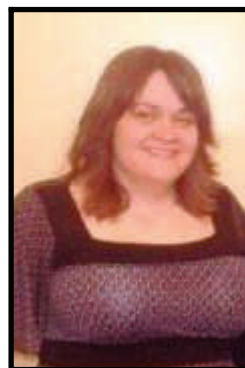
Sharveen Seebaluck
Membership Coordinator and Corporate Relations Coordinator



Sadaf Khattak
Secretary



Kerry Simoneau
Professional Development Chairperson - Long Island



Jennifer Millard
Website Coordinator

The Society of Women Engineers' New York Section would like to thank everyone that voted in the election!

Volunteer Trip to Ghana with the Global Autism Project

By Alicia Licata

In July, I was fortunate to partake in a three week volunteer trip to Ghana with the Global Autism Project. Not only had I never been to Ghana (let alone anywhere in Africa) before, but I had never interacted with a child with Autism. Needless to say, our three week adventure turned out to be a crash course in both for me!

I was fortunate to be traveling with a group of four therapists, whose goal for the trip was to provide training for the local staff at the Autism Awareness, Care and Training Center (AACT). My goal for attending the trip was to modify their existing desks to match the functions of the EOTO (which stands for "Each One, Teach One") teaching platform originally designed by Jennifer Lino and the Global Autism Project. Arriving in Ghana with the original prototype in tow, it was really exciting to be able to recreate a similar model using locally available materials. Much to my surprise, a good amount of the time was spent at local hardware and timber stores tracking down materials that could be used to make the necessary modifications. The photo on the right was taken at one of the more frequented hardware shops, located just down the road from us in New Town.



In addition to spending a lot of time at the local stores, a significant amount of time was also spent on the actual painting of the desks. I had never worked with oil based paint before, and unbeknownst to me, latex based paints are hard to come by outside of the US! Not only was the paint sticky nor could it be removed without turpentine, but it also required a minimum of 24 hours to dry completely. Although only four desks/chairs were modified at the end of the three weeks (one of which is shown on the left), our hope is that because they were made with locally acquired materials, that they can be easily reproduced accordingly after their initial trial period.

One of the most fun days by far with the children and staff from AACT was when we participated in a field trip to the University of Legon's Botanical Gardens. The bus rides there and back were full of singing, clapping and drumming, with local drummer Louis Wonder leading the sing-alongs. The children had a great time in the outdoor space, which was complete with a boat ride, a small animal farm and probably one of the most exciting playgrounds that I have ever seen. The photo on the right depicts the highlight of the playground - the two (or four) person see-saw that not only went up and down, but also rotated as well!



In addition to spending much of our days at AACT, we were able to get out and see a bit of Accra. We frequented Osu and the Centre for National Cultural (especially "Shop Number 1") quite often in search of local crafts to bring home for our friends and family. We also visited the National Museum, the National Theatre and Independence Square (shown in the photo on the left).

Venturing about 30 minutes west of Accra, we visited Kokrobite Beach, where we were the guests of honor at an evening bonfire with an authentic Ghanaian dancing and drumming show. During our trip to Cape Coast (which also happened to correspond with a bout of food poisoning!), we visited Cape Coast Castle, which is monumental in Ghanaian history and the West African slave trade. We also ventured into Kakum National Rain Forest and camped out overnight, to be woken up at 5:30am for the Canopy Walk through the Rain Forest. Unfortunately we didn't get to actually see any animals during the day, but the night spent on a platform under a bug net proved that there are some very interesting sounding creatures out there!



We happened to be in Ghana at the same time as President Obama, which proved to be a warmly welcomed visit by the West African nation. The photo on the left is of one of the hundreds of billboards that we saw when traveling in/around Accra. One quote from his speech that resonated with our group of volunteers included "But the true sign of success is not whether we are a source of perpetual aid that helps people scrape by – it's whether we are partners in building the capacity for transformational change." One of the many reasons why I appreciate and advocate the work that the Global Autism Project does is that it does not simply provide a short term financial means of assistance for children with autism. More importantly, it strives to provide a solid foundation for changing the lives of children with autism, not only in Ghana, but all over the world.

Overall it was truly an amazing trip and I will be forever indebted for the generosity of my friends and family, and of course the Global Autism Project for giving me the opportunity to participate in their bi-annual adventure! For more information about the Global Autism Project, please visit their website at www.globalautismproject.org.

An Overview of the SWE-NY Survey Results

The following results are based on the 2009 SWE-NY survey. For additional information regarding the survey or upcoming events, please contact us at swe-ny@swe.org.

Where do you live?

- ◆ New York City: 18%
- ◆ Long Island: 61%
- ◆ Other: 21%

Where do you work?

- ◆ New York City: 36%
- ◆ Long Island: 57%
- ◆ Other: 7%

Where would you prefer to attend a SWE event?

- ◆ New York City: 44%
- ◆ Long Island (Nassau County): 28%
- ◆ Long Island (Suffolk County): 24%
- ◆ If I am interested in a topic, location is not an issue: 4%

Which of the following do you do you use for your information?

- ◆ SWE-NY Website (www.swe-ny.org): 16%
- ◆ SWE Bits : 55%
- ◆ SWE Newsletter: 26%
- ◆ Other: 3%

Preferred Area of Interest (in order of preference):

1. Community Events
2. Social Events
3. Mentoring/Student Outreach Events
4. Networking Events
5. Professional Development Seminars

Preferred Professional Development Seminars (in order of preference):

1. Time Management
2. Conflict Management
3. Effective Communication Skills

Preferred Outreach Events (in order of preference):

1. Girl Scouts Event
2. Student Section Events
3. Mentoring

Did you attend a SWE Event this year?

- ◆ Yes: 66%
- ◆ No: 34%

Typically, SWE hosts an "After Holiday Party" in January. Would you be more likely to attend the event if it were held in February?

- ◆ January is fine: 45%
- ◆ February is preferable: 32%
- ◆ Not interested either way: 14%
- ◆ Other: 9%

Congratulations!

SWE-NY would like to thank everyone that took the time to fill out our end of the year survey. Congratulations to Donna Plante, our survey winner! Please contact Kyrsten Bréa at swe.nyresident@swe.org to pickup your gift card.

Call for Volunteers

The following volunteer positions are still open:

- ◆ Long Island Professional Development Committee Members
- ◆ New York City Professional Development Committee Members

If you are interested in these positions, or would like more information, we would love to hear from you! Please contact Kyrsten Bréa at swe.nyresident@swe.org for more information.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ **Wednesday, September 23 (6:30pm - Members Only)** - Wine Tasting in New York City at the office of Skanska (350 5th Avenue, 32nd floor). This event is open to and free for SWE members only. RSVP by Friday, September 17th, 2009 by emailing swe-ny@swe.org. Please include your membership number in the email. Space is extremely limited to a first come first served basis.
- ◆ **Saturday, October 3 (1:00pm)** - Pumpkin Picking at White Post Farms (250 Old Country Road) in Melville, Long Island. Free admission into the pumpkin patch (entrants pay for the cost per pound of pumpkins picked). Inquire about carpooling options from New York City, Long Island and the Huntington LIRR train station. RSVP by September 25th, 2009 to swe-ny@swe.org.
- ◆ **Monday, October 5 (6:30pm)** - An Evening with Florence Hudson, the *SWE 2008 Upward Mobility Award Winner Seminar* in NYC. Location to be confirmed shortly.
- ◆ **Wednesday, October 7 (6:15pm)** - Board Meeting. All members are welcome to call in. If you'd like to share your ideas or thoughts, or simply listen in on the meeting, please contact Kyrsten Bréa at swe.nypresident@swe.org.
- ◆ **Wednesday, October 14 (6:30pm)** - Happy Hour at Gaslight (400 West 14th Street, at 9th Avenue) in New York City. Please RSVP by emailing swe-ny@swe.org. Walk-in's also welcome!
- ◆ **October 17 (9:00am to 3:00pm)** - New York Cares Day in New York City. Join us and hundreds of other New Yorkers to paint a brighter future for New York City students. Location information will be announced shortly. Join us or pledge your support today by visiting our website at: www.newyorkcaresday.org/swe_nysection.
- ◆ **October** - Professional Development Seminar in Long Island. Details to be confirmed shortly.

Recipe Roundup

Enjoy some tasty **plum caipirinha** as we close out the summer of 2009!

Ingredients:

- ◆ 2 ripe, firm red plums, such as Santa Rosa or Elephant Heart
- ◆ 1/2 cup sugar
- ◆ 1/4 cup brown sugar
- ◆ 1/4 cup water
- ◆ 3 limes, diced and pitted
- ◆ 1 cup cachaca

Directions:

Halve and pit plums. Whisk the sugars and water together in a small saucepan. Add the plums and simmer over medium heat, until tender but not mushy, about 10 minutes. Cool plums in the liquid.

Slice half a plum for garnish and set aside.

Put the diced limes and remaining plums in a large open pitcher. Crush thoroughly with a muddler or a potato masher (it works great). Add cachaca and the plum cooking liquid and fill with ice cubes. Pour into chilled rocks glasses, allowing some ice and fruit to fall into the glasses as well.

Garnish each drink with a slice of poached plum.

This month's recipe was reprinted from the www.foodnetwork.com website.

Member News

- ◆ **Mina Agarabi** obtained her PE license in the state of California
- ◆ **Margaret Tang** obtained her PE license in the state of New York

Next Newsletter Deadline

If there is anything that you would like to write or read about, or if you have an achievement that you would like to announce (an award, a promotion, your recently obtained PE license or your new baby) don't be shy - let us know! The next newsletter deadline is Friday, October 23, 2009.