



Southwest Texas News

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHWEST SECTION OF THE SOCIETY OF WOMEN ENGINEERS

MAY 2009

“The society of Women Engineers stimulates women to achieve full potential as engineers and leaders, expands the image of the engineering profession as a positive force in improving the quality of life, and demonstrates value of diversity.”

NEW!

~ [SWT Website](#) ~

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President's Letter

Dear Members and Friends,

As the SWE year comes to an end I would like to thank all of our members, whether you have been able to participate at the local level or not: without you the Southwest Texas Section would not exist. In celebration of our members please try to attend our end of year Banquet being held at McCormick and Schmick's @ the Domain on June 5 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

This past year has been very challenging given the current economic climate facing our nation. Although Texas is doing better than a lot of other states we have been impacted by cut backs across different industries. Some of our members have lost their jobs, and local companies' budgets have been drastically cut. As a result, it is very difficult to get companies to sponsor SWE at a local level some companies that have covered attending SWE regional and national conferences for our members in the past cannot continue that support now. If you are one that has lost your company's support or are unemployed, there are cost saving alternatives if you still want to attend conferences like sharing a room, booking flights early, not renting a car, and if you are interested in presenting at conference or volunteering you can get credit towards your registration fees.

In challenging times we are all expected to do more with less and that is where SWE can help our members. It is getting close to that time to renew your SWE membership!, Jobs may come and go but SWE will be here for you our members! Remember that unemployed membership dues are reduced by 50%.

Whether you are looking for a job or your company is looking to hire SWE is a very important part of your personal and professional network. I would like to hear from our members, on the topic of jobs (looking or hiring): what can our local section do to help?

Penny Parang
President, Southwest Texas Professional Section

2008-2009 Officers and Committee Chairs

Penny Parang	President	SWESWT.President@swe.org
Pooja Bhatia	Vice-President	SWESWT.VicePresident@swe.org
Laura Clymer	Secretary	SWESWT.Secretary@swe.org
Monica James	Treasurer	SWESWT.Treasurer@swe.org
Angela Nickels	Section Representative	SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org
Ashley Alletag	Section Representative	SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org
Sharda Parthasarathy	Alt. Section Representative	SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org
Pooja Bhatia	Alt. Section Representative	SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org
Shelley Stracener	Webmaster and Newsletter Editor	SWESWT.Webmaster@swe.org
Socorro Miller	Award Committee Chair	
Manali Kesarkar	Program Chair	
Katie Moses	Program Chair	
Suzanne White	Career Guidance: Girl Scouts	
Ty Parcher	Career Guidance: Science Fair	
Jennifer Vargus	Career Guidance: Science Fair	
Nafisa Muzaffar	Career Guidance: Science Sundays @ ACM	
Sarah Kirkish	Fund Development (Corporate)	
Twana Arnold	Fund Development (Corporate)	
Monica James	Fund Development (Merchandise/Sales)	
Angela Nickels	UT SWE Counselor	
Tricia Berry	Collegiate Section Liaison	

Region C Conference Review

~Ashley Alletag

The Region C Conference was held in Houston, Texas this year from February 6th to the 8th at the Crown Plaza downtown. The Southwest Texas section was represented by six members. Special thanks to them for attending the conference to network and learn best practices from other sections.

Virginia Connolly, current SWE President, was a special guest at the conference this year. It was a pleasure to have her speak and interact with the great group of people we have here in Region C. The conference was well attended and featured a lot of fun new activities. The dinner on Friday night featured the first ever "Are you smarter than a collegiate member?" competition. Fortunately we were well represented and managed to beat the collegiates! On Friday, they also did a dessert gallery with different appetizing sweets in each room so that attendees could mix and mingle with different corporations.

Saturday was action-packed with lots of workshops sessions and new activities. A few of the popular workshop topics included Evaluating and Negotiating Job Offers, Leveraging Social Networking Sites Professionally and Personally, Managing Cash Flow, and Planning a Successful Outreach Event. At lunch on Saturday, the first ever "Region C Fashion Show" was presented. Different engineering outfits were modeled by fellow members. Some favorites included a white lab coat accessorized by safety glasses and a NASA jumpsuit. The evening ended with an amazing dinner and casino night. We gathered to test our luck on craps, poker, and blackjack. Winners accumulated lots of chips which were traded in for raffle tickets at nights end. Lots of laughter, tears, and good conversation were had by all as we pretended that we were in Vegas for the night. Myself and a few other region members (see picture below) learned how to play craps which was quite the endeavor.

Special thanks to The University of Houston, Rice University, and Prairie View ATM sections for hosting this year's conference. Also, congratulations is due to our own Southwest Texas member Angela Nickels, who received the Governor's Choice Award for her dedicated commitment to helping Region C achieve its goals. Angela and Monica, our RCR, are pictured below with their region awards.



March Event: The Art of Networking

TEXTRON Systems

~Twana Arnold and Penny Parang

On March 31, [Overwatch Textron Systems](#) and the SWE Southwest Texas Section hosted a networking workshop attended by employees as well as SWE members and outside members of the technology community. The event was the most well attended to date for our section and we were extremely pleased with how diverse the audience was.

The evening was focused on different styles of networking and tools. While we still need to connect to others in person, using networking tools assist in interacting with others. Panelist demonstrations eased the fears of many who were hesitant to use Twitter, Facebook and Myspace. We were shown that these social sites are great for creating knowledge communities and networking groups like Door64. However, before we run out and create that great new gathering site, the panelist suggested that we first plan it, go to other communities to get ideas, and always remember that whatever you put on the internet never goes away. Panel members included: Matt Genovese—founder of [door64.com](#), which is an on-line networking community of high-tech professional from the Austin area as well as other Central Texas locations; CJ Romberger—entrepreneur and columnist for [Austin Woman Magazine](#), who shared her views on the use of [Twitter](#) as a community networking tool; Steve Harper—entrepreneur and author of “The Ripple Effect—Maximizing the Power of Relationships for your Life and Business”; and Jamie Lagarde—Sr. Program Manager at Overwatch whom shared his thoughts on the business side of social networking. The attendees were well engaged and asked plenty of questions.



From left to right: Jamie Lagarde, CJ Romberger, Steve Harper, Matt Genovese, and Overwatch VP of Engineering Tom Baker.

View other pictures from this event at our new Picasa Web Album! [Pictures: The Art of Networking](#)

Girl Scout Outreach Event Review

~Suzanne White



The goal of this event was to encourage the pursuit of engineering and computer science studies by “learning to LEED the future with engineering.” The girls connected with local Women Engineers to build their own Green structures that were LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified. Several different kinds of engineering related to Green Design and Renewable Energy were directly related to the activities that demonstrated how their valuable contributions can have long-term positive impact to our environment — on both a local and a global scale.



[View our promotional video for this event!](#)
[Visit our Picasa Web Album to view photos!](#)

Many thanks to the following sponsors for their generosity and participation:





SWE Southwest Texas Website Updates

~Shelley Stracener

Although I've made plenty of updates to the SWE Southwest Texas Website throughout the year since its unveiling in September, I wanted to highlight a few recent additions to the site that you'll definitely want to check out!

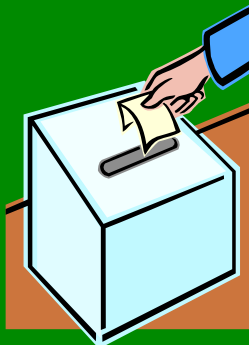
- **Archived Meeting Minutes:** Thanks to our 2008-2009 secretary, Laura Clymer, we have a lovely archive of officer meeting notes that are now accessible to all members. These are your resource for inside info about the "state of the section."
- **Past Event Archives:** Here you'll find links to videos, pictures, and presentation files from past outreach, networking, and professional development events. We are using Google's Picasa to host images through our section's Gmail address. If you have pictures from an event that you'd like to be included, please feel free to email them to me.
- **New Mom Announcements:** A few of our members have welcomed new members to their families this year, and we wanted to have a place to celebrate! If you are a new mom and would like to be added to this page, please email me a photo and birth information.

Stay tuned for lots of exciting updates and events in the 2009-2010 fiscal year. As always, if you have ideas, corrections, or submissions for the site, please don't hesitate to contact me at SWESWT.Webmaster@swe.org.

2009-2010 Officer Elections

~Shelley Stracener

Don't forget to cast your ballot for officer elections! You should have received ballots from this year's officers in your email. All votes are due by COB Tuesday, June 2nd. Elected Officers and Section Representatives will be contacted with results no later than Friday, June 3rd and your new officers will be announced to all members at the End of Year Banquet on June 5th! The election results will also be posted online at the SWE SWT website following the End of Year Banquet.



End of Year Banquet

~Pooja Bhatia

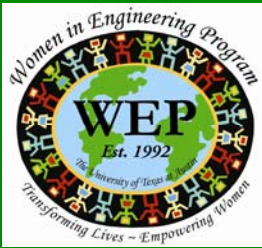
Please join us to reflect on this past SWE year with our members. The venue has changed from last year and with that also comes a significant savings to our members. We will have fabulous appetizers and special happy hour drink specials!

At the June meeting, in addition to distributing awards we will hold a brief general meeting to discuss and vote on new bylaws for the section. The proposed bylaws are posted [online here](#). This proposal is to accept the new SWE standard professional bylaws template dated February 23, 2009 in its entirety and with no modifications to be the new bylaws for Section C004 - Southwest Texas.

If you will be unable to be at the June meeting, you can [vote online here](#). If you have any questions related to the proposed bylaws in advance of the meeting, please contact Section Representative Angela Nickels at angela.nickels@swe.org.

SWE SWT End of Year Banquet
 When: Friday, June 5, 2009 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 Where: [McCormick & Schmick's at the Domain](#)
 Cost: \$10 for members, \$15 for guests

MCCORMICK & SCHMICK'S
 SEAFOOD RESTAURANT



In the Spotlight 2009

~Tricia Berry



Don't miss out on this summer's exciting event on Friday, June 19, from 1:30 p.m. - 6 p.m.: "In the Spotlight 2009: Best and Emerging Practices in Recruitment and Talent Development". The Texas Girls Collaborative Project (TxGCP) is joining forces with the Women in Engineering ProActive Network (WEPAN) to provide an amazing opportunity to connect with organizations and individuals around the state and across the nation interested in the advancement of girls in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). It's free for K-12 educators (with CPE's available) and \$25 for all TxGCP eNewsletter subscribers. Registration is open for the event and submissions are being accepted for posters or hands-on demonstrations to showcase your organization's efforts in getting girls excited about STEM fields.

In the Spotlight 2009: Best and Emerging Practices in Recruitment and Talent Development

Friday, June 19, 2009 1:30 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Omni Austin Hotel Downtown Austin, Texas

Hosted in conjunction with the WEPAN 2009 National Conference

[Register and/or submit to showcase your organization online!](#)



WEPAN
Women in Engineering ProActive Network



Schedule: Friday, June 19, 2009

1:30 - 1:45 p.m.	Welcome
1:45 - 3:00 p.m.	Spotlight 2009 - Best and Emerging Practices Showcase
	Concurrent Sessions
	1. Engineer Your Life and Effective Messaging to Engage Girls in STEM:
3:15 - 4:00 p.m.	2. Communication, Assessment and Stereotype Threat
	Concurrent Sessions
	1. Creating Successful Partnerships
4:15 - 5:00 p.m.	2. Engaging Volunteer Networks
5:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Networking in the Showcase

Engineering Advisors Needed for SWE UT Summer Camp!

~Angela Nickels



The Society of Women Engineers at UT Austin is looking for enthusiastic female engineers to participate as advising engineers for their summer program for middle school girls, Careers in Engineering for Women (CEW). They need your help to find some great advising engineers. This could be you yourself, co-workers, or even friends. As an advising engineer, you will get the opportunity to eat lunch with a team of five middle school-aged girls and advise them on their week-long development project.

The camp is Sunday, June 7th - Saturday, June 13th and the tentative days that you will be meeting with your team are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday (12:00-1:00 pm). The camp will be hosted in the University of Texas at Austin Campus Area.

This is a chance to make an impact in the lives of future engineers and I am excited to invite you to join our team! For more information about the camp, go to <http://www.engr.utexas.edu/swe/CEW.htm>.

If you are able volunteer or have any questions, please contact CEW Coordinator (Lauren Collins) at lauren.e.collins@mail.utexas.edu!