



Southwest Texas News

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHWEST SECTION OF THE SOCIETY OF WOMEN ENGINEERS

FEBRUARY 2010

“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.”

[SWT Website](#)
[SWE Community Facebook Group](#)

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President's Letter

Dear Members and Friends,

February means EWEEK! There are several events that are section is either hosting or partnering with other engineering, educators and community based groups for K-12 outreach that focuses on Science and Math. We can never have too many volunteers to help especially this month, so if you are able and willing please sign up to help out for one or as many events as you would like!

I recently attended the SWE Region C Conference that was held in Dallas, TX. The regional conference is a great way to be able to stay connected and attend professional development sessions on a smaller scale and lower cost compared to the SWE National Conference. However, this is the year to attend the National Conference: the culmination of the year-long SWE60 Anniversary Celebration will provide inspiration and excitement so this year's conference will be the best one yet...mark your calendars now for November 4-6, 2010 in Orlando, FL.

If you would like to participate, subject matter is needed for various audiences, tracks and formats. The submission deadline is **February 19, 2010**. Please check out the National SWE website for more information.

Thanks to all our members for your continued support, it makes even a bigger impact when times are tough to see that our members are renewing their memberships. The beginning of the year is also a great time to recruit new members since they can start a membership for 50% for the remainder of FY10 which ends June 30th. So the next time you receive an email of upcoming events or plan on attending a SWE event forward the invite to a fellow female or male engineer. We can build our network which in turn builds your network...win win!

Penny Parang
President, Southwest Texas Professional Section

2009-2010 Leadership Team

Penny Parang	President	SWESWT.President@swe.org
Katie Mills	Vice-President	SWESWT.VicePresident@swe.org
Laura Clymer	Secretary	SWESWT.Secretary@swe.org
Monica James	Treasurer	SWESWT.Treasurer@swe.org
Pooja Bhatia	Section Representative	SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org
Dianne Beever	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	
Suzanne White	Outreach Chair: Girl Scouts	
Ty Parcher	Outreach Chair: Science Fair	
Jennifer Vargus	Outreach Chair: Science Fair	
Nafisa Muzaffar	Outreach Chair: Science Sundays @ ACM	
~ Open ~	Fund Development (Corporate)	
Monica James	Fund Development (Merchandise/Sales)	
Tricia Berry	Collegiate Section Liaison	

Holiday Social & White Elephant Gift Exchange Review

~ Socorro Miller

The Society of Women Engineers closed the 2009 calendar year with the traditional Holiday Social event. The event took place on December 6th 2009 at McCormick & Schmick's. The event was a great success: the attendees enjoyed an excellent 3 course dinner, networking with SWE members and SWE member friends and families. They also participated in a White Elephant gift exchange that resulted on lots of laughter and gift stealing. As is our tradition, SWE members contributed donations for the Austin Children's Shelter. We delivered approximately \$250.00 (toys and cash) to the shelter. THANK YOU EVERYONE!! Penny Parang, our SWE president, closed the event by thanking everyone for their attendance and distributing a \$20.00 gift certificate to each attendee for another visit to McCormick and Schmick's.



SWE members Shelley Stracener and Penny Parang (and family) ready to enjoy a delicious meal!



Region C Governor and SWE SWT member Ebalina Roitberg contemplates her White Elephant Gift options.

Region C Conference Review

~ Shelley Stracener

The weekend of February 5th brought the Region C Conference to the Renaissance Hotel in Dallas, TX. Hosted by the University of Texas at Dallas, the conference was a tremendous success! Friday's events included tours of Texas Instruments, the CDM Water Treatment Facility, Raytheon, and Cisco, followed by a reception and hospitality suites.

Saturday was a full day of networking and professional development seminars focusing on sustainable technologies, various space programs, creative problem solving, generational differences, and interviewing skills. Lunch was served and keynote speaker Rebecca Rasor, PE gave an engaging presentation on the Trinity River Corridor Project in Dallas. The career fair was well attended by both students and professionals. The professional member meeting was attended by all Region C officers, so congratulations to our regional leadership team on their perfect attendance! Saturday evening, conference attendees enjoyed a special treat with dinner at the Dallas World Aquarium. The tanks in the aquarium held a fantastic variety of marine life from all over the world! There were several guest speakers including SWE National President Nora Lin. Awards were presented to conference planning committee members, student and professional sections with highest and most improved membership metrics, and student members who decorated their hotel room doors. SWE Southwest Texas won the professional section award for Highest Membership Growth Renewal Percentage!

The conference was a great experience for both students and professionals! In attendance from the Southwest Texas Professional Section were Region C Treasurer Ashley Alletag, Patricia Bedford, SWT Section Representatives Diane Beever and Pooja Bhatia, Region C Leadership Coach Sarah Kirkish, SWE National Board of Trustees Treasurer Angela Nickels, SWT President Penny Parang, Region C Governor Ebalina Roitberg, SWT Webmaster and Newsletter Editor Shelley Stracener, and SWE National Director of External Initiatives Melissa Tata.

New Year, New Work Solutions: Six Sigma Event Review

~ Shelley Stracener

On January 13, around 20 SWE members and Textron employees met at Overwatch Textron Systems for a professional development presentation on Six Sigma. Attendees enjoyed a light dinner and time for networking before an engaging discussion led by Textron employees Lee Davis (Master Black Belt), Melissa Garcia Vasquez (Black Belt), and Tom Fry (Black Belt).



The Overwatch Six Sigma team gave a brief history of Six Sigma methodologies and explained why, in some engineering applications, 99% quality assurance just isn't good enough. Critical, large volume products such as medical devices, military systems, and transportation vehicles require a higher level of design, manufacturing, process, and service controls to ensure the safety of their end users. Six Sigma provides the framework for establishing, quantifying, analyzing, and improving quality metrics using root cause analysis, risk analysis, and statistics.

Engineers have a vested interest in the quality of their products. This presentation was very informative and sparked a lot of thoughts and questions around the quality systems in place at our own employers and how engineers at any level can seek continuous improvement in everything that we do! Thanks to Textron for providing the venue and speakers for this wonderful event.

Upcoming Networking Lunch

~ Shelley Stracener

A networking lunch is planned for Wednesday, February 17 at 11:30 am. Meet us at LaMadeleine near the Arboretum for a tasty meal and some great networking! Please RSVP at the [Evite invitation](#) so we can get an accurate headcount.



Central Texas Discover Engineering

~ Tricia Berry

Volunteers are needed to visit a classroom or school and lead hands-on activities that demonstrate teamwork and logical processes. Share the excitement of engineering and what you do as an engineer! Volunteers have access to activity training and teacher and student giveaways. Volunteers also get a Discover Engineering t-shirt. Our section has been requested for a full school visit on Friday, March 26th, 2010 from 10am-2pm, and we need 12 volunteers to help with hands on engineering activities for K-5 at Blackland Prairie Elementary located in East Round Rock @ 2005 Via Sonoma Drive Round Rock, TX 78665 (close to 45/130 toll intersection and Dell Round Rock campus). Please sign up online at www.centexeweek.org or contact penny.parang@swe.org for more info on this school visit.

The mission of Central Texas Discover Engineering is to excite Central Texas K-12 students to pursue careers in math, science and engineering through in-class, hands-on engineering activities and collaborative, volunteer-driven initiatives of the engineering and education communities. The Society of Women Engineers is one of many engineering organizations making up the Central Texas Discover Engineering team. Learn more at www.centexeweek.org.

Opportunities to Get Involved!

~ Shelley Stracener

There are several open leadership positions available in our section. If you are interested in getting more involved and making a difference in your local professional section, please contact us at the links below!

- **Webmaster:** If you have an eye for graphic design and have a working knowledge of HTML, you can be a big part of our section's representation on the internet! You will be expected to update the website and calendar content (new newsletter files, officer list, events, etc) with the option to alter/redesign the graphic design of the website with input from the leadership team. Please contact Shelley.Stracener@swe.org if you are interested.
- **Fund Development Chair (Corporate):** Use your contacts with local companies to encourage them to SWE SWT by sponsoring speaker meetings, donating materials, or providing funds for events throughout the year. Please contact Penny.Parang@swe.org.
- **Membership Chair:** Develop and implement programs to help our section grow in membership. This includes both new professional members and collegiate conversions. Please contact Penny.Parang@swe.org.
- **Program Chair:** Want to see more meetings and activities on our calendar? Help us coordinate events and help our local professional section work for you! Please contact Penny.Parang@swe.org.



Austin Energy Regional Science Festival

~ Socorro Miller

February brings Engineering Week and a flurry of activity for outreach volunteering, this year is no exception! It's time again for the Austin Energy Regional Science Festival. SWE is committed to inspiring young women who have expressed an interest in science and engineering. The Regional Science Fair is a great way to show your commitment through your personal participation as a judge. Help us recognize these students' efforts by sending the message that science and math are key to an excellent career path!

To make this event a success, we need enough judges on the floor to conduct interviews. It's a lot of work but it is fun. If you can't participate in the entire fair please consider at least one time slot. There are several opportunities available starting the afternoon of Thursday February 24th. The judging is set up in a two step process: prejudging, which is targeted to select likely candidates for interviews, and formal judging, which requires interviews with the selected candidates to determine winners in each category. Please contact Ty Parcher at: tyler.parcher@swe.org to volunteer.

Event schedule:

- Senior and Junior Division Prejudge: Wednesday February 24th 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm.
- Junior Division Judging: Thursday February 25th 8:00 am - 10:00 am.
- Senior Division Judging: Thursday February 25th 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. Finalize winners by 2:00 pm.
- Senior and Junior Division Award Ceremony: Thursday February 25th
- Elementary Division Prejudging: Friday February 26th 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm.
- Elementary Division Judging: Saturday February 27th 8:00 am. Finalize all primary grade winners by 1:30 pm.

Classically Modern Wear

~Suzanne White

We're in the process of setting our date **this Spring** for another fête with the **Nordstrom Personal Shoppers**. Our January 2009 event was recognized as a National "SWE Event of the Year" (for our size/area) and featured in the SWE Magazine, so get ready for another award-winning program!

This year's agenda is being created around some serious fun in getting the sneak preview of the newest Spring Fashions for clothing, shoes, and make-up (along with other stuff you didn't know existed and / or you didn't know you need!). Nordstrom's personal shopping service is free and promises to save you time and help you "fit rewarding shopping into a busy lifestyle":

~ A personal shopper assists customers with a level of individualized attention and service beyond what a retail associate would offer.

~ A shopper can help a customer pull together an entire season's wardrobe based on his or her needs, budget or style, or find just the right gift based on a client's suggestions.

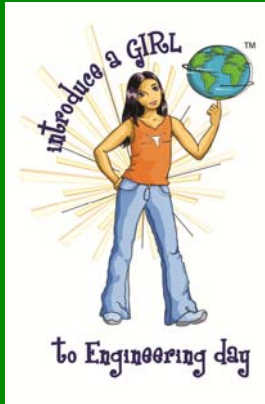
This Personal Shopping gig has helped several of us Smart Girls look quite smart, so keep your ears & eyes open for the by-invitation-only event email! This event has a limited number of seats, so make sure you RSVP as soon as possible!

Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day — Volunteer...or Bring Some Girls!

~Tricia Berry



Saturday, February 20, 2010 marks the 9th anniversary for UT's Women in Engineering Program hosting Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day as part of Engineers Week. Over 1,000 first through eighth grade girls are expected to attend the afternoon of hands-on activities and demonstrations. Over 300 volunteers are needed to host activities and demonstrations from their companies or organizations, lead activity rooms and interact with participants, encouraging them to get excited about math, science and engineering. In past years, SWE hosted an activity room and aims to expand the SWE presence this year if more volunteers sign up. SWE-SWT volunteers join SWE volunteers from Texas State, UTSA, Baylor, UT Austin and Trinity! Volunteer registration is available online at www.engr.utexas.edu/wep. Indicate your affiliation with SWE to be assigned to the SWE activities at Girl Day. Participant registration for first through eighth graders will be available in January. Girl Day runs from 2 to 5 p.m. with activities throughout the Cockrell School of Engineering complex.

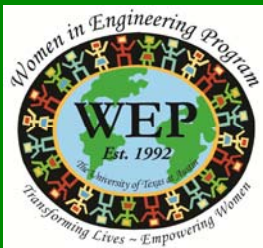


WEP at UT Austin Career Development Seminar — Role Models Needed!

~Tricia Berry



The goal of the Women in Engineering Program (WEP) Career Development Seminar at UT Austin is to provide undergraduate students with a career development experience unlike any currently available in the Cockrell School of Engineering and to provide students with some of the knowledge and skills required for a success in the workplace. It's all the stuff we wish we would have learned in college but never did! Help share your insights, experiences, and tips for success with students enrolled in the class which meets 2 – 3:50 p.m. on Wednesdays in the spring semester. Volunteers are needed for any or all classes. Check out the course information and syllabus to see what sessions are a best fit for you and sign up online to volunteer at <http://www.engr.utexas.edu/wep/career/seminar>.



Update from Longhorn SWE

~Angela Nickels



The officers have focused on increasing their member retention and make the section more gender friendly. They have been successful on both fronts. Previous members who had quit SWE were invited back to see the new SWE.

This year, those events that did not meet SWE national goals or had low impact were eliminated and new events with more impact were added. For example, in September, the section organized and hosted Networking Night a new networking dinner event for 200+ attendees and representatives from 20 companies.

To fulfill this plan of a new SWE, the section adopted the theme of "The Many Faces of SWE." This theme fosters inclusiveness within the SWE membership by celebrating our differences. Despite engineering stereotypes, the members each have talents and passion that make them unique and define them. There is no cookie-cutter definition of a SWE member (or an engineer). We are activists and artists, musicians and mathematicians, writers and researchers, athletes and adventurers. In lieu of The Many Faces of SWE, the general meetings reflect the new theme by allowing one member to showcase a special talent of theirs at each general meeting. The response has been amazing and they have seen Indian classical dancing to singing to gymnastics. The talent showcases have made the meetings more interesting and have increased meeting turnout.

Additionally, they actively sought out jointly hosting events with other organizations: a tailgate with the Society of Professional Hispanic Engineers (SHPE), a costume contest and game-night with the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), a dinner party with the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and a scholarship presentation with the Women in Computer Science (WiCS).

2009-2010 SWE Event Calendar

July 09							August 09							September 09							October 09						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
26	27	28	29	30	31	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
							30	31																			

November 09							December 09							January 10							February 10								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
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29	30	27	28	29	30	31								24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28								
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March 10							April 10							May 10							June 10						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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													30	31													

Society of Women Engineers Central Texas

2009—2010 Event Calendar

September 12	Kick off brunch - McCormick and Schmick's	February 17	Networking lunch-LaMadeleine
October 7	Technical Tour: See the Supercomputer!	February 20	Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day
October 9	Networking happy hour—Water 2 Wine RR	February 27	Austin Energy Regional Science Fest
October 10	Austin Energy Girl Scout Outreach Event	March 10	Nordstrom Event (Tentative)
October 15-17	National Conference	April 1	New officer nominations begin
October 21	Networking lunch—Iron Cactus	April 14	Networking lunch-TBD
November 11	Organizing for the holidays event	April—May	New officer elections
December 6	Holiday social brunch	May 8	Happy Hour/Officer election results
January 13	New year, new work solutions event	June 4	Officer Transition Meeting—Water 2Wine
February 5-7	Region C Conference — Dallas, TX		
Feb 8—Feb 19	EWeek		

For the latest calendar information, please visit our [online calendar](#).