



# Southwest Texas News

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHWEST SECTION OF THE SOCIETY OF WOMEN ENGINEERS

NOV 2008

*“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,

Welcome to a new exciting year with the Southwest Texas section of SWE! Our section will be focusing on enhancing the diversity of topics and locations for upcoming events. I would like to encourage members to take advantage of a great free SWE member benefit by [requesting your SWE e-mail alias](#) (firstname.lastname@swe.org). This will allow you to link any e-mail whether work or personal it is great for conducting SWE business, professional networking, and to use on your resume. In addition, please visit the National SWE site to update your profile to use your firstname.lastname as your login to take full advantage of the new SWE communities where we have our own [Southwest Texas Section - C004 Community](#).

I recently attended the National SWE Conference in Baltimore and was a speaker of a workshop session on the value of SWE membership to your company. I would like to let our members know that if your company employs a number of women engineers and you would like to let them know more about SWE, please let us know. Our leadership team has experience talking with HR, Diversity and women networking groups about how SWE membership is a cost effective way for companies to provide professional development, mentoring and networking to their employees.

The holidays are right around the corner and we will be celebrating SWE style with our traditional white elephant gift exchange at the holiday social, an invite will be going out soon with more details.

Penny Parang  
*President, Southwest Texas Professional Section*

## 2008-2009 Officers and Committee Chairs

Penny Parang	President	<a href="mailto:SWESWT.President@swe.org">SWESWT.President@swe.org</a>
Pooja Bhatia	Vice-President	<a href="mailto:SWESWT.VicePresident@swe.org">SWESWT.VicePresident@swe.org</a>
<b>&lt;Available, see page 5&gt;</b>	Secretary	<a href="mailto:SWESWT.Secretary@swe.org">SWESWT.Secretary@swe.org</a>
Monica James	Treasurer	<a href="mailto:SWESWT.Treasurer@swe.org">SWESWT.Treasurer@swe.org</a>
Angela Nickels	Section Representative	<a href="mailto:SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org">SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org</a>
Katie Todd Mills	Section Representative	<a href="mailto:SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org">SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org</a>
Sharda Parthasarathy	Alt. Section Representative	<a href="mailto:SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org">SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org</a>
Penny Parang	Alt. Section Representative	<a href="mailto:SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org">SWESWT.SectionRepresentative@swe.org</a>
Shelley Stracener	Webmaster and Newsletter Editor	<a href="mailto:SWESWT.Webmaster@swe.org">SWESWT.Webmaster@swe.org</a>
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	

## Kickoff Brunch Review

~Socorro Miller

The Society of Women Engineers (SWE) South West Texas (SWT) chapter opened the 2008-2009 year with the traditional kick off brunch on 09/27/08. This year's venue was Marie Callender's south Austin location. The event was a success! The food was excellent as usual and the networking was fun and invigorating. Penny Parang (2008-2009 President) welcomed the group and introduced this year's officers and chairs. Penny also led the announcement of the existing activities planned for this coming year. Among the announcements, was the new website launch programmed by Shelley Stracener. The new website has a Texas personality and is considerably more user friendly than before. Make sure to visit the website to read all about the upcoming events for this year and enjoyed our new site. A special thank you to Shelley for all her hard work!! During the brunch we also welcomed two new members to our section: Melissa Vasquez and Kathryn Moses.



## Freescal Networking Event Review

~Shelley Stracener

On October 22nd, Freescale Semiconductor hosted a networking and panel discussion event at their Oak Hill facility in South Austin. The panel included four of Freescale's most successful female managers, each with their own unique perspectives on the challenges of being engineers in management. The panel members were:

- Donna Imam, Manager of Product Marketing, Microcontroller Systems Group
- Michelle Milburn, Product Engineering Manager, Microcontroller Systems Group
- Anna Worthy, Software Engineering Manager, Networking & Multimedia Group
- Tiffany Huling Broadous, Program Manager, Networking & Multimedia Group

The evening began with some casual networking and delicious refreshments. Our host from Freescale's Diversity & Inclusion Program Manager, Monica Cole, gave a brief introduction for each panelist including their technical degree history and some background on their work at Freescale. Some panelists were working mothers, some had graduate degrees, and the panel represented a wide variety of experience in technical and management roles.

Topics included a discussion of management styles, mentoring tips and strategies, how to stay technical in a management position, work-life management, and challenges around managing virtual teams in a global work environment. Both the planned topics and the Q&A session after were very informative and spurred some great discussions between the panel and the audience.

Thanks to Freescale Semiconductor for hosting this event! SWE Southwest Texas looks forward to collaborating on more events with Freescale in the future.



# Sushi Networking Lunch Review

~Penny Parang



October 28th Networking Lunch: Mikado Ryotei

WOW! I was truly impressed with the great turnout we had for this event. The room was full and we even had to have another table brought into the room to accommodate all the attendees. There was no agenda, just great sushi and conversation with some of our smartest women engineers in Texas!

We wanted to offer to those of you that have a hard time making the evening or weekend events a great opportunity to meet up for lunch and network with other members. I really liked the fact that the attendance was comprised of a majority of members who I had never met in person before, which was great! It shows that our leadership team goal of diversity and flexibility of time, location, and dates really appeals to our members to get the most out of their membership. I hope this is the first of many SWE Southwest Texas Networking Lunches. Please send suggestions of restaurants that preferably have a private room that can be reserved and can hold at least 20 people to [SWESWT.President@swe.org](mailto:SWESWT.President@swe.org).

# Speaker Meeting: Simple Life Work Management

~Shelley Stracener

On the evening of November 20, SWE members met for networking, snacks, and a discussion on Life Work Management. Sarah Kirkish, a Leadership Coach, Professional Organizer, and SWE Life Member, led us through an engaging workshop on how to simplify our busy lives! She emphasized the importance of being aware of and prioritizing our values in order to create positive, realistic goals, and focused actions to achieve satisfying results.



Sarah covered time, information, and space management in both our work and personal lives. Categorizing actions and projects by priority and time required to act allows us to track actions and organize the deluge of information that we process every day. Sarah's presentation and the discussion that followed were inspiring, motivational, and especially timely given the upcoming busy holiday season!

If you're interested in learning more about Sarah's services, you can contact her at [Sarah@worklifeorg.com](mailto:Sarah@worklifeorg.com). Check the SWT website's Past Event Reviews for a copy of Sarah's presentation!

# 2008 National Conference Review

~Shelley Stracener

This year's WE '08 National Conference, appropriately titled *Women Leading a Technical Revolution*, was held November 6 - 8 in Baltimore, MD, the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. The conference had three full days of speaker sessions, networking events, and a large career fair with over 250 exhibitors in attendance!

Morning and afternoon sessions offered a variety of formats and topics. Sessions on applying to graduate school, ethics, career fair strategies, and the benefits of SWE membership were informative and engaging. Panels on communication, work-life balance, diversity partnerships, and getting back into the workplace after a hiatus allowed many unique perspectives to be heard on important issues affecting women engineers. Technical sessions were also offered from an assortment of fields including construction, medical devices, energy, and aerospace.

The Keynote Breakfast, Awards Banquet, and Celebrate SWE events are always a time of celebration and recognition of professional and student members' commitments to engineering and to SWE's objectives. The keynote speakers for this year's events were inspirational and highly accomplished women engineers from the military, academia, and industry. Although we won no section awards this year, one of our own Southwest Texas members, Melissa Tata, took home a certificate of appreciation for her FY08 work as Speaker of the Council of Representatives.

Saturday's Career Fair was a flurry of activities and networking opportunities. There were over 250 exhibitors at this year's career fair with representatives from universities, government agencies, and all kinds of industries including chip manufacturers, energy corporations, chemical manufacturers, automobile manufacturers, and software providers. One feature of the career fair that received rave reviews were the on-site computers provided for submitting resumes to companies online.

Our Southwest Texas section secured a booth at the SWE Boutique sales area on Thursday and Saturday, selling our SWE Gear items: business card dispensers, business card folders, lanyards, and key-chains. We got a lot of compliments on our practical items and made a few sales as well! You can also purchase these items at our meetings!

Thanks to all of our Southwest Texas members who represented us at this year's conference! For more detailed information on this year's conference, please visit the [WE '08 Conference website!](#)



## 2008 National Conference: Council of Representatives (COR) Update

~Angela Nickels

It was a busy and historic COR session in Baltimore. We had two days of business meetings and passed items ranging from updates to membership grades to giving the BOD approval to expand joint membership programs to some technical societies to changing the COR from a House of Representative model to a Senate model.

In FY10, the COR will become the SWE Senate. The Senate will be made up of the following:

- 2 Professional Senators elected by professional region membership (10 regions)
- 1 Collegiate Senator elected by collegiate region membership (10 regions)
- 2 International Senators elected by international members
- 2 Special Senators (can be elected by the above Senators – based on current Mega Issue work)

This shrinks the body from the current size of 165 down to 32-34 members. Section Representatives will remain (1 per every 100 members up to 4 Reps per section) and will focus on section and region concerns. Senators will focus on strategic planning and legislative issues for national SWE. Therefore, we will have up to 34 new leadership opportunities in SWE.

Membership grade changes:

- Associate and Affiliate member grades have been combined
- Associate members now have voting rights
- Senior members now need to have 10 years of experience if they hold an engineering related degree or 15 years of engineering experience
- Fellows now need to be a senior member for 10 years and have 'significant and long-term service'

The COR passed motions that gave the BOD authority to:

- Create joint membership programs with AIChE, ASCE, ASME, SAE, and IEEE
- Establish Collegiate to Career membership program that will offer a dues discount for multi-year collegiate membership
- Establish tiered dues for International members in accordance with the United Nations categorization of countries

For a brief summary of all 22 amendments and 4 motions, you can review this [two page briefing](#).



## New SWE SWT Website is LIVE!

~Shelley Stracener

The Southwest Texas Professional Section website has received a long overdue makeover! Since the national website got a face-lift a few months ago, we figured it would be fitting to refresh our own image. Our goal was to make what is often our first impression to potential new members and other visitors reflect our technical skills, professionalism, and creativity. The result is a clean, modern layout with a Texas flare, enhanced navigation features, and updated content!

The new website also has a new URL under national web-hosting and the Region C hierarchy. The old URL automatically redirects to the new site location, but please update your bookmarks!

[http://www.swe.org/regionc/southwest\\_texas](http://www.swe.org/regionc/southwest_texas)

Come visit us online and please send any comments or suggestions to [SWESWT.Webmaster@swe.org](mailto:SWESWT.Webmaster@swe.org).

## Open SWT Officer Positions!

~Penny Parang

We are looking for current professional members interested in joining our leadership team. This is a great opportunity for you to get more involved, develop your leadership skills, and build your network with SWE and our community. If interested please submit your name, contact info, position and reason you would be interested in running to [Penny Parang](#) by November 30th, 2008. A ballot will be emailed out to all current members to vote on December 1st, 2008.

### Open Positions/Responsibilities:

#### Secretary

1. Maintain the records of the section
2. Provide oversight and guidance to the committee chairs as assigned
3. Perform other duties normally associated with the office of secretary or as may be assigned by the president, the executive council, or the governance documents.

#### Section Representative (opening after the first of the year)

1. Perform those duties expected of them as described in the Society bylaws, the council of representatives' procedures, and the region governance documents
2. Perform other duties normally associated with the office of section representative or as may be assigned by the president, executive council, or the governance documents.
3. Training materials are online and fellow Section Representative will assist in necessary training and updates.
4. Attendance is required at Regional Council and National COR teleconferences, on-line discussions, and on-line votes.



## Scholarships and Operating Budget

~Monica James

Do you ever wonder how the SWE Southwest Texas section operates its budget? The majority of our working budget comes from rebates from our National section that are a portion of your membership dues. We supplement that with interest from our money market account, meeting fees, fundraising activities, and from corporate donations. The income is then used to grant scholarships, pay the outstanding balance for our monthly meeting expenses, Science Fair prizes, fundraising activities, and other administrative expenses. At the end of the fiscal year which ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>, we usually end up with a small net income.

Unfortunately, with belts tightening due to our economic situation, new members, membership renewals and corporate donations have been trickling down. Last year, we did not receive any corporate monetary donations so we were not able to offer any scholarships to our SWE Student section members. How disappointing! As Treasurer and Fundraising Chair, I've challenged the SWE SWT Section officers, and now the members, that we offer two \$1000 scholarships at the end of this fiscal year. This means we need members' help in recruiting new members and checking with your company whether they can donate as little as \$250 to our scholarship fund. Help us reach that goal!

To keep operating costs down, we will continue to charge a small fee at our monthly meetings that are not company sponsored (Thank you, Freescale for sponsoring October's event!). We also have SWE Gear for sale! Show your SWE spirit by purchasing a lanyard, business card dispenser, business card file, or keychain. Check them out on our website. We will have those items and the Entertainment Passbooks for sale at each meeting or by contacting any of the officers.

Finally, I'd like to thank everyone that renewed their membership or joined this year. We exist because of you and we are here to serve you. Please feel free to contact me at [Monica.James@swe.org](mailto:Monica.James@swe.org) if you have any questions or concerns.



## Holiday Social

~Monica James

This year's Holiday Social will be on Saturday, December 13th at [McCormick & Schmick's](#) at The Domain from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm. The cost is \$10 for members, \$15 for guests and includes great networking, an appetizer and dessert buffet, coffee, tea, and mimosas!

We will also be having our traditional White Elephant Gift Exchange. This is the time to re-gift that item you got last year and is sitting at the back of your closet or the only time you get to buy something silly on purpose! Don't forget to bring your gift packaged in a way we cannot determine who it is from so we can't point fingers afterward!

If you have any questions or concerns about the menu or the gift exchange, please contact me at [monica.james@swe.org](mailto:monica.james@swe.org).

## January Event: New Year, New You!

~Suzanne White

Since the New Year is the best time for "out with the old, and in with the new," we'll make it easy for you to add a New Year Resolution to your list to start revamping that wardrobe of yours with both casual and work clothes!

You have the good fortune to be in fine company to support such bold efforts: SWE Members + Personal Shoppers at Nordstrom!

Come join us for a peek at the freshest upcoming fashions at Nordstrom at Barton Creek Mall on January 15, 2009. Because this is a tailored event (*hehheh*) for our group, there is room for only the first 35 that RSVP. This fête is also being catered, therefore pre-payment will be required at sign-up.

All details will be announced via email and on our website. *Smart Girls need smart clothes, too!*

## 2009 Region C Conference: Head's Up!

~Sharda Parthasarathy

The 2009 Region C conference is just around the corner. The region has decided to have the conference early this time so don't forget to save the date: February 6-9, 2009. We also seem to be setting a healthy tradition of jointly hosted conferences. The hosting collegiate sections this time are out of the University of Houston, Rice University and Texas A&M -Prairie View.

The theme this year is 'Energizing Engineering' and it is perfect given all the emphasis being put on energy independence and alternative energy sources. There will be a great lineup of terrific speakers and workshops for both professional and collegiate members. In addition, a bunch of exciting activities are being planned to entertain the attendees including a Dessert Gallery, Plant tours, a SWE-style casino and even a basketball game!

If you couldn't make it to Nationals (or even if you could) here's a great opportunity to meet with other professionals in the Region and interact with the budding engineers from our wonderful collegiate sections... and all this just a short drive down the road in Houston, TX. Most of the events will be held at the Crowne Plaza hotel.

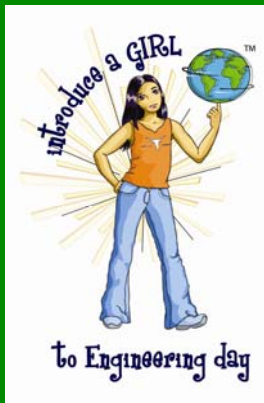
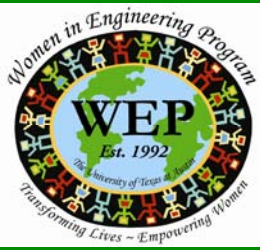
Early registration is open at the conference website (link below).

What: SWE Region C Conference - "Energizing Engineering"

When: February 6-9 2009

Where: Crowne Plaza, Houston TX

Registration: <http://www.swe.org/RegionC/conferences/2009/registration.htm>



## Swing into Spring with SWE and WEP – Networking Extravaganza!

~Tricia Berry



On Thursday, January 22, 2009 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the Gregory Games Room on campus, join the SWE-Southwest Texas Section, SWE-UT Austin student section and the UT Austin Women in Engineering Program (WEP) in a night of networking, interactive games, food and New Year fun. This annual networking event kicks off the spring semester for the students and is a great place to get connected with engineers across the area. We'll be sharing networking tips and tricks that are useful for both students and professionals. And of course, there will be plenty of door prizes and free parking in the Jester Garage! Registration is available online at [www.engr.utexas.edu/wep](http://www.engr.utexas.edu/wep).

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

~Tricia Berry



Saturday, February 21, 2009 marks the 8<sup>th</sup> 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 discovery booths. Over 300 volunteers are needed to host discovery booths 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](http://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 2009. 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/current/careerdevseminar.cfm>.

## Longhorn SWE Wins the Halloween Canned Food Drive Competition

~Crystal Guevara – Freshman SEC Representative C/O Angela Nickels



This year UT SWE's participation in the Halloween Canned Food Drive (HCFD) was a huge success! Every year, the Student Engineering Council (SEC) and the Capital Area Food Bank host the Halloween Canned Food Drive, where numerous engineering societies compete to collect the most canned food donations. UT SWE was awarded 1<sup>st</sup> Place with special thanks to their members' hard work and participation. Several Saturday mornings were dedicated to the cause as members collected canned food donations from a local neighborhood. UT SWE also hosted a Silent Auction in conjunction with the canned food collection. Local businesses such as The Cheesecake Factory, Einstein Brothers, Romeo's, and others donated generously to the Silent Auction. The Silent Auction was a daylong event that was open to faculty, staff, and students. Of course SWE made sure to provide delicious sweets to the bidders! All the monetary proceeds went to the Capital Area Food Bank. Everyone's diligence and determination ultimately paid off to benefit the community, and fit into UT SWE's theme, *Make An Impact: SWE!* The section looks forward to next year as they close on this year's HCFD event with a Big Bang!



# Society of Women Engineers

## Southwest Texas Section 2008-2009 Calendar

### September 2008

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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28	29	30				

**Sept 27** - Kick-off Brunch

### October 2008

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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**Oct 22** - Freescale Networking Meeting  
**Oct 28** - Sushi Networking Lunch

### November 2008

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**Nov 2** - Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure  
**Nov 6-8** - National SWE Conference  
**Nov 20** - Speaker Event

### December 2008

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
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28	29	30	31			

**Dec 13** - Holiday Social

### January 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**Jan 15** - New Year, New You!  
**Jan 16** - Applied Materials Diversity Day  
**Jan 22** - UT SWE/WEP/SWT Joint Event

### February 2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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28						

**Feb** - Volunteer month  
**Feb 6-8** - Region C Conference  
**Feb 11 or 12 (TBD)** - Volunteer Training for E-Week  
**Feb 18-21** - Austin Science Fair  
**Feb 21** - Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day

### March 2009

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**Mar 25 or 26 (TBD)** - Speaker Meeting

### April 2009

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26	27	28	29	30		

**Apr 4** - Girl Scout Workshop  
**Apr 22 or 23 (TBD)** - Speaker Meeting

### May 2009

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31					1	2
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

**May 7 or 9 (TBD)** - Scholarship and Award Banquet