



WISE Planet

Cohort 1 | Class of 2021





MISSION STATEMENT: Create a diverse, inclusive, equitable and just society by training women and other underrepresented groups in STEM to be change leaders equipped to implement strategies and innovations that will build that society.

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CONGRATULATIONS



“Together, we can make a diverse, inclusive, equitable and just society.”

I am no longer waiting for change to happen.

Over one year ago, we started together on this journey of learning and changing the world. Our joint mission was to empower your voices and shine light on your perspectives so that together we can build an inclusive and just society. This was the most rewarding experience I have the privilege to be part of.

These increasingly disruptive times require specialized leaders to ensure greater shared prosperity. As part of our journey through the WISE Planet program, we learnt about change leadership skills, analyzed systems, design for disruptive technologies and sustainable development. I hope that this training has equipped you with the knowledge, skills, and network connections to position yourselves as the global leaders who will be making an equitable and inclusive future and I am looking forward to living in the future that you will build.

You each brought with you a leadership equity action plan (LEAP) project aimed at advancing recruitment and retention of women within your communities. Your projects created research and training opportunities for women from diverse backgrounds and geographical locations who may not have access to such resources and opportunities. Today we see the culmination of your research, hard work and aspirational thinking. Your projects range from training opportunities for immigrant women or women in shelters, to setting up advocacy groups for reducing wage gap, to better leave policies to teaching science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to the next generation. These projects show a future where everyone can have a seat at the table and realize their true potential and I am looking forward to seeing that future.

We are now at a critical point in our history when our voices can be heard. You will be changing the conversations in our society to be inclusive and show your varied perspective necessary to ensure an equitable impact. Together, we will be the drivers of change. I am so glad to have been part of this exciting journey with you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laleh Behjat".

Laleh Behjat, PhD, P.Eng

WISE Planet Program Founder
Chair, NSERC Women in Science and Engineering – Prairie Region
Professor, Department of Electrical and Software Engineering,
Schulich School of Engineering, University of Calgary



I am always evolving.

This first year of WISE Planet as a program developer, I feel like I was in many ways one of the Cohort 1 participants and it has been a huge honor to be in such company. It was daunting when Laleh reached out and said she had a whole novel year-long program in mind and we needed to start it *now*. It was mildly scary the more I thought about our goal, and what we should provide for the training; the only certainty I kept coming back to was that the best way forward was not something we could define absolutely through the existing literature.

That was the whole point though, wasn't it? WISE Planet is itself a LEAP project, built on a vision of a future that is dependent on yet to be discovered structures and procedures.

That kind of uncertainty became comfortable and even exciting for me once I got to know all of you. The approach that quickly felt right was to support and inspire the right people – and you inspired us right back.

It is our sincerest hope that regardless of what roles, companies, or life circumstances you find yourselves in in the future that you will stay flexible, stay alert, stay optimistic, stay connected and support one another, and always speak up!

Jennifer van Zelm, MSc
WISE Planet Program Manager



*I am an environmental engineer
who's ready to make waves.*

Warmest congratulations to our first cohort of WISE Planet Change Leaders! As members of the WISE Planet Team, we're so proud of all the work you have done and all you have learned and accomplished over the last year.

We will truly miss all your smiling faces in our online sessions. Despite the challenges of completing a completely virtual yearlong training program, you persevered and remained actively engaged throughout the program. We, the members of the WISE Planet Team, learned as much from you as you did from us and all our invited speakers through your lively, active discussions and your dedicated, thoughtful progress on your LEAP projects. Thank you for all your hard work!

Want to Change the World? Yes, We Do. Yes, We Can.
And Now, You're Ready.

Stacia Thompson McCoy, PhD
WISE Planet Program Developer

ABOUT WISE PLANET

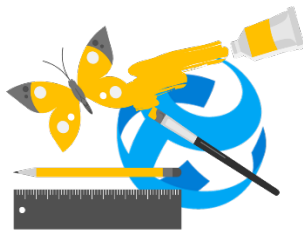


Personal Leadership

The goal of this module is to explore implicit bias and its effect on leadership, conflict management style, and leadership style. The module also works on developing effective oral and written communication skills, personal branding and storytelling for science communication. Participants learn leadership tools to support change leadership and managing change.

Culture & Systems

The goal of this module is to understand how culture defines our organizations, our actions, and our interactions. Participants learn also how systems and associated power structures are created and how systems perpetuate inequalities. The goal is to gain understanding of how to change culture and systems through strategy, collaboration, activism, and policymaking.



Designing for Disruptions

The goal of this module is to learn how to design systems that are robust and can handle disruptions. Participants learn how to design strategy, perform uncertainty analysis and build scenarios for disruptive technologies. Participants gain an understanding of how to incorporate disruptions to make future plans better through creative process and scenario planning.

Sustainability

The goal of this module is to understand that sustainability is a holistic approach. The UN Sustainable Development Goal themes of nature, economy, wellbeing, and society are used as a basis. Participants explore sustainability topics such as Climate Action, and Regenerative Design, as well as learning Life Cycle Assessment, Gender Equality, and Policy Advocacy.



LEAP Projects

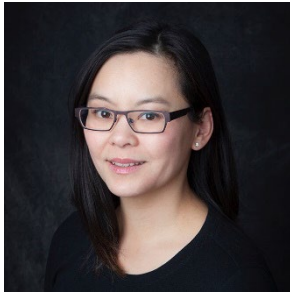
All participants undertook a Leadership Equity Action Plan (LEAP) project as part of their WISE Planet training. These projects aimed to address equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) at the participant's partner organization through recruitment, retention or innovation initiatives.

WISE LEADERS

The contributions of the WISE Planet network of volunteers, mentors, and allies from academia and industry are an important component of the program. Their roles as advisers, mentors and sponsors of individual participants or Learning Communities of the participants, and their feedback on Leadership Equity Action Plan (LEAP) projects is a valued part of the WISE Planet program.



Deidre Norman
Imperial Oil



Diana Wong Doolan
Information and
Communications
Technology Council



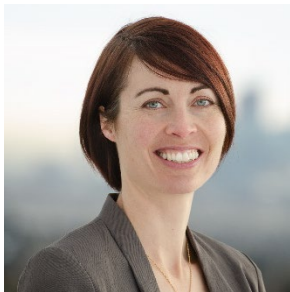
Heather Herring
Make it So Inc.



Jillian Johnson
DNV



Kelly Hall
Vermillion Power
Technologies /
Kelly Hall & Associates



Kelly Krahulic
Summit Nanotech
Corporation



Latha Nachiyamai
Garmin Canada



Laura Curiel
University of Calgary



Laura Mislan
Tundra Oil and Gas



Nafiseh Dadgostar
Imperial Oil



Nayyara Mandjee
Imperial Oil



Sandy Kennedy
Hexagon Autonomy and
Positioning



Serene Yew
Pixeltree Inc.

ANA CAROLINA LIMA



“I see the WISE Planet Fellowship as an excellent opportunity to learn the necessary skills to become a future leader who promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion as essential components of research and training in the academic space.”

I am a scientist & a nature lover.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Ana Carolina Lima is a scientist and an advocate for diversity and inclusion. Her academic path includes biology and conservation, and she has a PhD in Biology and Ecology of Global Change. She was born in Brazil and moved to Portugal when she was 10 years old. In 2017 she came to Canada to work as Postdoctoral Associate at the Aquatic Laboratory from the Biological Sciences Department of the University of Calgary, Alberta, where she is studying the effects of multiple stressors on the biological endpoints of the Athabasca River Basin (ARB). She is also the recipient of the University of Calgary’s WISE Planet Fellowship. In 2019 she joined the Immigrant and International Women in Science (IWS) Network as Co-Chair of the External Relations Committee and City of Calgary Leader. During this journey she has had the opportunity to meet like-minded women and support the development of a collaborative and supporting environment for other immigrant women in Canada. In her free time, she loves hiking, scuba diving, and photography. She is also a mother of a young toddler who is starting to discover the world.

LINKEDIN

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LEAP PROJECT

Building a strong professional network between Immigrant Women in STEM and Academia – A scientific perspective using social network analysis

In today's fast-paced, global, high-tech environment, the individual willingness and comfort with networking can significantly impact the ability to establish contacts, get interviews for jobs, and identify and cultivate mentors. Such networking skills are crucial for career and personal success. However, evidence suggests that immigrant women are less likely than Canadian-born to contact an employer or be recruited directly because their social networks are smaller and less diverse. To provide STEM immigrant women in Canada with a better chance to build a strong network in the academic setting and to provide a tool to help institutions to build a strong diversity strategy, this project aims to create a roadmap for the organization of informal "mixings" between academics and immigrant women. The project's more specific goals are a) to facilitate professional networking, b) to serve as a catalyst for exchange, c) to improve personal communication skills and d) to provide a data-driven approach to how successful links are formed during network events.

To achieve these goals, we propose starting with the University of Calgary in Alberta and the members of the IWS-Network. This not-for-profit organization provides support and mentorship to fellow Immigrant and International Women in Science (IWS). The organization is composed of individuals who are either 1st generation Canadians or who arrived in Canada and felt the personal and professional challenges accompanying this transition. The informal mixings will consist of networking events and use social network analysis. These methods will enable the identification of new professional links, planned follow-ups, and a preliminary indication of professional impact. It is anticipated that increased informal interactions between these two groups will inspire new forms of exchange, resulting in collaborations that would benefit individual professional growth and the university environment at large. The expected impact is to increase diversity recruitment and retention in academia by tackling institutional challenges. This project can make a significant contribution by helping to create the opportunity for the active recruitment of visible minorities in the academic setting.

I am very grateful for the opportunity of being part of the WISE Planet program. I never thought of myself as a leader, and this journey has shown me that the inner strength to have a voice about what you are passionate about can lead you to places never imagined before. I have learned about implicit bias and the glass ceiling. But also, how we are slowly but surely bringing it down piece by piece. I have learned how embracing cultural differences and taking risks make the most significant growth. I have learned new approaches for making a positive impact on the planet by designing for disruption. Finally, I have learned that leadership is not about a job, a role, or status. It is about having something you believe in and using it to inspire others while creating the environment for them to grow individually but, more importantly, together.

ANDREA JEFFERY



“To create change and empower others”

I am a collector of things, concepts, and experiences.

BIOGRAPHY

I like the less defined. My career has been a collection of experiences and opportunities without a singular destination or achievement. I try to take advantage of each experience and opportunity to develop a facet of my career. I am passionate about creating systems/processes that improve functionality and efficiency as well as empowering others.

I am currently an engineer in the Material Engineering department at ATCO Natural Gas. I am responsible for understanding how material properties (macro and microscopic) impact the integrity, performance, and behavior of products on our natural gas systems. On the surface this is a technical role. However, safety, integrity and operability cannot be separated from the human factor. How we use, implement, and maintain our materials directly impacts their safety, integrity, reliability and operation. As a result, I am also a liaison between the technical (materials/products) and the human factor (their users).

LINKEDIN

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LEAP PROJECT

When the freedom becomes a roadblock, restructure for success.

The importance and advantages of DE&I in the workplace have become undeniable. It allows corporations to leverage diversity to their benefit, breed innovation, and improve resiliency. However, in order to be successful, each company must understand what DE&I means for themselves to bridge their unique gaps and elevate their strengths. At ATCO, employee advocacy groups (EAGs) play a large part in creating targeted initiatives that are relevant to their customers and employees. In 2021, the ATCO Workplace Inclusion Diversity and Equity (WIDE) committee launched five EAG subcommittees – Women, Visible Minorities, LGBTQ2S+, Persons with Disabilities, and Indigenous Peoples – to further targeted DE&I initiatives within the company. My LEAP project focused on establishing the EAG subcommittees through the development of mission and goal statements, an action plan, and ongoing membership. Through this experience, I saw the challenges of new groups struggling to identify and organize themselves as well as the power and passion that people can bring to something that they really care about.

When setting up the subcommittees, WIDE gave them a lot of autonomy. The subcommittees were given freedom, encouraged to create their own internal structure, processes, and plans specific to their own unique goals. Although we expected this to give the subcommittees freedom to develop without being directed, it actually made it very difficult for most of the subcommittees to get started. Things were made more difficult as a number of other DE&I initiatives started around the same time creating confusion both within the subcommittees and the company at large about how the subcommittees could fit in and work with these other initiatives. Although most subcommittees successfully created mission and goal statements, all subcommittees expressed concern about drafting these documents without a firm understanding of their scope within the organization and planned to revisit the exercise again when this became clearer. Establishing leadership within the subcommittees was also a challenge. Many potential leaders didn't feel comfortable in the lead role or couldn't commit the time they felt was necessary. However, through the struggles, every subcommittee managed to generate an action plan with both short term and long-term goals. Each subcommittee also successfully held a DE&I event that showcased their passion for DE&I and the changes that are possible.

Reflecting on the year, it became obvious that the subcommittees required more support and clarity from WIDE. They needed to understand what was expected of them and how they could make the changes they felt ATCO needed. ATCO WIDE has since started to develop a more defined structure which shows how WIDE and the subcommittees fit into the organization and work with other DE&I initiatives currently underway. This has formed a channel for subcommittees to bring DE&I topics that are important but outside the subcommittee scope (policy change, etc.) to senior leadership as a driver for change. Roles and responsibilities have also been defined for all of the WIDE members with recommended term limits, and time commitments. These changes have already helped the subcommittees regroup and focus on generating DE&I moments and movement with ATCO.

CHRISTIE SAMPSON



“I want to be one of the people leading the charge to make academia a more inclusive and diverse space.”

I am a conservation biologist.

BIOGRAPHY

I am an ecologist with over ten years of experience within the United States and internationally. Currently, I am a postdoctoral research associate at the University of Calgary focusing on bull trout conservation. I received my Ph.D. from Clemson University in 2018, where my research addressed issues in mitigating human-elephant conflict and elephant poaching in Myanmar in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution, World Wildlife Fund, and the Myanmar government. I completed my M.S. degree studying Asian elephant habitat management in relation to fire ecology and invasive species in protected areas in Sri Lanka in December 2013. I have worked with all types of species from snakes and fish to elephants and wolves; I have also trained as a wildland firefighter, supervised restoration and invasive species removal projects, worked as a botanist and timber marker in US National Forests, and am Biosystems engineer. I've traveled the world doing everything from catching alligators in Florida to tracking tigers and leopards in Russia. I've made friends with everyone from the leaders of international NGOs to leaders of rural communities in the middle of a tropical jungle. My past projects combined aspects of human dimensions of wildlife studies with GIS, science communication and educational outreach, and movement ecology research to develop more effective conservation policy and mitigation strategies. I love research but I am also drawn to education and science communication. My involvement as a leader in conservation education has provided some of the most rewarding experiences in my career.

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LEAP PROJECT

Role-Playing App to Enhance Outdoor Ecosystem Learning

One of the mandates of the Biogeoscience Institute is to provide experiential learning experiences in an outdoor ecosystem. The onsite education team has spent years creating engaging, interactive lessons for people of all ages, but the challenges of the pandemic have highlighted the need for creative ways to deliver these lessons. Limits on class sizes and difficulties in arranging transportation to field sites have drastically affected our ability to provide in-person activities. Even without the additional challenges presented by the pandemic, funding for field trips and hands-on services like those provided by our team can be difficult for some schools to provide. And after more than a year of online lessons, parents and teachers are searching for ways to help students connect with the information they receive in class in a more concrete way.

To address this issue, we are developing a series of digital placed-based games designed to offer players a new way to learn. Both educational and entertaining, they are designed to highlight an area's unique flora, fauna, and history. Part outdoor escape room, part Pokemon Go, our adventure games will take users to new spots and old favorites, using technology to enhance outdoor experiences and offer extraordinary educational opportunities. Getting started is easy- users (or their parents) simply download the app and pick the game they'd like to play. They can decide what type of role-playing adventure they'd like to do, anything from being a detective solving a science-based mystery to assisting a prominent woman in STEM make the next big discovery. Once they choose a game, they'll get directions to the starting location, and off they go- they'll get clues, solves puzzles, and learn about a topic of their choice, all using their cell phone!

ELIZABETH MCCAFFREY



“I joined WISE Planet to learn how to be a better leader and to inspire women and young girls to both enter, and remain in, STEM fields.”

I am a young professional woman dedicated to helping others!

BIOGRAPHY

I am a young, passionate, energetic, third-generation oil and gas worker, keen to make a difference in my industry. Currently working as an Application Specialist at Spartan Controls, I have also worked for a petroleum industry producer in both the office and in the field. In 2014, I was awarded the Seymour Schulich Community Service/Entrepreneurial Award (four-year university scholarship) for my volunteering, sporting, and academic achievements. In 2019, I graduated from Chemical Engineering (with Distinction) from the University of Calgary after having completed an internship program.

Throughout university, I worked with, and led, several different student organizations as well as volunteered outside of the university community. To this day, I remain an active member of the community and continue to volunteer for a variety of work related and non-work related volunteer organizations.

External to work, I am a fitness enthusiast. Having grown up as a competitive swimmer, I continue to love group fitness. In 2019, I started teaching barre group fitness classes at Calgary’s first barre studio. Other interests include traveling, hiking, backpacking, and anything outdoors. I am also an adventure seeker – from bungee jumping in New Zealand to volunteering at an archaeological conservation site in Italy, I will try anything once!

Finally, I absolutely love animals, owning two kittens and a dog. I am extremely family-oriented and have a large group of friends from all walks of life, including a young female politician that I volunteer for. I believe that we need more women leaders in all industries!

LINKEDIN

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LEAP PROJECT

Gender Gap in Outside Sales Roles at Spartan Controls Ltd.

Sales roles throughout history have been dominated by men with most media depictions of sales professionals represented by salesmen instead of saleswomen. This representation is accurate for sales positions in science and technology industries.

Currently, Alberta is the leading province for women's entrepreneurship in Canada with 30% of their tech start-ups being founded or co-founded by women. Despite Spartan's ongoing commitment to a diverse and inclusive workplace, women in outside sales roles at Spartan account for a very small percentage. Although it is only in Spartan's recent history that women have begun to move into these roles, low retention rates have caused a decline following initial uptake. As an entrepreneurial company Spartan should strive to lead these advances in industry.

We've investigated why Spartan women are hesitant to apply for outside sales roles and why the retention rates within these roles are so low. Through our research, we've compiled a short list of barriers, including:

- Misconception of role requirements
- Lack of mentorship
- Prevalent gender biases

Fortunately, many of these issues can be addressed through organizational changes and we will provide recommendations for future actions to help correct this disparity.

ELLYN SCHLEGEL



*I am a STEAM educator, experience designer
and life-long learner.*

*“I was grateful to be nominated
for the 2021-2022 WISE Plant
Fellowship Program as it has
allowed me to connect with
inspiring and like-minded
professionals in a diverse range
of STEM careers. I have learned
both professional and life skills
to innovate and expand my
knowledge for years to come.”*

BIOGRAPHY

I am an educator with eight years of experience working in non-profit environments and classrooms to engage learners of all ages in STEAM topics.

My love of learning has led me to pursue a Bachelor of Commerce in entrepreneurship and Bachelor of Education in elementary science.

LINKEDIN

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LEAP PROJECT

Exploring Best Practices for Community Partnerships in STEAM Education

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed widespread systemic inequities while amplifying the call for increased access to social services and education as a means to work towards social and financial equity. STEM education is a critical component of an inclusive and equitable curriculum for all learners as career opportunities within the sectors of science, technology, engineering and math continue to grow and evolve.

When individuals are given the opportunity to be exposed to STEM learning opportunities from a young age, they are more likely to develop interests in STEM disciplines and pursue a career in a STEM field (Blotnicky, K. et al., 2018). As a STEM educator and program designer, I have had the unique opportunity to collaborate with creative STEM professionals and learners. As a result, I have witnessed and identified the opportunities to offer inclusive and equitable STEM education with the help of STEM professionals and enthusiasts, who can offer a range of identities, perspectives, experiences and knowledge.

Over the past year, I have developed a flexible and comprehensive framework for educators to guide the development of community-oriented partnerships for the purpose of inclusive and equitable STEM education. The framework is informed by best practices from over 40 community engagement resources and conversations with over 30 individuals, who are active community builders in the non-profit and education sectors. As I experience a career transition and move from a museum setting to the classroom, I hope to continue to share and iterate upon this framework. I also hope to bring a community-oriented approach to student learning as inspired by my WISE Fellowship experience.

JESSICA MECHER



“The reason I joined WISE Planet is to be part of the positive change in industry and our community for Women in STEM and other marginalized groups.”

I am a partner, a leader, and a feminist.

BIOGRAPHY

In my work life I am a Mechanical Engineer leading a Project Management Team at ENMAX Power. My strengths are in communication, humility, relationship building, organization and discipline. I am motivated by problem solving, connecting with co-workers, and overcoming new challenges. I have experience in Upstream Oil & Gas Projects, Electrical Distribution and Joint-Use Utility Construction.

In my personal life I am an avid hiker, skier, runner, yogi, and ice hockey player. I focus on health, the pursuit of ambitious goals and quality time with my family and friends. I love travelling to experience new opportunities, perspective and understanding. I am lucky to have an extremely supportive partner whom adds some calm and stability to our active lifestyle. I am the happiest when I am on a mountain top experiencing the world’s natural vast beauty.

LINKEDIN

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LEAP PROJECT

Allyship to support Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

Our organization is pursuing the implementation of a Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (DI&B) Program. This is a commitment that will benefit employee engagement, safety, innovation, and company reputation. But how can we ensure this program is successful and aligns with our employee's needs? Allyship will set a foundation for our DI&B future.

Becoming an ally helps us develop awareness of existing prejudice and unconscious bias. Having an ally encourages us to feel safe to speak up about our unique experiences. These experiences and unrepresented voices will be a pivotal part of developing DI&B company-wide. Throughout the last year, I have utilized the following three pillars to help promote allyship at my organization.

Awareness:

- Highlighting the WISE Planet Program and Leadership Equity Initiatives at corporate meetings
- Initiating Diversity Moments at department meetings (Similar to Safety, Leadership and Innovation Moments already successful)

Collaboration:

- Engaged the Senior Leadership Team in discussions about unconscious bias and microaggressions
- Worked with our equality focused Development Network to create a YouTube Story Series emphasizing how to be an Ally to diverse groups
- Brainstorming with the DI&B Program Manager to align and support objectives

Connection:

- Championed multiple Employee Connection Sessions – 'A conversation on DI&B'
- Engaged with fellow employees and industry leaders through the Calgary Pride and Women in Power Allyship sessions
- Reviewed Employee Engagement Surveys and Developed Engagement Plans
- Creating a Diversity Moment Guide to provide more opportunities for employees to share and learn with each other

The main goal for this project was to connect with as many people as possible on the topic and create momentum around Allyship. The above pillars have not only promoted DI&B at our company but has normalized this important conversation and increased understanding of what it means to be an ally. This journey has personally provided me the opportunity to learn and understand how much these objectives mean to me as an employee, engineer and Calgarian.

Through WISE planet, I have gained confidence as an ally; I have learned to better reflect on my own biases, center the voice of those impacted and utilize empathy and curiosity to aid in continuous learning, discussion, and action for marginalized groups.

Looking ahead, the continuation of our YouTube Story Series, Employee Connection Sessions, and Diversity Moments will be key in creating a platform for diverse perspectives and voices. These voices will shape our Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Future.

KAT DORNIAN



“I joined WISE Planet to develop leadership skills and connect with like-minded individuals passionate about sustainability.”

I am an experience designer.

BIOGRAPHY

My life's vision is a generative, long-lasting world where technology is in harmony with our whole planet. I use my problem-solving, communication, design, and learning skills to design ways to bring more perspectives into technology.

As a master's student at the Schulich School of Engineering's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, I explore tools to help mentors in engineering outreach programs. My research has investigated digital skills programs in K-12 and is currently looking at high school coding workshops at the University.

In the future, I'll connect more people working in technology with those historically excluded from STEM's imagination. I will help rebuild the boundaries of STEM to be more inclusive to the human and beyond human world. I believe that a regenerative world is one built on flexible and resilient networks. These connections are vital to sustaining the planet we call home and making it a truly better place with every passing decade.

LINKEDIN

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LEAP PROJECT

Using Mentors and Outreach to Close the Digital Divide

Across the world, something known as the "digital divide" is leaving behind swaths of society. In Canada, for instance, only 81% of people have an adequate connection to the internet. That means 19% of Canadians struggle to access services and information readily available online. Furthermore, historically marginalized people have significantly less access to technology and fewer opportunities to develop digital skills than those in non-marginalized groups. With the world facing some of the greatest challenges of our time, we cannot afford to leave solutions from diverse perspectives out of the digital solutions.

To bridge the divide, digital skills programs targeting youth from marginalized groups can help. By building digital skills through creative projects, such programs offer technology access and skill-building and increase youth's interest in computing careers.

The Schulich Ignite Program is a digital skills program that has been running since 2017. The program is an eight-session online workshop for high school students to learn the basics of computer programming. Students are encouraged to create a project, such as a simple computer game, with the help of undergraduate mentors.

Mentors are a crucial part of the Schulich Ignite program's success and are helping to close the digital divide. They play the roles of teacher, collaborator, and role model. Each mentor works with up to six students to help them learn to code, create a game, and see themselves pursuing a computing education. However, program participants have recognized that while the mentors are skilled in computer coding, there is an opportunity for them to develop their teaching, mentorship, and leadership skills.

The Schulich Ignite training package will help train mentors in digital skills outreach programs. The training package delivers the best approaches in mentor-based outreach, including, for example:

- creating inclusive virtual learning and mentoring experiences
- using collaborative coding in a virtual environment
- addressing barriers to engagement in technical fields
- leveraging project-based learning

With well-trained mentors working with students from historically marginalized groups, we believe we will see more diverse perspectives entering computing fields. These students' perspectives are a necessary part of the solutions that address global challenges and work towards an equitable future for all.

KAYLEY EVANS



“I want to help inspire the next generation of female scientists.”

I am a primatologist & business strategist.

BIOGRAPHY

As a teenager I was fortunate enough to travel around the world competing in Track and Field, where I discovered that different cultures and people in general are extremely fascinating. These experiences inspired me to study Psychology and Anthropology at the University of Calgary. From there I set out to become a Primatologist. I received NSERC funding to research spider monkeys in Belize and spent a large portion of my young adult life living in Central America and Africa. I taught university field courses in Costa Rica, worked in wildlife rehabilitation and took time to publish articles in scientific journals.

Throughout my university studies I also had a career in retail as a manager and eventually in operations. After graduating I spent the majority of my time working in retail operations. 3 years ago I started working at TELUS Spark Science Centre as the Manager of Daily Operations. A role where I get to utilize both my experience in business and my passion for science. Every single day I get to inspire and educate the public on the wonders of science. As well as find ways to reach new audiences and enhance the guest experience at the science centre.

LINKEDIN

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How Equity & Diversity Influences Membership Sales at TELUS Spark

Equity and diversity are factors that are not typically considered when creating a membership offering. This is especially apparent when looking at family memberships at various museums, attractions, zoos and science centres. Most family memberships are created to serve the Standard North American family (SNAF) ideal. This family structure includes a legally married couple living with their children in the same household. Since 2012 it has been apparent through the Canadian census that SNAFs are no longer the norm in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2012). There has been a sharp increase in single parent, common-law and multigenerational families. Although multigenerational families occur in all cultures, it is more common in South and East Asian cultures. These cultures are a large part of the cultural diversity here in Canada and are minorities that tend to have less access to science education. Science centres may unintentionally be contributing to this by creating barriers for non-SNAF families to become members. Thereby reducing the exposure of these individuals to science education, which may reduce the chances of these individuals ending up in a STEM career. In this project the aim is to review the membership offering at TELUS Spark Science Centre to ensure it is not creating barriers for non-SNAF families to acquire memberships and to ensure it creates an equal access opportunity for different cultures and genders.

KELSEY CLARK



“I joined WISE Planet to expand my perspectives and learn how to lead change.”

I am a committed problem-solver.

BIOGRAPHY

I am an engineer in training, working on Canada’s West Coast. I was born and raised in Vancouver, and although I love to travel, I find it difficult to imagine calling anywhere else home. This is a place that allows me to exercise my appreciation of food, wine & natural beauty.

My childhood was punctuated by treatment of a physical disability – an experience that’s made me resilient and given me a drive for independence. I enjoy being challenged and take the most pride in accomplishments that have not come easily.

Following my graduation from the University of British Columbia with a Bachelor of Applied Science in Chemical and Biological Engineering I found employment as an Application Specialist with Spartan Controls. Eight years later, I am still impressed by the variety of challenges that the position and organization offer for personal and professional development. As a prominent company in local industry, Spartan is in an ideal position to lead change and set an example for others in its equity, diversity, and inclusion practices.

I look forward to continuing my contributions to the organization and aspire to serve as a leader to the next generation of female engineers.

LINKEDIN

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Gender Gap in Outside Sales Roles at Spartan Controls Ltd.

Sales roles throughout history have been dominated by men with most media depictions of sales professionals represented by salesmen instead of saleswomen. This representation is accurate for sales positions in science and technology industries.

Currently, Alberta is the leading province for women's entrepreneurship in Canada with 30% of their tech start-ups being founded or co-founded by women. Despite Spartan's ongoing commitment to a diverse and inclusive workplace, women in outside sales roles at Spartan account for a very small percentage. Although it is only in Spartan's recent history that women have begun to move into these roles, low retention rates have caused a decline following initial uptake. As an entrepreneurial company Spartan should strive to lead these advances in industry.

We've investigated why Spartan women are hesitant to apply for outside sales roles and why the retention rates within these roles are so low. Through our research, we've compiled a short list of barriers, including:

- Misconception of role requirements
- Lack of mentorship
- Prevalent gender biases

Fortunately, many of these issues can be addressed through organizational changes and we will provide recommendations for future actions to help correct this disparity.

KIRSTEN EEUWES



“I joined WISE Planet to gain the skills required to achieve my vision of increasing diversity within the engineering profession.”

I am a leader.

BIOGRAPHY

I am an Electrical Engineer working in Asset Management in the utilities sector. I graduated from Western University in 2011 and have lived and worked in Alberta ever since. Diversity and inclusion have become a passion of mine as I have gotten older. As a child I did not experience a lot of diversity firsthand as most of my classmates at my Catholic school were white. Now as a working professional, I recognize that there are so many different thoughts, beliefs, and abilities and I have a strong interest in learning more. At the peak of my career, I envision myself as a recognized leader both at work and in the community. I will be known as a diversity and inclusion champion and will have a large network of people that I can call upon to help remove barriers and build a better world.

LINKEDIN

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LEAP PROJECT

Gender Equity at EPCOR

EPCOR recognized the need to establish a gender equity working group in order to cultivate psychological safety at work. The existing workforce does not reflect the diversity within the greater community. This needs to change in order for EPCOR to meet the vision of being a company that attracts and retains the best employees.

EPCOR established six working groups in 2021 as part of their diversity, equity and inclusion journey. The gender equity working group will focus on identifying and removing systemic barriers and areas of gender inequity within the company.

Short-term goals of the group include establishing measures to track progress, implementing the GBA+ recommendations for EPCOR's hiring system, and identifying policies and practices that contain bias and recommending changes. Longer term goals include completing a GBA+ analysis on the performance review process and understanding and removing barriers that are found within specific business units.

As co-lead of the gender equity working group, I helped guide the team through initiation and planning. In the initiation stage, I:

- Created a draft project plan;
- Designed a visual representation of the team's purpose; and
- Facilitated a brainstorming session to identify activities to achieve our goals.

In the planning stage, I:

- Organized the activities into short-, medium- and long-term action items;
- Determined the group's responsibility level for each activity (lead versus support);
- Met with the team to assign action items; and
- Updated the project plan.

Throughout my time as co-lead I also scheduled and led the group meetings, wrote minutes, made presentations at related meetings, and maintained a database of reference documents on the SharePoint site.

The working group is now focused on executing the plan. I believe it will be very important to listen carefully to feedback from employees about barriers they encounter instead of making assumptions. Progress updates should be shared regularly to demonstrate commitment and maintain momentum. In the future, it will be beneficial to expand the discussion beyond a binary definition of gender.

Thank you to my co-lead and the members of the working group for their support of my LEAP project. I learned a lot about turning a large scope into an actionable plan. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to help improve gender equity at EPCOR.

MARYAM AGHAJAMALI



“The reason I joined WISE Planet is to learn how to be a change leader and support women in my field.”

I am a chemist.

BIOGRAPHY

I am a scientist, an immigrant, a wife, and a mother. I was born and raised in Shirabad, Astara, Iran. I faced many challenges while growing up as a girl in my hometown; therefore, I decided to study hard and change my environment. I excelled in my classes in all grades and was admitted to Tabriz University. During my undergraduate degree, I also studied hard, completed my BSc courses in 7 semesters with First Class Honors, and was admitted to Tehran University. I also did very well both in classes and in research during my master's program. Although I performed very well in my both degrees, I had a hard time getting job offers with a reasonable salary after graduation. Even when I found my dream job as an R&D Scientist in a petrochemical R&D center, I noticed that women's voices are not heard, and they do not get the attention that they deserve. Again, I decided to leave, this time my country for a better quality of life. I immigrated to Canada in 2013 and graduated from the University of Alberta with a Ph.D. in Chemistry in 2018. After graduation, I joined the University of Calgary as a Postdoctoral Associate, and I am currently researching in the area of materials science and nanotechnology. In my life, I have experienced many forms of injustice and inequality towards women, so I want to be a change leader and make the world a better place for future generations.

LINKEDIN

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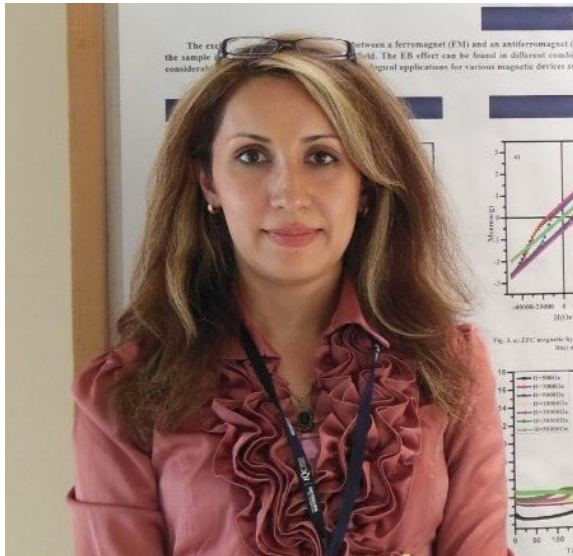
How to Support Female Postdocs During Pregnancy and Maternity Leave?

To increase the number of women in academia, we need to understand and address female postdocs' problems. One of their problems is pregnancy and giving birth to a child. In 2020, female undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Calgary were 54% and 55%, respectively, but why did these percentages drop to 44% and 40% when we look at the number of female postdocs and female faculty at UCalgary? Most female postdocs are in the age range of 30-35 and consider giving birth to a child during their postdoc. However, they may fear its impact on their career because pregnancy and giving birth to a child may cause interruptions to their academic performance. Moreover, it may cause financial problems because not all the funding agencies provide paid maternity leave. Besides, postdoctoral appointments are short-term contracts, and sometimes there is no possibility of extension. Due to these problems, some female postdocs may decide not to give birth to a child until they find a secure position in academia. Some postdocs also may give up on their academic dream and look for alternative opportunities in the industry. To keep more women in academia and train them as future faculty and academic leader, this project aims to raise awareness about some issues of female postdocs and propose strategies to support them before, during, and after maternity leave.

During this project, I learned that postdoctoral scholars at UCalgary are not eligible for the same benefits (e.g., paid maternity leave), and their benefits depend on their appointment type and funding sources. Postdoctoral associates are considered employees and may be eligible for Employment Insurance maternity and parental benefits. They may also be eligible for a maternity/parental leave top-up payment through the University. According to the Collective Agreement between the Board of Governors of the University of Calgary and the Postdoctoral Association of the University of Calgary, postdoctoral associates receive a salary top-up to 95% of their salary for up to 18 weeks. Externally funded postdoctoral scholars may also be eligible to receive maternity/parental leave, but the amount of coverage and the duration of coverage depend on the funding source. For example, some agencies (e.g., CIHR, NSERC) offer paid maternity/parental leave for up to 12 months. Some agencies (e.g., CFREF, Alberta Innovates) provide paid maternity/parental leave for up to 6 months, and some agencies do not offer paid maternity/parental leave. By reaching out to the female postdocs, I also learned that the principal investigators (PIs) could play a key role to support them and retain the top talents. The PIs could offer flexible working hours or hire undergraduate/graduate students for the postdocs. In this way, the postdocs not only could gain leadership experience but also could advance the research in the organization. During maternity leave, the PIs could also support the postdocs by providing maternity leave top-up and health care benefits. They also could extend the postdoc contract and create a positive "return to work" environment, which in turn leads to better postdoc performance and higher productivity. In conclusion, university leaders, PIs, and funding agencies must consider the challenges of female postdocs and establish policies to support all of them regardless of their appointment type or funding sources in order to keep more women in academia and create a diverse, inclusive, equitable and just environment.

¹<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/university.of.calgary.office.of.institutional.analysis/viz/UniversityofCalgaryEquityDiversityandInclusionDashboard-Public/TABLEOFCONTENTS>

MARYAM TAHERI



“I joined WISE Planet to provide me the necessary skills and tools I need to reach my goal (being part of community to build an equitable, diverse, inclusive environment for all women).”

We are empowered women to speak out our rights, to move forward and to build a more resilient world for next generations.

BIOGRAPHY

I am a Materials Scientist and Experimental Physicist, also a Woman, a Mother, a Wife, and an Immigrant. I love hiking, traveling, cooking, planting, reading books, spending time with my family and friends. I enjoy learning, exploring, and innovating by combining science and engineering. I was born in Iran, spent the first seven years of my life in a war zone, days of bombarding, deafening noise, blinding nights, concrete shelters, and fear of death. As a woman grown in Iran, I suffered from gender inequality, a serious discrimination that women suffered, including their rights in marriage, divorce, child custody, heredity, choose their clothing in public, taking some positions in the society or leave the country without their father/husband’s permission. When I immigrated to Canada in 2010, I faced new challenges as an immigrant woman and a new page of my life began. In terms of my academic background, I completed my Ph.D. in Condensed Matter Physics and Materials Science at Brock University, Ontario and then joined Departments of Chemistry and Chemical and Petroleum Engineering at the University of Calgary as a postdoctoral researcher. Currently I am working as a research and development scientist at CES Energy Solutions Corp. Beyond my research success, I have been fortunate to obtain a wide range of teaching experiences including college instructor along with several voluntarily project manager and executive committee member responsibilities. I believe all my experiences and concerns made me stronger and more determined person to achieve my goals, to help creating more diverse, equitable and inclusive world, where every person despite of his/her race, gender, ethnicity, and beliefs feels valued, respected and equally supported

LINKEDIN

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Gender and Race Analysis in STEM Education and Career at the University of Calgary

According to the Statistics Canada study, over half of the Canadian population are women while about 25% of them are the visible minority. “Visible minority “is defined by the government of Canada as a person, other than Aboriginal people, who is non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.^{1,2} The ethnic and cultural diversity of Canadian population is significantly growing since the population of foreign-born Canadians, Canadian-born visible minorities, and children of recent immigrants are rising. Visible minority women in Canada are relatively well educated; however they encounter different cultural or systematic challenges in personal and professional lives, and they still continue to be underrepresented in political and professional leadership positions. Unawareness of women specifically visible minority and women in color and lack of systematic education are some causes of gender and cultural biases.¹

This research collected the race-and gender-based demographic data of people study or work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs at the University of Calgary through a survey of over 600 people, investigated the rate of awareness in underrepresented group about their rights, responsibilities and available resources, considered the relation of gender and race with the level of occupation, and addressed the sexual harassment, discrimination and biases which visible minorities and women in color have experienced at Canadian organizations. This study aims to highlight the impact of this underrepresented group in the Canadian society and economy, understand the effective way to educate and support them to grow and present their potentials in a right time and place, to encourage more opportunities for minority women in leadership positions.

According to the collected results through the survey, visible minority women, more often reported experiencing discrimination or unfair treatment than non-visible minorities. Raising awareness, providing with mandatory training and enriching workshops at all levels, periodically collecting information in the way of surveys and establishing disciplinary action toward sexual harassment and gender/race discriminations at the universities can be some valuable steps to provide an equitable safe place for students, staffs and faculties.

¹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-503-x/2010001/article/11527-eng.htm>

² <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/guides/006/98-500-x2016006-eng.cfm>

NAJMUS SALTANAT



“I joined WISE Planet to be an active voice for ‘diversity and Inclusion’ in the industry and ensure representation of women in the leadership.”

I am ambitious, engaging, and gregarious by nature.

BIOGRAPHY

Najmus holds Bachelor and Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology. She has completed a ten-month tenure for the research work at the University of Bradford in the United Kingdom and has ten years of experience in the utility industry.

Najmus Saltanat has been with ENMAX since 2014, in various roles in the generation, distribution, and transmission; each role with a focus on problem-solving and improving the efficiency and performance of ENMAX’s electric assets. Currently, she is responsible for the ideation, development, and oversight of the execution of projects supporting the safety and reliability of ENMAX’s transmission system.

Najmus is passionate about ‘diversity and Inclusion’ in leadership, and in 2021 she has been nominated for the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) fellowship program.

Her focus is to develop a long-term plan to ensure a diverse and inclusive workplace. Najmus’ desired aim is to grow as an individual and help uplift others to create widescale change.

LINKEDIN

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LEAP PROJECT

Positive Experience around Maternity and Parental leave

According to an APEGA (Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta) report on women in the workplace¹, 'maternity and parental leave' is identified as one of the top seven barriers to women in engineering and geoscience workplaces. Effective maternity and parental leave policies and a supportive 'return to work' environment help to reduce parental stress and promote working parents' wellbeing, which in turn leads to better business performance. Such policies enhance an organization's ability to attract and retain top talent – especially women. Support during and after the leave ensures higher employee engagement and consequently higher productivity, profitability, and organizational success.

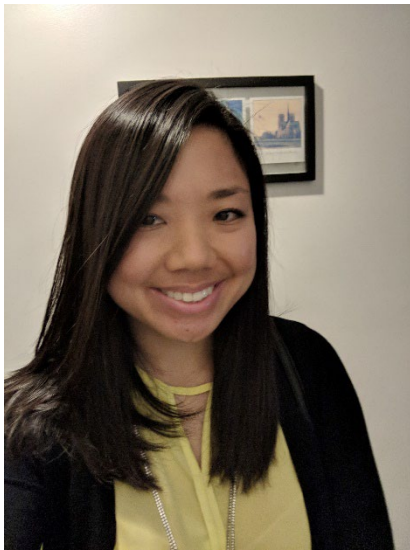
Project Idea: My Leadership Equity Action Plan project focused on raising awareness and gathering employee feedback regarding the employee experience before, during, and after the leave. As a parent of a newborn, step or adopted child, it is a privilege to enjoy the new addition to the family without feeling uncertain about career advancement. Support during and after the leave will ensure an inclusive workplace for all employees, increase their engagement, and retain top talent.

The Plan: My plan for this project is split into three timelines: short-term, mid-term and long-term. I tied the scope of this project to ENMAX's strategic goals, ensured alignment with the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) initiatives. As this initiative is not achievable by one individual, I have shared my ideas with senior leaders and ensured their awareness and buy-in of this initiative. I have been collaborating with a range of stakeholders, not only in various HR (Human Resources) departments in multiple organizations, and with management, but also with the employees at ENMAX as I progressed. Throughout this journey, I ensured all feedback was listened to and heard. I have turned the initiative into a collaborative agenda for the organization to achieve. Based on an employee survey identifying people are tired of virtual events in the pandemic, I pivoted my plan to a mid-term initiative for panel discussion. Unfortunately, this suspends the timeline for further work until after the 'return to office'.

Achievements: Through this WISE (Women in Science and Engineering) Planet program, I learned to push a collaborative initiative forward. I contributed to an updated maternity and parental leave policy to ensure inclusivity. I have gathered employee experience stories and planned a sprint session to prepare a recommendation document and to connect employees with available resources inside and outside ENMAX. The recommendation document will be a reference for leaders to support new parents and the rest of the team. This project's most significant achievements are creating strategic action plans and continuing the initiative as a part of the ENMAX's 'diversity and inclusion' journey. These milestones have allowed me to continue the plan for a panel discussion on maternity and parental leave with selected panelists tentatively in mid-2022. In summary, this project initiative was a spark that ignited the conversation about maternity and parental leave to be discussed without stigma.

Challenges: Policy change is not achievable if a group of leaders with power do not work together by being one in spirit and purpose. Some of the biggest challenges with writing policy is that no one policy is 'one size fits all'. It is important to ensure that the long-term impact of the policies on equities and inclusivity are considered. Advocating for the policy is the next vital step towards a successful policy.

SUSAN THAI



I am a professional engineer.

“I joined the WISE Planet program to grow professionally and personally as a leader and a person, and to learn what it means to create a diverse and inclusive space for those around me.”

BIOGRAPHY

I am an inspiration-driven and outcome-focused engineer with almost 10 years of experience in the utility industry. Professionally, my focus has been to balance strategic business goals and technical drivers to maximize the value of my organization’s assets. My future goals include continuing to drive change for the business and organization culture, and to lead and develop new engineers in the industry.

I believe we all have a role in making the world a fairer place, and being fair doesn’t always mean being equal, unless we’ve removed all systemic barriers that prevent someone from reaching their full potential.

LEAP PROJECT

Pay Transparency at ATCO

Pay disparity amongst women and minorities is a systematic problem that is made worse due to a lack of transparency. This project will highlight the key benefits of increased pay transparency by presenting information from public studies, legislative requirements, publicly available pay information, and survey results from members of other electric utilities. The early results indicate that there are benefits for both the organization and employees to have pay scales publicly available. By providing this information, the organization is able to ensure the accuracy of the data their employees use to assess whether they are fairly compensated, and at the same time provide their employees with the information they need to advocate for themselves and have open conversations with their superiors regarding compensation.

TANNIS KEMP



“I joined WISE Planet as I was eager to connect with like-minded, talented women in STEM who were keen to improve their community.”

I am a scientist, art admirer, and mediocre plant mother.

BIOGRAPHY

Tannis received both her Bachelor (2018) and Master (2021) of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Calgary. Throughout her studies, Tannis was drawn to biomedical applications of engineering, and her research focused on using advanced medical imaging to study bone biomechanics and structural bone adaptation. She authored multiple peer-reviewed research articles, including two first author publications. Tannis’ research bridged biology engineering, medical imaging and mathematics. Her work was recognized by local, provincial and national research awards.

Tannis is now working in the biomedical industry as a System Test Specialist at Synaptive Medical Inc in Toronto, ON. She uses her background in medical imaging and engineering to develop diagnostic and treatment tools for neurological conditions such as brain tumors and stroke.

Tannis is a leader in her community, and has served on the McCaig Trainee Committee and the University of Calgary’s Engineers Without Borders chapter. She was also a crisis responder with the Calgary Distress Centre. Tannis has been a speaker for women in engineering panels, she has facilitated outreach activities for high school girls interested in engineering, and she has mentored many undergraduate engineering students. Through each of these opportunities, Tannis found a passion for community service. Tannis is proud to be a woman in engineering and hopes to inspire other women to follow this career path.

LINKEDIN

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LEAP PROJECT

WISE (Women in Science and Engineering) Social Media Campaign

Among first year undergraduate students studying engineering, 19% are women, and among first year undergraduate students studying math and computer science, 28% are women. The disparity in the number of men and women in science, engineering, technology and math (STEM) may be attributed to the gender stereotypes. It has been shown that career choice is heavily influenced by our gender image of an occupation. It has also been shown that women tend to associate math and physics with men, meaning women are less likely to pursue careers in math and physics.

Social media could help change the gender image and gender stereotypes of careers in STEM. 90% of young Canadians who use the internet also use social media, and 54% of polled young Americans would consider a career as a social media influencer. This indicates that social media has a wide audience and may impact career aspirations. The top influencer niches for women are beauty, health and fitness, travel, fashion, and business. To the author's knowledge, few social media influencers, pages or channels are in the STEM niche, meaning young women are inundated with content related to beauty and fashion, and have few online role models in other niches. Showcasing women in STEM on social media could change the gender image of careers in STEM and create a new niche of online role models for young women. This may inspire young women to pursue careers in STEM and perhaps increase representation of women in historically male-dominated fields.

UPMA GANDHI



“I joined WISE Planet to accumulate skills to overcome gender bias and achieve success in industry.”

I am independent.

BIOGRAPHY

Coming from the small town of Meerut, India, I always wanted to pursue my education abroad as I loved to explore and live-in new places. Hello, I am Upma Gandhi pursuing a Ph.D. in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Calgary. My dream always has been to provide quality education to the kids from the economically weak section of society by witnessing the wealth gap in my home country. I aim to open an orphanage and an old age home in my city. In my free time, I like to search about new technologies related to human-computer interaction, quantum computing, electric vehicles, the stock market, etc. My hobbies are playing sports such as badminton, squash, and long tennis.

LINKEDIN

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LEAP PROJECT

Bridging the knowledge Gap for Vulnerable Women

Skill development is an integral part of life to make a living and become financially independent. The most structured way of skill development is to get an education, pursue a degree or diploma or just take a course. My LEAP project (called the Bridge program) revolves around building a skill development platform for the residents of Brenda Strafford Society for the prevention of domestic violence. The residents are the mothers/women who come out of a difficult relationship with their spouses/partners. The center provides them and their kids with a home for a certain duration and gives them time to become independent financially. As some moms are starting from scratch, hence it's quite hard for them to find a stable job. Moreover, they also need to get training to learn the skills for which they lack the finance, which puts them in a difficult position as they can't live in the center forever. My project aims to share the STEM (Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) based knowledge that graduate students learned in their degrees with the residents of the centre. This will help them to make STEM based career and can get financially stable.

To do that, the main task is to build a robust infrastructure as this project is based on the volunteering of students. When the students graduate, it should not have any effect on the program. Moreover, to make the Bridge program accessible, it is essential to have an online-based platform for the residents and the students to register. To achieve these objectives, the plan is to become a branch of existing student-run programs to get a head start. The next step would be to meet with prospective student-run programs and present the project to them. The project proposal has been presented to the center as well and they have been supportive of the idea.

One of the important lessons from this project is to observe different perspectives of a problem from a different angle. In the beginning, the focus was on the resident of the center. After the discussion with the mentors and the leaders of the WISE planet, it was realized that different stakeholders such as the graduate students and the center's administration should be a focus as well. This will help to build a stronger and more robust infrastructure for the center's residents to take advantage of the Bridge program.

WISE PLANET TEAM



DR. LALEH BEHJAT

Laleh Behjat, PhD, is a professor in the University of Calgary and the NSERC Chair for Women in Science and Engineering (Prairies). She is an advocate for women in science and engineering and is passionate about removing systematic barriers to their advancement. Dr. Behjat received several awards including the 2015 Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA) Women in Engineering Champion Award and the 2017 ASTech Leadership Excellence in Science and Technology Public Awareness Award.



JENNIFER VAN ZELM

Jennifer van Zelm has a master's in electrical engineering and has worked the last 15 years in strategy, advisory and leadership roles related to tech and innovation. Her experience includes working at a not-for-profit ICT research consortium, contracting for the Schulich School of Engineering to launch its diversity strategies, and being CEO of an e-health start-up. She is currently performing program management, network outreach and content development for WISE Planet.



STACIA THOMPSON MCCOY

Stacia McCoy earned her PhD in Civil and Environmental Engineering and Engineering and Public Policy from Carnegie Mellon University and her BSE in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Princeton University. Her work experience includes projects on drinking water quality, bioremediation of contaminated river sediments, water reuse classification, life cycle assessment of new technologies, and policy recommendations to address barriers for women engineers. She acted as a consultant for the UNESCO Engineering Initiative.



MATTHEW BARDSLEY

Matthew Bardsley is an award-winning communications professional with a diverse skill set informed by solid academic credentials. With undergraduate degrees in history and communications, and a technical diploma in journalism, Matthew understands the nuances of sharing complex stories and ideas with diverse audiences. Matthew specializes in distilling complex STEM-based content into broadly applicable, engaging stories.



LORENA SOLIS

Lorena is a PhD candidate at the University of Calgary in the Experimental Psychology (Concentration in I/O Psychology). Her dissertation focus is on the micro-event (e.g., microinequities) that unfold in interpersonal interactions and either reproduce or mitigate macro-level inequality in diverse contexts (e.g., organizations, teams, and dyadic relationships). Her research emphasizes the importance of placing demographic diversity through a sociohistorical context and intersectionality lens.



ROBYN PAUL

Robyn Paul is a PhD Candidate at the Schulich School of Engineering. Her work is looking at using best practices from ecofeminism to deconstruct the culture of engineering education and bring awareness to engineering's hidden curriculum. She is heavily involved in the community, particularly as an advocate for 2SLGBTQIA+ communities. She is Chair of the Gender and Sexuality Alliance of the Graduate Students' Association, and regularly facilitates workshops and panels to advocate for more inclusive classrooms.



ALISON BARRETT

Alison Barrett has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Victoria. As the Manager of Community and Social Impact at the Schulich School of Engineering, Alison is passionate about fostering an inclusive space in engineering for students, staff, and faculty. In particular, Alison enjoys working with current and prospective students to help inspire the next generation of change leaders in engineering.



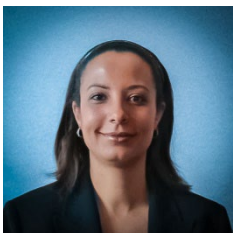
SHOKOUFEH MANOUCHEHR

Shokoufeh is an MSc in Biotechnology with an engineering background, over 14 years of combined industry and academic experience in analytical, physical, and chemical processes. She is currently managing the Canada Excellence Research Chair Laboratory. She is an active volunteer as a committee member of Diversity and Equity - Schulich School of Engineering is always her passion.



JASMINE MCDERMOTT

Jasmine is entering her final year of Mechanical Engineering with a minor in International Indigenous Studies at the University of Calgary. She co-chaired the Canadian Federation of Engineering Students' 2020 Conference on Diversity in Engineering. Her Indigenous ancestry is from Sawridge Cree First Nation, and she is the founder and President of the Calgary Indigenous STEAM Students' Association (CISSA). She is also a NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) recipient.



ANNE NDEGWA

Anne has a BSc from University of Waterloo and an MSc from University of Calgary, both in Civil Engineering. She was a Water/Wastewater Process Engineer for nearly 20 years working on municipal, water reuse/reclamation, and industrial projects. The majority of Anne's project work was with municipalities and consulting firms working on full-service water/wastewater projects across Canada.



“Promoting careers for women in the natural sciences and engineering is a priority for NSERC. We are committed to creating a more equitable, diverse and inclusive community by increasing the number of women in these fields and supporting programs like the WISE Planet Early Career Fellows that will nurture training and mentorship opportunities for women to become change leaders in STEM.”

Alejandro Adem

President, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada

“Imagine only being able to draw on a partial talent pool to build your team. You could never reach your full potential. That’s why the Calgary science centre is so pleased to support WISE Planet. So the planet can reach its full potential.”

Mary Anne Moser

President and CEO, TELUS Spark

~~Change is hard~~ **COMING**

PROGRAM SPONSORS



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