Letter from the Chair

Lorraine Finlay
Chair of CSWM and Professor, Department of Allied Health Sciences, Nassau Community College/University Medical Center

I look forward to greeting our visitors, friends, supporters, and members of the Committee on the Status of Women in Microbiology (CSWM) at the 2012 ASM General Meeting in San Francisco. Our Special Interest Session will be held on Sunday, June 17. Our open forum, held the following day, Monday, June 18, allows you the opportunity to voice your issues and concerns. Immediately following the forum is our reception, a wonderful social event that gives you a chance to meet new fellow microbiologists, network, and exchange ideas. At this reception, the recipient of the Alice C. Evans Award is acknowledged. Our committee administers this award, given to a scientist who has fostered the advancement of women in the field of Microbiology. Please look for the announcement of these events in this newsletter and please attend all of our events.

The CSWM is excited to offer something new this year at the ASM General Meeting. Experts on specific topics pertinent to women will be present at the CSWM display booth at designated time frames throughout the meeting. These experts will be available to answer your personal questions and provide information on such topics as negotiation, conflict resolution, and discrimination. The Women’s Health Program Manager of the National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Diseases, Tamara Lewis-Johnson, will be present on one day. Watch for these announcements! The CSWM display booth has been a source of pride for the CSWM and a permanent fixture at the ASM General Meeting for many years.

How are women in academia progressing in their careers? A 2012 issue of the National Education Association Higher Education Advocate has been published that lists the salary data on full time faculty in the nation’s public and private colleges and universities. The Advocate reports that women faculty members continue to earn less than men faculty in all sectors. The greatest disparity still continues to be at doctoral universities, where women’s salaries at public and private institutions are 80% and 78% of men’s salaries, respectively; these gaps have remained stubbornly unchanged for the past four years. Female faculty members continue to fare best at two-year institutions where women’s salaries are effectively equal to those of their male counterparts. Despite women’s salaries making little headway, the number of full-time women faculty members at public institutions has increased by 98% since 1989-1990, while the number of men increased by 10%. The share of women working full time at private institutions also has increased dramatically during this time, by 83%, compared with a 7% increase for men. Doctoral universities and community colleges have seen a net increase in women faculty of 189% and 81%, respectively! Women account
for 83% of the increase in the number of teaching faculty over the past 20 years (NEA Higher Education Advocate, Vol. 29, #2, 2012, Special Salary Issue). Unfortunately, the horizon ahead remains dark for institutions engaged in teaching. Impending funding cuts in the majority of states don’t bode well for faculty salaries or for the creation of full-time faculty jobs. According to the Advocate, with faculty salaries in public institutions tied closely to state funding, hard times in many states mean that salaries have stalled or declined in the face of the nation’s economic recession. Thirty states still face decreases in higher education appropriations for this year. Consequently, troubling trends around tamped-down faculty salaries, increased hiring of poorly paid part-time contingent faculty, increased teaching loads, and growing salary gaps between faculty at public and private institutions will likely continue. Nationally, the percentage of total state appropriations for higher education (including supplemental federal funding in the form of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act) decreased by 7.6% over the past fiscal year. Typically, when the nation experiences economic problems, institutions of higher education experience enrollment increases. Since 2008, the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students enrolled at public institutions rose by 8.1%. Despite increases in FTE enrollment, the number of full-time faculty members at public institutions increased by a mere 1%.

On a brighter note, there are significant initiatives on jump-starting the interest of girls interest in science, technology, engineering, and math, referred to as the STEM subjects, and boosting the percentage of women employed in science and engineering. A report of the Economics and Statistics Administration of the US Department of Commerce, “Women in STEM: A Gender Gap to Innovation,” states that although women fill close to half of all jobs in the US economy, they hold less than 25% of STEM jobs. In September 2011, the White House Council on Women, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, and the National Science Foundation announced the “NSF Career-Life Balance Initiative,” a ten-year plan to provide greater work-related flexibility to women and men in research careers. Researchers will be allowed to delay or suspend their NSF grants for up to one year in order to care for a newborn or newly adopted child or fulfill other family obligations; this will facilitate and maximize the reentry of scientists into their professions with minimal loss of momentum. On a further encouraging note, there are plenty of women interested in communicating with each other and with the CSWM within ASM. Please take a moment to visit us at our booth in San Francisco!

Lorraine Findlay, Ph.D.
Chair, CSWM

ALICE EVANS AWARD

Each year the CSWM recognizes one ASM member for contributions toward the full participation and advancement of women in microbiology. This award was established by the ASM’s Committee on the Status of Women in Microbiology, and is given in memory of Alice C. Evans, the first woman to be elected ASM President in 1928. The nominee can be any member of ASM who has made major contributions toward fostering the inclusion, development, and advancement of women in careers in microbiology. The nominee must demonstrate commitment to women in science through mentorship and advocacy and by setting an example through scientific and professional achievement.

This year, Micah I. Krichevsky, Ph.D., Chairman of Bionomics International, has been honored with the prestigious 2012 Roche Diagnostics Alice C. Evans Award. Dr. Krichevsky was nominated by Sara Rothman, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. Dr. Candace McManus, formerly of the FDA states that Dr. Krichevsky “has demonstrated his commitment to the full participation and advancement of women in science and microbiology through his service on and his contributing work with the ASM Committee on the Status of Women in Microbiology (CSWM) and by his unending willingness to encourage, advise, mentor and support individual women in their careers in microbiology.”

Dr. Krichevsky received his undergraduate degree at the University of Connecticut, Storrs, and his master’s and doctoral degrees in Dairy Science at the University of Illinois, Urbana. His research career at the National Institutes of Health, primarily at the National Institute for Dental Research, spanned 34 years, where he served as a Section Chief from 1967 until his retirement in 1992. He then established Bionomics International, a non-governmental organization that promotes sustainable development,
to protect the biosphere using biotechnology in countries with a low per capita income.

Dr. Krichevsky has worked in several areas of microbiological research as well as parallel activities in human rights in science. His major research interests have included computer and instrument methodology, and the growth, physiology and metabolism of bacteria of the oral cavity. He developed the first real-time computer analysis of chromatographic data, computer algorithms for double-label isotope composition calculations, and algorithms for real-time analysis of gas chromatograph/mass spectrometers. He also developed a standardized method for computer coding of microbiological phenotypic and macromolecular data for data entry, management, analysis and communication—the RKC Code. While computer independent, the Code can be coupled with the Microbial Information System (Micro-IS). The Micro-IS is constantly enhanced by taking advantage of modern computer programming techniques. The combination of the RKC Code and Micro-IS is used in various developed and developing countries.

Using his experience in acquiring and analyzing microbiological data, Krichevsky has developed extensive collaborations worldwide. He has organized and taught workshops and designed data banks for UNEP, UNIDO, ASM, SIM, NSF, and ICSU/CODATA.

“His sterling service on the NIH’s Equal Employment Opportunity Committee earned him the Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Equal Employment Opportunity Program of the NIH in 1976,” described Rothman. “During his service on that committee he advised and assisted numerous women in their efforts to achieve appropriate recognition and opportunities in an often hostile environment.” “Krichevsky worked tirelessly on as many as eight cases in one year to help female scientists facing illegal discrimination and unfair treatment in the nation’s foremost medical research institutes,” added Anne Morris Hooke, Miami University. He continues his activities in human rights in science with an emphasis on international activities. He has also served as a member of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women for the American Society of Biological Chemists. Currently he is an active consulting participant in CSWM programs.

Dr. Krichevsky continues to advise and support persons who feel they have been denied equal opportunity in the workplace. “I hold him in the highest esteem and believe he is a more than worthy candidate for this prestigious award,” summarizes Hooke. Dr. Krichevsky will be available for informal discussions with ASM members on the topic of “Coping with Discrimination at Work” at the CSWM booth on Monday, June 18 at 1:30 PM.

Other Events at asm2012

Meet the Experts
At the CSWM Booth #1612

The Committee on the Status of Women in Microbiology (CSWM) is adding a new feature to their booth. This year attendees can meet one-on-one with experts to discuss issues related to advancing their careers as women in science. Do you wish to learn, as applied specifically to your personal situation, to negotiate for salary or promotion, to solve conflicts at work, to deal with discrimination, or learn about opportunities at NIH? The CSWM booth #1612 is located in the Exhibit Hall near the Advance with ASM Booth.

Sunday, June 17
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Ericka B. Gray, President, DisputEd, Boston, MA
Topic: Negotiation and Conflict at Work

Monday, June 18
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Tamara Lewis Johnson, Manager, NIAID Women’s Health Program
Topic: Funding Opportunities at the National Institutes of Health

Monday, June 18
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Micah I. Krichevsky, Ph.D., Chairman, Bionomics International
Topic: Coping with Discrimination at Work
General Meeting Session

The Highway to Success for Women in Microbiology: Avoiding the Potholes and Roadblocks

This session, sponsored by the Committee on the Status of Women in Microbiology, will provide strategies to assist women to remain and advance in careers in microbiology. Women in large numbers still continue to leave careers in microbiology and the sciences in general, and women continue to encounter glass ceilings and be under-rewarded in professional environments. Topics will include: When and why women are lost from science careers; How to balance the building of a career while raising a family - what are the inherent problems and what is the best timing; How to prepare for promotion and advancement; How to negotiate for a salary - women can have different negotiation styles; How to resolve gender discrimination and harassment issues; How to gain assertiveness, assure proper acknowledgement, and resolve conflicts. All members of ASM can gain useful information from this session.

Speakers

Gender Equity Across Work Sectors: Common Challenges and Unique Stressors
Joan Herbers, President - Association for Women in Science (AWIS)

Beyond Bias and Barriers: Prospects for Women in Academic Science
Joan Steitz - Sterling Professor of Molecular Biochemistry at Yale Univ and Member of National Academy of Sciences Committee on Maximizing the Potential of Women in Academic Science and Engineering

Why Can’t a Woman Be More Like a Man? Does Subtle Bias Still Affect Women in STEM?
Joan C. Williams, Distinguished Professor of Law, Hastings Foundation Chair, Director Center for Worklife Law, Univ. of California

Strategic Negotiation for Women in Science
Ericka Gray, President, DisputEd, Boston, MA

How to Position Yourself For Advancement
Shirley Malcom, Head, Education and Human Resources, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)

Funding Opportunities

ASM Career Development Grants for Postdoctoral Women

The Career Development Grants for Postdoctoral Women (CDGPW) program, administered by the ASM Membership Board, awards up to three $1200 grants per year to postdoctoral women with outstanding scientific accomplishments and potential for significant research in the area of microbiology. The grants support the career development of the candidates by providing funds to travel to a meeting, visit a laboratory, take a course in a geographically distant place, or for other purposes to advance the candidates’ careers.

The CDGPW Committee is currently accepting applications for the 2013 grant program. Please check the ASM website for complete program policies and nomination procedures:


Submit grant nomination materials (Candidate Statement, CV, Nomination letter, additional Letter of Support) by email to Anne Dempsey at adempsey@asmusa.org or by mail to the address below. Copies are not required. All submissions must be dated no later than February 1st 2013.

(or go to http://www.asm.org/, click on “Membership,” then “Membership Board Grants”) or contact Anne Dempsey at ASM Headquarters (adempsey@asmusa.org).

Recipients of the 2012 Career Development Grants for Postdoctoral Women will be presented during the CSWM Reception, Monday at 4:30 PM.

Volunteer Opportunities

The Committee on the Status of Women in Microbiology (CSWM) invites attendees at the 2012 ASM General Meeting in San Francisco to become Ad Hoc Volunteers.

Ad Hoc Volunteers assist at the general meeting by distributing information at CSWM events and staffing the CSWM booth for a period of time that fits your meeting itinerary. It’s a great opportunity to add committee service to your C.V. Ask any committee member at the CSWM booth or at CSWM events at the general meeting, or visit our webpage http://www.asm.org/cswm. Booth hours are Sunday, June 17 and Monday, June 18 10:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and on Tuesday, June 19, 10:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

E-mail publicaffairs@asmusa.org to volunteer.