Women in Physiology Committee

Bodil Schmidt-Nielsen Distinguished Mentor and Scientist Award
Ten excellent nominations were received for the 2013 Bodil Schmidt-Nielsen Distinguished Mentor and Scientist award. The Women in Physiology (WIP) Committee selected Jerome E. Dempsey, University of Wisconsin, Madison, as the awardee. At the award lecture and reception, Dempsey gave a talk on mentoring, entitled, “Mentoring through Teamwork: Lessons Learned.” An article based on his lecture was published in the July issue of The Physiologist, and the multimedia presentation will be posted on the APS web site.

APS Professional Opportunity Awards: Caroline tum Suden/ Frances Hellebrandt, Steven M. Horvath, Fleur L. Strand, and Gabor Kaley Awards
The WIP Committee received 154 applications for the 2013 tum Suden Professional Opportunity Awards, which is 21% higher than the number of applications received in 2012. The Committee was able to fund 36 tum Suden Awards, two Horvath Awards (given to the top two underrepresented minority applicants), one Strand Award (given to the top applicant) and two Kaley Awards for a total of 41 awards (27% of applicant pool). The Kaley Awards will not be available in 2014; the funding will provide for a lecture instead, at the request of the family.

MentorNet Mentoring Program
The Committee launched the APS MentorNet collaboration in October 2007. MentorNet continues to need both mentors and mentees from APS. The Committee continues to recruit students and mentors, and is making active efforts to spread the word about the benefits of MentorNet to APS members.

Experimental Biology Mentoring Workshop
For EB 2013, the workshop was entitled, “The Changing Face of Tenure.” The workshop was held on Wednesday, April 24. The workshop was not as highly attended as in previous years and the Committee will investigate the reasons for the lower attendance at this workshop, in an attempt to remedy this in future years. However, attendees noted on their evaluation forms that the low attendance was due to timing, i.e. on the last day of EB and late in the afternoon, prior to travel.

For EB 2014, workshop organizers Caroline Appleyard and Maria Urso will co-chair a session on “Leadership Skills.” The workshop topics will include why are leadership skills important; how does one obtain leadership skills (at one’s institution or through a special program); and how does one demonstrate leadership skills on his/her CV.

Representation of Women in APS and Scientific Community Leadership
One of the charges of the WIP Committee is to support advancement of women in APS and in the scientific community at large. The WIP Committee annually reviews the number of women serving on APS Committees and Section Steering Committees.

In reviewing the membership of the APS section advisory committee (SAC) and other Society committees, the Committee found that the representation of women on the APS committees continues to be very good. The WIP Committee commends the Committee on Committees for its
ongoing attention to gender diversity when making committee appointments. The WIP Committee is also pleased to note that, in 2013-2014, the APS Council has four women members out of nine (45%) as well as women in both the Past President and President positions. Overall, six (50%) of the 12 elected members of Council are women. The Committee believes this continues to reflect the increasing role of women in the Society as a whole and especially in both Section and Committee leadership positions which provide important visibility and service opportunities.

Development of a Women’s Listserv/Facebook Page
The WIP Committee has developed a Facebook page, which launched on June 10, 2013. The specific goals of this page are to share information that is relevant to the mission of the WIP Committee, including content on women in physiology and gender issues in science, promotion of physiology to early-career scientists, and mentoring. The direct link the page is the following: https://www.facebook.com/pages/APS-Women-in-Physiology-Committee/163131533858252?fref=ts.

The WIP Committee continues to work to promote women within the Society and the scientific community and to provide mentoring for early-career investigators and trainees. We look forward to additional involvement in new APS programs and activities, and we will strive to remain active instrumental in the implementation of the New Strategic Plan developed by Council.