Bodil M. Schmidt-Nielsen Distinguished Mentor and Scientist Award
Nine excellent nominations were received for the 2018 Bodil M. Schmidt-Nielsen Distinguished Mentor and Scientist Award. The WIP Committee selected Dr. Merry Lindsey, Professor and Director, Mississippi Center for Heart Research, Department of Physiology and Biophysics, University of Mississippi Medical Center, as the awardee. During the Experimental Biology meeting, Dr. Lindsey gave an outstanding talk, providing “The Flight Safety Briefing for Your Career,” an overview of her best tips on mentoring that she has developed over her prestigious career. The slide presentation from Dr. Lindsey’s presentation will be posted on the APS website.

APS Professional Opportunity Awards: Caroline tum Suden/ Frances Hellebrandt, Steven M. Horvath, and Fleur L. Strand Awards
The WIP Committee received 95 complete and eligible applications for the 2018 tum Suden Professional Opportunity Awards, which is exactly the same as the number of applications in 2017 (95) but less than those received in 2016 (117). The Committee was able to fund 50 tum Suden Awards, 2 Horvath Awards (awarded to the top two URM applicants), and 1 Strand Award (awarded to the top overall applicant) for an overall funding rate of 56% (53 awards in total).

Mentoring Programs

Mentoring Forum

Over the past 12 months, the WIP Committee has coordinated the development of 6 new Mentoring Forum columns published in The Physiologist. These columns cover a wide range of topics, from retirement and career change to “alternative” careers, recruiting students to a new lab and tips for aspiring physician-scientists. Each article has related bulletin board discussion topics at the mentoring website and on LifeSciTRC.

Online Mentoring Programs

The WIP Committee continues to provide information about MentorNet on the APS website, and the APS is also a Scientific & Professional Society partner with the National Research Mentoring Network (NRMN) (https://nrmnet.net/), which provides comprehensive mentoring services for APS members, including a “Virtual Mentoring Program”, similar to the MentorNet approach. A variety of mentoring resources are also available on the APS website under the “Career Development & Mentoring” link. During the 2017 Fall Meeting, the WIP Committee continued to explore a number of innovative options that would provide much needed mentoring experiences across career stages, without incurring the logistical and fiscal expenses of establishing and maintaining a formal mentoring program. The WIP Committee plans to establish an APS Connect Community for women in physiology and discussion about other initiatives are ongoing.

WIP Committee Facebook Page
The WIP Committee has a very active Facebook page, with 712 “likes”, and many posts reaching more than 300 views. The specific goals of this page are to share information that is relevant to the mission of the WIP Committee with both men and women, including content on gender issues in science, promotion of physiology to early career scientists, and mentoring. Please visit and “Like” the WIPC Committee Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/APS.WIPC.
Experimental Biology Mentoring Workshop
The EB 2018 workshop was entitled, “Recognizing and Responding to Implicit Bias in Science.” The workshop was held during the new “Trainee Hour” over three days (Sunday – Tuesday) from 7:00am – 8:00am. Given that this was the first year of the change in format for the symposia, attendance was understandably lower than the previous years with 35, 40 and 25 participants on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday respectively, compared to the 125 participants at the 2017 Mentoring Workshop. Seventy-one attendees completed a survey, with several attendees having attended the sessions on multiple days. Based upon these responses, the audience was primarily made up of trainees (undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows); however, there was a wide range of audience members, including junior and established investigators. The speaker presentations received very high ratings (average of 4.3 out of 5.0), and the subsequent 5-10 minute question and answer period resulted in an informative and lively dialogue between the speakers and audience members.

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. Of the members who include gender in their membership profile (n=6,311), women currently comprise 33% of the APS membership [29% of the regular membership (n=5,158), 47% of the graduate student membership (n=932) and 63% of the undergraduate student membership (n=221)]. These numbers are consistent with those from last year.

In reviewing the membership of the APS Section Advisory Committee (SAC) and other Society committees, we found that the representation of women on the general Society committees continues to be good. The WIP Committee commends the Committee on Committees for its ongoing attention to diversity on APS appointed committee positions. The Committee notes, however, that in 2018, the APS Council has 3 women out of 9 elected regular members (33%; down from 44% in 2017) in addition to 1 woman in the Past-President position. Thus, overall, 4 (33%) of the 12 elected members of Council are women. While this is lower than in 2017, the Committee feels that this reflects the overall distribution of women in the Society as a whole, but that it could be improved. In 2018, the SAC also has 4 women representatives out of 14 (29%), which is also lower than in 2017 (31%); we continue encouraging all Sections to involve women in their leadership positions, particularly as Section chairs.

In reviewing the Section Steering Committees, we found a higher proportion of women compared to last year (43% compared to 38% in 2017). In 2017, there were 3 Sections that had Steering Committees where less than 25% of the members are women and this has improved in 2018 such that all but one Section (EEP) now has more than 30% of women members. We are also pleased to report that 3 out of the 12 Sections now have Steering Committees where at least 50% of the members are women. In 2017, 20 out of 22 APS Committees were comprised of at least 25% women members; however, this has dropped in 2018 such as only 18 out of 22 Committees now meet this benchmark. Women are also Chairs of 10 of these APS Committees (45%), which is a noticeable increase over 32% from 2017. The WIP Committee encourages the Committee on Committees and the Section Steering Committees to continue their efforts to identify and select women members for APS Committees.

Historically, there have been very few women selected for the major APS awards. At EB 2017, only 2 of the 15 (13%) Distinguished Lectures were given by women. While this is more than the single lecture in 2017, this is down from 3 lectures in 2016 and 6 lectures in 2015. The Committee continues to strongly encourage Sections to include women on their slate of candidates for their Distinguished Lectureships in the future.

Concluding Remarks
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 are also working to specifically address the mentoring needs of LGBTQ scientists. We look forward to additional involvement in new APS programs and activities, and we will strive to remain instrumental in the implementation of the New Strategic Plan developed by Council.