

# CWSE-Prairies Newsletter

January 2014  
Volume 3 Issue 1



*The goal of the  
NSERC CWSE – Prairies*

*is to develop and successfully lead  
strategic activities that promote  
greater opportunities for women,  
particularly Aboriginal women, in  
science and engineering across the  
Prairie Region.*



## **Gender Summit 3 North America – Diversity Fuelling Excellence in Research and Innovation**

Established in 2011, the Gender Summit has become an annual event, attracting researchers, policy makers and other stakeholders in STEM to discuss the importance of gender equity in research and innovation. Over 500 delegates attended the 2013 Gender Summit in Washington, D.C., November 13 – 15.

Annemieke Farenhorst along with the other National Science and Engineering Research Council Chairs for Women in Science and Engineering (NSERC – CWSE) presented in various sessions on their activities focusing on advancing equity for women in the science in engineering professions.

NSERC CWSE-Prairies sponsored three people so they could attend: Jenna Rapai (Soil Science) and Selena Randall (Soil Science) from the University of Manitoba, and Laleh Behjeet (Electrical Engineering) from the University of Calgary.



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## CWSE (Prairies) Hosts Leadership Workshop for Women in SETT

In one of our surveys, which included female graduate students and professors at the University of Manitoba, a majority of respondents (78%) indicated that women have fewer opportunities than men to become leaders. Thus, providing women with networks and strategies of leadership development can improve career opportunities for women.

On December 11, 2013, CWSE (Prairies) hosted a workshop on *Becoming Leaders: An Introduction to Leadership Skills and Strategies for women in science, engineering, technology, and trades (SETT)*. Over 25 women from diverse cultural and professional backgrounds attended the workshop which was held at the University of Manitoba.

This professional development workshop was delivered by the Canadian Centre for Women in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology (WinSETT Centre: [winsett.ca](http://winsett.ca)). CWSE (Prairies) would like to thank the WinSETT Centre, particularly facilitators Edna Dach and Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour whose efforts were essential to the success of the workshop. Also, a special thank you to Dr. Karin Wittenberg and Dr. Christine Wu for sharing their life experiences with the participants.



This workshop would not have been possible without the financial support of the Faculties of Agriculture and Food Sciences, Engineering, Environment, Earth and Resources, and Science as well as the Office of the Vice-Provost (Academic Affairs). Many thanks.

### **Feedback from some of the participants attending the workshop:**

*"Thank you for today and in helping me to gain a better understanding of what qualities make a good leader. The exercises were helpful for getting me thinking about what skill I already have and about where I want to go with my life."*

*"Excellent across the board. Margaret-Ann & Edna were energetic & engaging. The two speakers both brought a personal perspective to challenges faced & life decisions - fantastic!"*





## See Yourself at the University of Manitoba – Connecting to Northern Communities.

When Jen Storm first started her job as the University of Manitoba's Aboriginal Student Recruitment Officer, she quickly realized that many of the northern Manitoba communities were difficult to connect to because of their remote locations. But, through her efforts, those connections between the University and northern communities have been greatly improved. For example, she was responsible for creating an innovative student recruitment video that was made possible by funding from the NSERC CWSE (prairies) program.

When Jen Storm and Annemieke Farenhorst were planning the video, they recognized the need to show youth in northern Manitoba what it would be like to study at the University of Manitoba, but they also recognized the challenges of reaching those youth as not everyone has an internet connection. A goal of the video was to make it available to students no matter where they lived. Thus, in addition to the video being posted on the popular University of Manitoba Youtube channel for students to view, it will also be distributed to students in northern communities via USB sticks.

When asked about the video, Jen Storm said: *"We focused on showcasing the U of M where there are many Aboriginal students already enrolled in a range of programs but not necessarily in science fields. In the video we show that science programs can be fun, but we also promote a wide range of other programs on campus, including support programs for Aboriginal students"*.

It took about a year to produce the rough cut, and then another four months to edit. Jen Storm really enjoyed the planning and creativity in doing something this original and important. She stated that it was not only important to have the right students appear in the video, but the video had to have the right look and feel. *"I really embraced sharing my creativity with other people. It felt good to work with the numerous students and staff appearing in the video. It was a great learning experience"*, Jen Storm said. Click on the link below to access the full video.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QssI3LRog4>



### Hot Shot Profs.

On October 22, 2013, Dr. Annemieke Farenhorst was named one of The Globe and Mail's "Hot Shot Profs" recognizing her outstanding talents and contributions at the University of Manitoba.

The Globe and Mail uses information gathered from professors, alumni and the universities themselves, to rank almost 60 universities based on their strengths and weaknesses. The ranking was also based on interviews with students that asked questions such as what is their university's culture like, what are their fellow students like, and how well is their university preparing them for the job market.

The University Profiles can be found in the 2014 Canadian University Report of the Globe and Mail.

### More Women Needed in STEM Fields: Interview With CJOB



PhD student, Jenna Rapai and member of the CWSE (Prairies) team, participated in a CJOB interview on December 18, 2013 with host Dahlia Kurtz.

They discussed the need to attract more women to STEM fields.

Congratulations to Jenna Rapai for stealing the show! Sounds like she may have missed her calling.

## CWSE (Prairies) Chair Receives U of M Outreach Award

On November 13, 2013 Dr. Annemieke Farenhorst and her team received a University of Manitoba Outreach Award for her outstanding efforts.

Engaging numerous of participants through workshops as well as her accomplishments to build strong partnerships with other Universities and First Nation communities as part of the newly established H2O CREATE program, were some of the reasons Annemieke Farenhorst and her team earned the award.

Accepting on behalf of Dr. Annemieke Farenhorst was CWSE Program Coordinator, Jackie Onagi (sitting second on the left).



## The CWSE - Prairies Team



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<http://www.ccwestt2014.ca/>