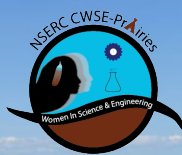


CWSE-Prairies Newsletter

December 2017
Volume 6 Issue 3



The goal of the NSERC CWSE - Prairies

is to develop and support strategic activities that promote greater opportunities for women, particularly Indigenous women, in science and engineering across the Prairie Region.



A New Mentorship Program for Women in Agriculture

2017 was the inaugural year for a new mentorship program for women in agriculture. The Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS) Mentorship program matches mentors with students in a 2:1 ratio - a structure that increases the breadth of experiential learning for students. With 40 mentors and 20 mentees participating, the program strengthens women's networks and knowledge exchanges in agricultural fields, and helps students in their career development.

The program hosts four formal events per year, but is flexible in that mentees and mentors also meet at other times. *"Mentorship can really be what you make of it – it's proof that you get what you give. We have become a great group of unique strength that supports each other,"* said one mentor. Mentoring relationships are an important way of gaining knowledge from a more experienced individual and can often lead to increased achievement of career goals and more professional connections. *"This program has given me more confidence and greater clarity on my career, school and personal plans,"* said one mentee.



"Mentorship can really be what you make of it - it's proof that you get what you give"

A New Face at CWSE-Prairies

The CWSE team and Faculty of Engineering welcome Mahalia Lepage as the new CWSE-Prairies / WISE Kid-Netic Energy Program Coordinator.

Mahalia graduated from the University of Manitoba in 2016 with her B.Sc. in Genetics and Biochemistry. She is picking up from Lena Yusim, who has gone on to pursue her master's at OCAD University in Toronto.

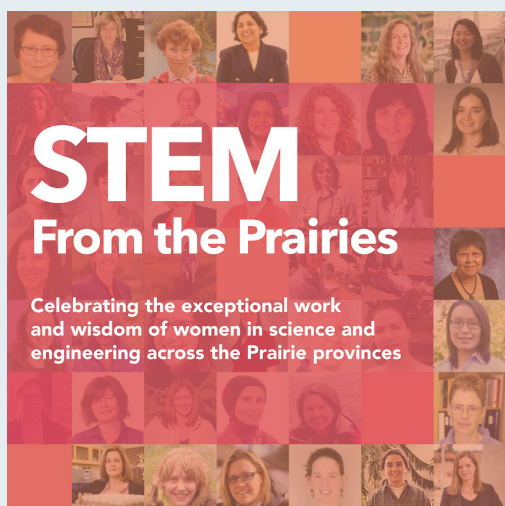


Siobhan Maas, a Prairies CWSE team member and FAFS alumna, coordinates the mentorship program. For more information about the program or to sign up as a mentee or mentor in its next cycle (2018/19), please contact siobhan.maas@umanitoba.ca.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

2. Sharing Research that STEMs from the Prairies ICAN-WISE Learning Reaches School Classrooms
3. Announcing a New Video Series - House of Women Scientists WISE Kid-Netic Energy 'Meets a Scientist'
4. Gender Advocates Gather at GS11 Innovation and the Future of Canada Summit

Sharing Research that STEMs from the Prairies



STEM from the Prairies (#STEMfromPrairies) is an online campaign sharing the vibrancy and diversity of women academics in science and engineering units across universities in the Prairie Region.

"Examples of amazing women need to be shared more often and more deliberately"

The Prairie NSERC CWSE team interviewed over 80 professors at universities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta on topics related to their research, how they support diversity within their field, and advice for encouraging the next generation of scientists. Profiles of their answers are intended to be used as tools for students looking for academic mentors, as well as inspiring examples of current STEM researchers and research topics.

Ten universities are involved in this project. *"Examples of amazing women need to be shared more often and more deliberately so that girls never question whether or not they can pursue careers in science and engineering."* said Dr. Dena McMartin, Director of Research Services and Assistant Vice-President Research University of Saskatchewan. Dr. McMartin is a Professor of Environmental Engineering and is one of the many women participating in the profiles featured with #STEMfromPrairies.

If you are interested in having your profile featured on the CWSE-Prairies website and twitter, please reach out! Contact mahalia.lepage@umanitoba.ca for further information.



WISE Kid-Netic Energy 'Meets a Scientist'

On November 18th, 2017, members of the WISE Kid-Netic Energy Girl's Club got a special look inside the research labs at the University of Manitoba for their 'Meet a Scientist' event. Five labs from biological sciences, microbiology, physics, and environmental science visited with the girls to share examples of what a scientist's work looks like, and to let them meet real-life scientists.

The Girls Club is a program that is coordinated by the Prairie NSERC CWSE team member Mahalia Lepage. The program runs on Saturdays throughout the school year, and gives girls in grades 3-8 a chance to learn about different areas of science or engineering each week. Participants are given opportunities to voice their own ideas about what topics they would like to explore, and the 'Meet a Scientist' event came about in response to the interests of this year's members. Girls Club wrapped up for the fall term on November 25th, but will be back in action in the spring, with more talks, visits, tours, and activities.

One of the Girls Club participants was particularly excited about learning about nanomagnetism at her visit to Dr. Johan von Lierop's Physics lab. *"The material may have been 'Nano small', but the experience was much bigger!"*, she said.



Announcing a New Video Series - House of Women Scientists

The Prairie NSERC CWSE team is excited to announce the release of their new series of videos: House of Women Scientists! The video series celebrates the research of women who are undergraduate or graduate students in science and also highlights ways in which these students have experienced changes in their lives.

Each video centers around the experiences of a different student, and gives voice to her identity, uncertainty, transition, and growth while progressing in her career. While each experience is unique - from one student being the first in her family to pursue higher education abroad to another student choosing to become a mother while enrolled in a Ph.D. program - all videos have in common the resilience, adaptability and passion for science that all students share.

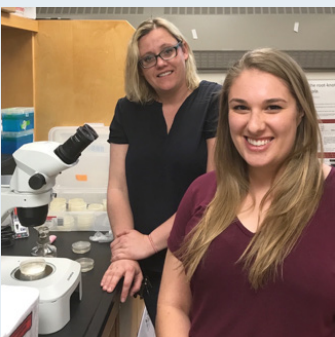
The videos are all available to view on the CWSE-Prairies website so please check out the inspiration videos of students Taylor Morriseau, Amarawansa Eragoda Arachchilage, Anita Murdock, Sirajum Munira, and Marufa Fatema at <http://cwse-prairies.ca/pages/videos/videos.html>



ICAN-WISE Learning Reaches School Classrooms

ICAN-WISE is the Integrated Collaborative Academic Network for Women in Science and Engineering. Through the ICAN-WISE scholarship program in 2017, six undergraduate students from across the Prairies each had the opportunity to spend their summer working with their academic role model on a science or engineering research project. They documented their research experiences through photo blog and prepared presentations about their research findings. *"Many people imagine scientific research to be limited to white coats and laboratories, and while that will be a major component of our project as well, I've been enjoying working outside (with my part-time canine research assistant) in beautiful surroundings, collecting data and executing the field trial"* said ICAN-WISE Scholarship recipient Taryn Goff.

This fall, the six winners took their presentations to the broader community and presented on their research results at local schools in their home provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. Classes ranged from elementary to high school. *"The students were very engaged and had lots of questions about both my project and geomatics engineering. Dr. Shahbazi and I have been asked to present at three more affiliated schools"* said ICAN-WISE Scholarship recipient Morgan Moe. Morgan Moe is an undergraduate student in Geomatics Engineering at the University of Calgary. Other ICAN-WISE Scholarship recipients were Candace Toner (Geology, Mount Royal University), Amanda Ronnquist (Environmental Earth Science, University of Saskatchewan), Taryn Goff (Horticulture Science, University of Saskatchewan), Tinsley Douglas (Genetics, University of Manitoba), and Sachi Villanueva (Science, Brandon University).



Gender Advocates Gather at GS11

From November 6-8, 2017, the five Chairs for Women in Science and Engineering were at the 11th North American Gender Summit in Montreal where they joined academic scholars, policymakers, industry leaders, and other advocates for gender equality in science and engineering fields. With a theme of "Embracing Pluralism and Thriving through Diversity", the summit provided a venue for over 675 participants to discuss topics related to equity, diversity and inclusion within research and innovation, and to develop attainable actions for influencing positive change.

The Gender Summit 11 North America 2017 was co-hosted by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and the Fonds de recherche du Québec, in collaboration with Portia Ltd from the UK. A big thank you to all the organizers and participants that made the Gender Summit a great success!



Innovation and the Future of Canada Summit

The Innovation and the Future of Canada Summit was held on November 16, 2017 and brought together senior executives, entrepreneurs, scientists, public policy makers, and leaders from eight of Canada's prominent business schools. About 200 participants were at the event and these engaged with expert panelists for discussions on global competition, changing demographics, and innovation.

Dr. Farenhorst was an invited panelist to speak to the topic "Balancing Inclusive Growth and Sustainability", which was chaired by former Toronto mayor David Miller who is now the North American Director of C40 Cities. Dr. Farenhorst advocated for greater inclusion of women and Indigenous peoples as leaders in securing Canada's future prosperity.



A full list of the agenda and speakers can be found at innovationsummit.mcmaster.ca

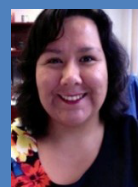
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