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Sigma Delta Epsilon-Graduate Women in Science

December 2012

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Hello Omega Chapter Members,



The hustle and bustle of the holidays are here! This time of year brings extra commitments and obligations on top of our regular "life loads". However, you need to make time to do something for yourself this holiday season. I suggest you start by [renewing your membership in SDE-GWIS](#) so you can continue to reap the rewards!

Benefits of SDE-GWIS Membership:

- * Meet other women scientists with diverse backgrounds and interests at local chapter events (or, in our case, through chapter projects) and at the national meeting.
- * Obtain financial assistance in the form of highly competitive SDE-GWIS fellowships and grants, which are awarded annually for research and travel to scientific meetings.
- * Develop leadership and team-building skills, which are essential in today's workplace.
- * Gain insight into balancing personal and professional life.
- * Receive *The Bulletin*, our printed national newsletter, published triannually, which highlights the activities of chapters, individual members, our history, fellowships winners, etc.
- * Receive *GWIS News*, our national monthly e-newsletter, which contains the latest news about jobs, internships, fellowship opportunities and grant deadlines, and the activities of chapters and members.
- * Receive *Mega Bits*, the Omega chapter monthly e-newsletter, which highlights Omega chapter members, SDE-GWIS volunteer opportunities and other organization news, and science-related articles and events of potential interest to our chapter members.
- * Receive our national Membership Directory containing the contact information for almost 1000 members in diverse scientific disciplines.

Memberships expired on 6/30/2012. Currently 68% of our chapter

This is What a Scientist Looks Like!

Needed: Photos of anything and everything that highlights all of our "non-science" interests and talents: photos of you playing with your kids or dogs, you dancing around your house, doing yoga, baking, shopping, gardening, hiking--whatever makes you, YOU!

Please send your submission by clicking [here](#), including a 1-sentence caption with your name, chapter affiliation, what you are doing, and when it occurred. Photos will be published in future issues of *The Bulletin* (see previous Bulletins for examples or [contact the editor](#)). Let us break those scientist stereotypes and get to know one another in the process!

Volunteers Needed to Help with *The Bulletin* and this e-Newsletter

Want to learn desktop publishing and email marketing--skills that look good on any CV or résumé?! We need writers and copyeditors to help produce the SDE-GWIS *Bulletin* (published three times per year) and the Omega Chapter e-newsletter (published monthly).

We are currently updating our files, so even if you have previously expressed an interest, please re-send your name to the editor, Dr. Melanie McEwen, by clicking [here](#).

Volunteers Needed to Help with Fellowships

Get involved in SDE-GWIS, either as a Fellowships Committee Member or as a reviewer for the Fellowships Applications. Click [here](#) to contact Dr. Laurie Cook, Fellowships Coordinator, by December 15th, for more information.

members are at risk for being dropped from all future SDE-GWIS communications (non-renewing members will be dropped very soon). I hope you will [renew today](#) so that you do not miss out on anything! If you are not sure about the status of your membership, please feel free to contact Renee Berry, our national Membership Secretary, by clicking [here](#).

I also strongly encourage you to get involved in SDE-GWIS (see opportunities mentioned in this e-newsletter). I joined SDE-GWIS in 2002 but "lurked" for several years, never really benefiting from my membership until I actually became involved at the national and chapter levels, first as *The Bulletin* editor and then as Omega Chapter Liaison and Omega e-newsletter editor. As a result, I have met many wonderful women scientists through email communication, web teleconference, and at our national meetings in June, not only increasing my professional network but also increasing my circle of friends. I have even increased my skill set by learning desktop publishing, email marketing, and website design. The old adage, "[the more you put into something, the more you get out of it](#)" is so true! I hope you will think about not only renewing your membership but also getting involved. Start slow and see how it goes. I think you will be happily surprised! And, please [let me know](#) if there is anything I can do to help. Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,

Melanie L. McEwen, PhD
National Omega Chapter Liaison

Our Newest Members

Please help us welcome the following members who joined Omega Chapter during the past month:

Feana Francis; Little Rock, AR
Dr. Alice Ortman; Dauphin Island, AL
Sarah Vorpahl; Seattle, WA
Mrinalini Watsa; location unavailable

Featured Omega Member of the Month

Unfortunately, no one volunteered to be the Featured Member of the Month. If you would like to be featured in January (or any month), please request the biosketch template by clicking [here](#). The biosketch and headshot are due by the 21st of the present month to be featured the following month. The biosketch is very brief, so we hope everyone will eventually participate!

Brain Teaser of the Month



A stereogram is a picture within a picture. Click [here](#) to check out several! Let your eyes "blur" when looking at these images, and a 3D object will soon appear in the center.

Stereograms are good for relieving eye strain and therefore preventing the often-associated headaches! Find out why (and see four more stereograms) by clicking [here](#).

Info Needed for Omega Chapter Website

Have you won any awards, published a manuscript, gotten a grant funded in the past year? Send us the details and we will place it on the Omega Chapter website as a way to promote the accomplishments of women in science. Send your questions or contributions by clicking [here](#).

Omega Chapter is Growing!

We currently have 237 members spread across the United States as well as Canada, Ghana, Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Japan, Madagascar, Argentina, Italy, England, and Nigeria.

Science Faculty Not Immune from Gender Bias

by Melanie L. McEwen, PhD

Despite discussions and increasing efforts to recruit and retain more women in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields, the gender gap persists. However, recent research suggests that there may actually be an early career gender bias against female students among science faculty--including both male and female faculty members--that could contribute to the gender disparity.

Yale University researchers recently asked 127 scientists to review the job applications of identically qualified male and female students (the same application was randomly assigned as male or a female when given to the faculty members), and the researchers found that both male and female faculty members consistently scored the male candidates higher on competency, they were more likely to hire the male candidate, they were willing to pay him \$4000 more than the female candidate, and faculty members were more willing to provide mentoring to the male candidate. The results were recently published in the October 9, 2012, issue of the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, and the full article can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

I Got a Job Offer! Now What?

by Alli Coffin, PhD

In my previous articles we have looked at the different stages of the academic job application process: the application package and the on-campus job interview. In this final piece we will discuss the most fun, but also perhaps the most nerve-wracking, portion of landing an academic job: negotiating your offer.

When you are exhausted from the search and interview process and thrilled to have an offer, it is easy to accept the initial terms from the university. Do not sign just yet! Your offer letter is your official contract with your new institution and it is critical to get everything they promised you in writing. For a tenure-track position in scientific fields, your offer letter should contain the following (at a minimum):

- Starting salary: base salary, 9 or 12 month?
- Benefits package
- Start-up funding to set up your lab, including the dollar amount and how long you have to spend it
- Lab space allocation: what building, how much space? Do you get an animal facility? Access to special equipment?
- Teaching load, in terms of courses/credits per term or per year. Is there a summer teaching option? Is it required?
- Tenure deadline and requirements. These are often not explicitly spelled out, but rough tenure requirements should be listed.

Many schools offer additional incentives, such as course release for your first semester, or a small annual travel budget. If these are offered they should be included in your contract letter.

SDE-GWIS Membership Directory Now Online

Do not forget, you can now access our Membership Directory online. Simply go to the SDE-GWIS home page, click the Membership Directory link in the right-hand sidebar, and enter the username and password. If you do not know the login information, please contact Dr. Laura Ramsey, Omega Chapter President, by clicking [here](#).

Suggestion Box

Do you have any questions about Omega Chapter or national SDE-GWIS? Do you have suggestions for fostering or enhancing interactions among Omega members or strengthening the presence of Omega Chapter within the national organization? We want to hear from you! Please send us any and all suggestions by clicking [here](#).

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Follow the first rule of negotiating: Ask for what you want! Almost everything on the list is negotiable. If you need more lab space or funds to support a graduate student, ask. Requests that are "in line" with institutional norms will likely be considered. [The Chronicles of Higher Education](#) has a great piece on job offer negotiations, including all of the things you can negotiate for, and how to pick those that are most important to you.

In my opinion you should always ask for more salary, as all future salary increases are proportional to your starting salary. Many women are uncomfortable negotiating for salary and other monetary items, but we are at a disadvantage if we do not do it! The Chronicles has a great [first-hand story](#) about academic salary negotiations for women, which I think every woman should read. [The American Chemical Society](#) also has a great article, including what other items to ask for in addition to, or in lieu of, a higher annual salary, such as moving expenses or summer salary. Do not be greedy, but do not sell yourself short. Good luck negotiating!

Stay happy and healthy, and we will "see" you in January.

Sincerely,

Dr. Laura Ramsey, Omega Chapter President and National Omega Committee Chair

Dr. Allison Coffin, National Omega Committee Member

Harmony Hancock, National Omega Committee Member

Dr. Melanie McEwen, National Omega Chapter Liaison, Omega E-Newsletter Editor, and *Bulletin* Editor

"United in Friendship through Science."

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