



## Welcome From the Editor

Greetings!

Now that the dog days of summer are winding down, sfAWIS is kicking into gear once again. We have some exciting events coming up that we hope will be as valuable and enjoyable as ever. I hope you'll be able to join us for a career event at Amgen on September 16, when Dr. Nathalie Dubois-Stringfellow will speak about career goals and achievements. In October, we'll be holding our bimonthly networking social at the UCSF Pub—always a great opportunity for learning and networking! We have many more events listed in the calendar on the final page of this newsletter. Please check them out and find the ones of interest to you!

sfAWIS held board elections in May. After taking over for Joleen White last fall, our indefatigable president Edi Alvarez has stepped down and Anita Joubel has taken on the task. Melissa Erickson continues to serve as our secretary and is also taking on the job of treasurer. Amy Borchard was

elected as our vice-president. We look forward to a great season with our new leadership!

This issue offers some resources, both about careers (from Jennifer Petoff, on page 2) and science-related online tools (from Mary Lim, on page 2). Jennifer and Mary offer some great insights about job-hunting and using tools effectively.

We have noted some volunteer opportunities in this issue as well, on page 3. Mozilla is sponsoring a week-long volunteer drive to encourage techies and scientists to contribute to the community, and Expanding Your Horizons is conducting a workshop to encourage girls' participation in math and science.

If you missed our May event at Genentech, a recap is on page 4. We heard from two amazing scientists conducting research in women's public health. As always, you can learn about how to get involved and upcoming events on the final page.

Happy Reading!

Elena Strange

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## Conducting a Job Search? Give Yourself an Information Edge

*Jennifer Petoff, PhD*

The economic downturn guarantees that more people are competing for each available job opportunity. It is more important than ever to differentiate yourself from other candidates. Technology tools can give you a significant information edge over the competition. Many articles emphasize the importance of networking in helping job seekers obtain an interview. Once you obtain an interview, you have one chance to translate the opportunity into a job offer. Do your homework to increase your chances of landing the position.

Learn as much as you can about the company. Arm yourself with information to showcase that you are interested, motivated, and proactive.

Use tools like Google Finance, Yahoo! Finance, or Hoover's Online to answer questions such as:

- Is the company getting into any new businesses?
- Has the company signed any major partnership deals?
- Who are the key competitors?

Check news-focused websites and set-up email alerts using a tool like Google Alerts to keep your knowledge current in the days/weeks leading up to your interview. Activate email alerts for competitors to keep a pulse on the industry.

Use resources like Google Scholar and Google Patent Search to educate yourself about the technology interests of the company. Investigate the expertise of specific individuals you'll be interviewing with. Work this information into the conversation during the interview. Scientists love to talk about their research and will typically be flattered that you took the time to learn more about their work. If you don't know who you'll be interviewing with, don't be shy—ask!

Leverage a search engine or professional networking sites like LinkedIn to learn more about the people you'll be interviewing with. What are their hobbies? Where did they work before? Where did they go to school? Make a mental note of any overlap with your own background and interests. If you're chatting casually over lunch or dinner, you could strategically bring up that you love to travel if you discover that one of your interviewers shares your wanderlust. In an interview situation, the "airport test" is often used as a tie-breaker if there are two equally qualified candidates vying for a position. Interviewers ask themselves how they would feel if

they were stuck at an airport with the interviewee for an extended layover. Building rapport and demonstrating common interests can help ensure that you emerge with the offer.

Giving yourself an information edge can legitimately tip the balance and increase your chances of turning an interview into a job offer. Given how easy it is to find information online about a company and its employees, it is surprising how few people take the time to do this research. You won't get a second chance – it's up to you to make the most of every interview opportunity.

For more information on technology tools that are useful in a job search and best practices for managing through a layoff, please visit [knol.google.com/k/jennifer-petoff](http://knol.google.com/k/jennifer-petoff).

## Online Resources for Scientists

*Mary S. Lim*

The internet is full of useful websites for scientists who are job hunting or looking to develop their career. Here are reviews of some of the best out there:

### Science Careers

<http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/>

From the journal *Science*, Science Careers is one of the most comprehensive websites for career advancement. It features a job bank with over 3,000 job listings updated daily, and allows users to track their searches, save listings, and store resumes and cover letters. It also contains thousands of articles on career advice and a search engine for grants and funding. Make sure to visit their online forum, where you can post questions to the scientific community. The forum is moderated by a seasoned recruiter and populated by five doctoral-level advisers. Topics range from networking to alternative careers in science.

### Biospace

<http://www.biospace.com/>

If you are in the life sciences, this website is for you. In addition to a job bank and a forum, this site offers a biopharma industry news feed and company profiles. For those in medical devices and diagnostics or clinical research, there are [devicespace.com](http://devicespace.com) and [clincaspace.com](http://clincaspace.com), divisions of biospace dedicated to jobs and news specific to those industries. If you'd like to get info on companies in one geographic location, check out the Hotbed link, where you can search for

jobs and research companies within a biotech cluster in North America, Europe or Asia. It also contains maps of biotech communities within North America, such as Biotech Bay in the San Francisco Bay Area. Finally, the creators of biospace host career fairs twice a month around the nation. Check their Events link for their career fair schedule.

### BayBio

<http://www.baybio.org/wt/page/index>

BayBio, Northern California's Life Science Association, has a website with career tools for the Bay Area job seeker. Here you can search through listings in Northern California, and read articles on honing your job search skills. In addition, this website features career profiles of different positions in the biopharmaceutical industry, including required education and information on that career track. While BayBio serves mostly businesses and organizations rather than individuals, the site can be a great tool for keeping tabs on industry developments in the Bay Area. Also check the community calendar for events open to everyone, including adult education info sessions and leadership seminars.

### Mentornet

<http://www.mentornet.net/>

For women and others who are underrepresented in scientific fields and are in school, Mentornet offers one-on-one online connections with mentors who support diversity in science. While any professional can mentor, you must be enrolled in, or a faculty member of, an institution partnered with Mentornet to be a protege. This is normally a college or university, but those in non-participating schools can sign up for e-mentoring by being a member of AWIS, which is an affiliated partner of Mentornet. Once registered as a protege, you will be matched with a mentor in the field you choose and you and your mentor may correspond regularly by e-mail. However, if you cannot sign up for e-mentoring, you still have access to the forum, where you can search for mentors informally and ask for advice. There is also a list of resources for women and minorities in science including links to useful websites, a bibliography of research on women and people of color in scientific fields, a list of staff and participant recommended books, an e-newsletter, and various pertinent articles (which are kindly provided by AWIS).

### Dice

<http://www.dice.com/>

For computer scientists, engineers, and technology professionals, Dice.com is the website for job listings

and career advice. In addition to an online forum, tech news and articles on job hunting, there is a resume center and a calendar with information on upcoming career fairs. The job database can be filtered by job location or by skill (i.e. Java, AJAX, Business Analyst, Software developer). There is even a link that takes you directly to "green" jobs. Finally, Dice recently launched a learning center, where you can find training programs offered by providers pre-screened by Dice. The site offers discounted pricing on these courses and a Dice certification guarantee. You can search for programs by type of training (i.e. Certifications, bootcamps, college programs) or, if learning about a new product, by vendor technology.

No matter where you are in your career, there are a wealth of resources online to help you get to that next level. I hope you have found a new website or a new feature you haven't seen before that will help you in your career. Happy web surfing!

## Volunteering Opportunities Science in the Bay Area

### Mozilla Service Week, September 14–21

[www.mozillaservice.org](http://www.mozillaservice.org)

Use your scientific and tech skills to make a difference and volunteer in your community. Mozilla believes everyone should know how to use the Internet, have easy access to it, and have a good experience when they're online. By utilizing our community's talents for writing, designing, programming, developing, and all-around technical know-how, we believe we can make the Web a better place for everyone.

### Expanding Your Horizons, November 21

[www.expandingyourhorizons.org](http://www.expandingyourhorizons.org)

Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) is a national program that nurtures girls' interest in science and math courses to encourage them to consider careers in science, technology, engineering, and math. EYH is holding an event in San Francisco on November 21, 2009. The event is a one day conference for middle school girls to allow them to explore career opportunities in mathematics and science. EYH is soliciting presenters to put together hands-on workshops for the girls. This is a great opportunity to get involved in the community and inspire and mentor the next generation of women.

## Women's Global Health Imperative

### A San Francisco AWIS Event

*Elena Strange*

At Genentech on May 13, we heard from two women scientists who combat disease and violence in neglected communities. Megan Dunbar, DrPH, and Suneeta Kirshnan, PhD, work with the Women's Global Health Imperative (WGHI), part of a North Carolina-based non-profit research corporation. Dr. Dunbar engages with HIV issues in Africa, and Dr. Kirshnan with domestic violence issues in India. Both women conduct amazing, inspiring research that greatly impacts women's lives.

#### **Combining Economic and Behavioral Strategies to Reduce HIV Risk Among Young Women in Africa.**

Dr. Dunbar was inspired to work in gender equity issues during the early years of the AIDS epidemic, when she visited Zimbabwe. With a mission to reduce the affect of the epidemic on women, who are disproportionately affected in that country, she created and runs a program called Shaping Health of Adolescents in Zimbabwe (SHAZ).

Zimbabwe is in the midst of an economic crisis that has had dramatic effects on its population, both financially and physically. The country has an 80% unemployment rate and is experiencing "hyperinflation:" the monthly rate of inflation is well over 50%. The public health condition is similarly dramatic, and it impacts women and girls more than men. Although one in seven Zimbabwean adults is infected with HIV, adolescent girls are twice as likely as adolescent boys to be HIV-positive. Moreover, the average life expectancy for women is around 34 years.

In part because jobs and financial stability are more difficult to attain, women and girls are more vulnerable to the disease. SHAZ applies behavioral and livelihood interventions to reduce economic vulnerability to HIV. If they can help women and girls financially and socially, they can help protect women and girls from AIDS.

There are three components to SHAZ: life skills education, vocational training with microgrants, and integrated social support. They followed 315 girls over 2 years. The control group was given life

skills education only, and the intervention group was given all three components of the program.

After 18 months, the percent of girls reporting paid work was 3% in the baseline group and 83% in the intervention group. 6% of the baseline group reported having their own income and 35% in the intervention group. There was no significant difference in HIV infection, however. Food insecurity was decreased and so was experience of violence.

#### **Mitigating Gender-Based Violence: Interventions at the Individual, Family, and Community Levels in Urban India**

Suneeta Kirshnan, an epidemiologist with WGHI, presented her research on the mitigation of women's vulnerability to gender-based violence and adverse reproductive and sexual health outcomes in India. Her research focuses on partner violence among young married women in low-income urban areas in India.

In India, the average age of marriage is 17. A staggering 40% of women report some kind of physical abuse. Moreover, 85% of HIV-positive women in India were infected by their husbands.

Dr. Kirshnan studies power within marriage, and how it influences women's vulnerability. This study was conducted in low-income working communities of Bangalore. The researchers followed 750 married young women for two years. To determine the tie between vulnerability and violence, they monitored both the participants' access to power and their health outcomes.

Partner violence was widespread among the participants in the study. 27% of the 750 women reported having been abused by their husband in the previous 6 months, and 53% had been raped. Often, nonconformity to gender roles contributes to domestic violence. Kirshnan found violence was tied to women's and men's working status and social groups. Surprisingly, violence is particularly prevalent in non-arranged marriages, probably for the same reason of abandoning traditional roles.

The researchers found a promising method of intervention by involving extended families in a household. They set up an intervention called DIL/MIL: daughter-in-law/mother-in-law. With both sides of the in-law relationship working together, they can become a powerful force against violence in the home.

## sfAWIS and Other Community Events

<b>September 1, 2009</b> Ask a Scientist Take a Tour of Your Brain 7:00–9:00 P.M. Axis Cafe, San Francisco <a href="http://www.askascientistsf.com">www.askascientistsf.com</a>	<b>September 2, 2009</b> East Bay Science Cafe 7:00–9:00PM Cafe Valparaiso, Berkeley <a href="mailto:bnhm.berkeley.ed">bnhm.berkeley.ed</a>	<b>September 11, 2009</b> The Op-Ed Project UCSF Center for Gender Equity 9:00AM–5:00PM UCSF, San Francisco <a href="http://www.ucsf.edu">www.ucsf.edu</a>
<b>September 12, 2009</b> The Science of Baseball Exploratorium and the SF Giants 3:00 PM AT&T Park, San Francisco	<b>September 16, 2009</b> sfAWIS Event Visualize Your Career and Make it Happen 6:30PM–8:00PM Amgen, Inc., South San Francisco <a href="http://www.sfawis.com">www.sfawis.com</a>	<b>September 21, 2009</b> Down to a Science Cafe The Global Warming Diet 7:00–9:00 P.M. Atlas Cafe, San Francisco <a href="http://www.sciencecafesf.com">www.sciencecafesf.com</a>
<b>September 30, 2009</b> GeneAcres Conference 8:30AM–5:00PM South San Francisco <a href="http://www.baybio.org">www.baybio.org</a>	<b>October 6, 2009</b> Ask a Scientist The Science of Magic 7:00PM–9:00 P.M. <a href="http://www.askascientistsf.com">www.askascientistsf.com</a>	<b>October 14, 2009</b> sfAWIS Networking Social 6:30PM–8:00PM UCSF Pub San Francisco, CA <a href="http://www.sfawis.com">www.sfawis.com</a>
<b>October 21, 2009</b> BioScience Forum Stephen Quake, Ph.D 7:00PM–9:00PM Millbrae <a href="http://www.biosf.org">www.biosf.org</a>	<b>October 22, 2009</b> PBWC Breakfast Club 8:00AM–9:4AM Embarcadero, San Francisco, CA <a href="http://www.pbwc.org">www.pbwc.org</a>	<b>November 21, 2009</b> Expanding Your Horizons 9:00AM–2:45PM SF State University <a href="http://www.sf-eyh.com">www.sf-eyh.com</a>

## Involvement

### Join us!

Here are just a few ways you can be part of our continuing efforts to bring together Bay Area women scientists for career development, inspiration, scientific and social innovation.

#### 1. Volunteer

Help recruit new members, design programs, manage event sponsorship, and much more. Contact [volunteer@sfawis.com](mailto:volunteer@sfawis.com) for more information.

#### 2. Join the sfAWIS Distribution List

sfAWIS invites members and non-members to join the sfAWIS listserve. You'll receive regular, low-traffic updates on

sfAWIS and related events. To join, visit [www.sfawis.com/subscribe.html](http://www.sfawis.com/subscribe.html).

#### 3. Become a member

Women, men, scientists in industry and academia, professionals, teachers, students, and any who wish to support and promote women in science are welcome to join sfAWIS. Visit [www.sfawis.com](http://www.sfawis.com) to learn more.

#### 4. Submit an article

This newsletter appears quarterly, and we would love to hear from women in science throughout the Bay Area. Tell us about your job, your research, your life, and how you got there. Submissions on any topic are welcome! Please email [newsletter@sfawis.com](mailto:newsletter@sfawis.com).