

Atlanta Section SPRING 2007 Newsletter

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



This will be my last letter to you as the Section President. The past two years have been a wonderful opportunity to serve you. You have been very generous in maintaining your memberships, attending meetings and outreach events, and volunteering your time when asked. Our section is successful because of your commitment!

This year we received the Region D award for most growth for a large section. We will also be considered for the same award at the National Conference. We have also been complemented on our website by peers in the region. Have you visited our website lately? We hope to submit a section award application for our Engineer's Week flagship program: Teacher Training Day. I thank all of you who have contributed in one way or another to making this program a success.

SWE national kicked off its signature "Wow! That's Engineering!" program last year. Over 15 sections volunteered to host this signature event in 2007. Atlanta was one of the lucky three sections that were chosen for this event. Not only that, Atlanta was chosen as the 2007 kickoff location! Please mark your calendars for an exciting event with media coverage. It will be held on April 21st at the Georgia Power Corporate HQ. Please refer to the website for more details.

These activities have put us in a celebratory mood and we are planning an end-of-the-year banquet. Mark your calendars for a semi-formal event where you and your significant other can mingle with fellow members. We are planning to hold this event on June 24th. More details will be posted on the website shortly.

This is also election time. The section is looking for a treasurer. If you are committed to coming to all of our meetings and events and willing to work on our budget, please contact me or the current treasurer Wendy Anderson. Serving on the Executive Committee gives a unique opportunity to impact the section's strategic direction which adds value to any resume! Look out for the email from the nominating committee in April.

2006-2007 Calendar of Events

August 15, 2006 (lunch)	Personal Development Communication Skills
September 19, 2006	Networking Wine Tasting and Jewelry Sale
October 17, 2006	Personal Development Sports 101
November 14, 2006	Professional Development Engineering Panel with GT section
December 12, 2006	Networking Holiday Party
January 16, 2007	Personal Development Self-Defense with GT section
February 20, 2007 (lunch)	Professional Development International Business Etiquette
March 27, 2007	Networking Student Upgrade Dinner
April 17, 2007	Personal Development TBD
May 15, 2007	Professional Development TBD
June 24, 2006 (Sunday)	Networking End of Year Celebration

So I bid you farewell. It has been a wonderful journey with you and I will continue it as a participating member of the section. I hope you will also continue to be active in the section and take an ownership of services you would like the section to provide. I am looking forward to the new leadership in SWE Atlanta and am confident that it will be in capable hands.

Cheers,
Sabrina

Just Breathe

Tips on Work Life Balance

By Lisa Smith

I knew something had to give when my then two year old son removed my hand from my laptop one Saturday morning and said sternly, "Mommy, stop working!" Finding balance between work and personal responsibilities is a topic that is often talked about in light of today's busy times, but does anyone truly have the answer?

Everyone's situation is different. As female engineers, our jobs, in terms of demand and work environment, can be quite broad. From a personal perspective, some of us are single, some married, some mothers and some single mothers. Because of these differences, there may not be one solution to the work life balance issue, but here are some tips that may prove beneficial in any situation.

Determine What You Want

Do you want to climb the corporate ladder? Do you want a low stress, flexible position? Do you want to put your career on hold for a while to stay home with the kids? Only you know the answer. Once you have decided what you want, you should make decisions that complement, not complicate, your professional and personal aspirations.

Be Honest

One of the main reasons that we find ourselves overwhelmed, is because we over commit. Don't be afraid to say "no", especially when it comes to things that are not high on your priority list. You may not be able to make every social event. Be careful though that you don't use either your personal or professional duties as an excuse for not meeting your obligations. For example, engineers that work for electric utilities are often asked to work long hours, sometimes away from home, during storm restoration efforts. If personal obligations are always used as a reason for not being able to participate in storm restoration efforts, then the employee may not be seen as meeting job expectations.



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Get Help

Sometimes we feel that we have to do it all, even when we have resources available. Don't be afraid to delegate! Take trusted family and friends up on their offers to baby-sit. If you're financially able, hire someone to help with household duties. If you're overwhelmed at work, speak up. You may be able to work flexible hours, telecommute, or get help on special projects.

Let Go

There are times when help may not be available. In that case, you have to prioritize and not worry about the little things. You may not be able to keep up with the laundry everyday. You may not be able to get everything done on your "To Do" list at work by the end of the day. Make sure you're meeting your obligations, but as you've heard before "Don't sweat the small stuff".

Take care of yourself

In the midst of everything, you have to make time to take care of you. Although you may not be able to go the gym 2-3 times a week, you can eat healthy meals, sometimes. You can keep your regularly scheduled appointments with your doctor. You can find, even if just for a moment, some quiet time to just breathe.

WOW! That's Engineering!

April 21, 2007

The Atlanta section of the National Society of Women Engineers has been selected to host the kickoff to the 2007 series called "Wow! That's Engineering!"

The event will be 8:30 - 1:00 at the Georgia Power Corporate facility on 241 Ralph McGill Blvd, Atlanta GA.

This event introduces middle school girls to engineering. to middle school girls that have This program targets girls that have previously been marginalized based on sex, race, and socio-economic backgrounds, especially inner city and immigrant girls who may now or in the past spent time in homeless shelter and/or transitional housing.

Volunteers are needed April 21, from 7:30-1:30 to:

- Lead students in hands-on experiments
 - Talk to teachers about engineering
 - Help with event logistics
 - Host engineering career booths
- There's something for everyone!!!**

Volunteer Opportunity

*It is time to help students in our area learn about science,
math and engineering!*

Getting to the meat of your meetings

Meg Ferguson

What would a project be without a kick off meeting? And planning, requirements gathering, status, impromptu, and post-critique meetings? Before long, it seems that meetings are gobbling up all of the time during which we could be productive and making real progress. According to dictionary.com, a **meeting** is "an assembly or conference of persons for a specific purpose," but sometimes that purpose can be buried amongst illogically organized agenda items and lost amongst tangential conversations.

Follow this simple recipe to get to the meat of important project team meetings:

Plan the meeting... sounds very intuitive, I know... but the first step to a productive meeting is determining the following:

Who should attend? Keep the roster as slim as possible while having all of those who regularly contribute to or generate action items around the table.

Where and when should those attendees convene? Identify a location and time that is convenient to all of those involved. Check online calendars, if applicable, and determine a central location, or alternate between two locations convenient to the groups that are meeting.

What should attendees prepare prior to meeting? Outlining what each attendee should be bringing to the table can eliminate any confusion as to why the meeting is scheduled. Clear objectives and deliverables are necessary to peak productivity

What are the objectives? Clearly define the goals and objectives of the meeting. Identify milestones to be passed and deliverables to be submitted. Concise objectives allow attendees' expectations to be set and met during the meeting. These objectives should be addressed in the meeting document –the Agenda.

A is for Agenda

Based on the answers to the above questions, draft an agenda that is concise, but useful to those attending. It becomes documentation that the meeting occurred, and also a resource for attendees both before, during, and after the meeting. The Agenda should outline the time and date of the meeting, as well as objectives and topics of discussion. Most importantly, the agenda should outline the amount of time to be spent on each topic.

Elections Are coming!!!!

(Also - Committee Positions Available)

We are looking for a few good women to help with the planning and execution of section activities during the 2007-2008 fiscal year. We would love for you to get more involved. Let us know what sort of things you are interested in and we'll see where your skills can fit in with SWE.

Examples of opportunities include:

Girl Scout Outreach – Contact Andrea Wulz

Corporate Support – Contact Meg Ferguson

Newsletter – Contact Wendy Anderson

Science Fairs – Contact Sabrina DeIoannis

Space Campership – Contact Nancy Hunley

Stick to your Guns!

Once in the meeting, stick to the times and agenda items that you've outlined. If a tangential conversation starts to distract others, be sure to reel the participants back to the 'main event' rather than the side show. Do so politely, but in a way that lets them know you mean business.

Also, if breaks are a part of your agenda, be sure to identify a time at which everyone should be back in their chairs and ready to continue. If your group is more informal about these breaks, they could extend longer than necessary and cut into time to discuss the important items. So... frequent breaks should be kept short!

Re-cap, Re-cap, Re-cap

It is important to re-cap all of the action items that were identified during a meeting. Either identify a scribe or keep a 'parking lot' of items that come up during your discussion. At the end of the meeting, take an extra ten or fifteen minutes to go over those things that were captured and assign a due date and person to complete them. For example, should these items be completed by the time the group convenes again? Or by the end of that week? Make sure to outline these people and times so that milestones do not slip, causing a project to run longer than necessary. It is also during this time that your group should decide when the next meeting should occur. If this is a kick-off meeting, it is important to establish the frequency of subsequent meetings – weekly? Bi-weekly? Monthly? Quarterly? It depends on the nature of the committee, but it should be ironed out during that first gathering.

Finally, be sure not to forget your patience when entering a meeting scheduled for more than an hour. All members of a project team want their issues to be heard, but if these items are outlined and discussed in a logical order, you can cut through the extras and really get to the meat of those important meetings.

Happy Meeting!

Exploring Engineer Academy 2007

June 3 – 8, 2007

Sponsored by the Georgia Engineering Foundation and the Boy Scouts of America, Learning for Life, is designed to give high school students an opportunity to explore engineering as a career by engaging in hands on activities in various engineering venues.

The group will be based at the Georgia Tech campus and will participate in various experiences to give the students a broad exposure to the basic engineering disciplines both in engineering labs on campus and at other venues in metro Atlanta.

Volunteer Opportunity



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E-Week 2007

Members from the Atlanta SWE Section participated in the E-week "Introduce A Girl To Engineering" luncheon on February 17, 2007. The best and brightest female math and science students were invited from the local area middle schools to participate in the event, which introduces them to the engineering profession and the awesome career opportunities in the math and science fields. The event also included a competition to win scholarships for summer camps in the Southeast.

This year's event was a smashing success with approximately 200 girls buzzing around the professional societies' booths and the hands-on activities. SWE was pleased to host a booth at the event, where they conducted a mini-activity for the girls using a SWE engineering game DVD.

Sabrina DeJoannis, Nancy Hunley, and Courtney Flores participated in the planning committee for the event. Sabrina and Nancy participated in the Scholarship sub-committee, and Courtney was the chair of the Hands-On Activities sub-committee. Also, Wendy Anderson, along with Sabrina and Nancy, did a wonderful job of representing SWE at the booth. The girls really did appear to enjoy themselves tremendously all through the event!!!

Read what happened recently!!!

This year's SWE Atlanta Fall events provided a mix of professional and career development topics as well as some social networking functions. We had an above average turn-out for most events and were excited about the enthusiasm of all members including new and existing members. Thank you to all who attended and participated in the discussions.

Û**Communications lunch:** Beverly Langford presented to us the importance of putting your best foot forward and being ready for those short elevator rides with the CEO. Her book on business etiquette is really about how to communicate the best of you effectively through politeness and finesse.

Û**Sport 101** - Alison George, Director of the Georgia Tech Sports Information, spoke about football and answer questions you have ranging from game strategies, player roles and Fantasy Football teams.

Û**Engineering Panel at GT** – Members presented ways in which they use their engineering degrees for non-engineering fields. Careers included: a corporate recruiter, a patent attorney, a former consultant who now works for United Way, a product developer, and a business/finance professional.

Û**Wine Tasting** – The wine tasting provided an opportunity to meet each other and bring new guests. We sampled wines from South America as we talked and viewed jewelry for sale as part of our fundraiser.

Û**International Business Etiquette** – Peggy Parks shared her experiences in living in France and Venezuela and working with Japanese company in Atlanta. She provided insight into these other cultures to promote understanding and better business deals.

Û**Self-defense** – our GT section hosted an event to teach and refresh our members about how to protect themselves

Û**Holiday Party** – we gathered at Sabrina's house for a night of food and fellowship including a ornament secret exchange and highlights from the year past and the work to come.

Û**Mock Interviews and Resume Workshop** – members coached GT students through the job search process in the exciting Saturday event!

Contact Us
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Visit our Website
www.atlantaswe.org



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