



An Update on U.S. WIN Activities
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Special Post-Conference Edition

Written by: **Shilo Terek**, Employee Concerns Program, Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Diablo Canyon Power Plant, Region IV

"I make power." This was the opening line from Donna Jacobs, senior vice president of engineering and technical services at Entergy during this year's U.S. WIN National Conference plenary session in Boston, Mass. The conference, entitled "Leadership in Challenging Times," encouraged members to be advocates of the nuclear industry and use their voice to paint the picture of safe and reliable operations at our nations' nuclear facilities. Speakers from across the industry stressed the importance of culture, relationships and passion.

On behalf of U.S. WIN, we thank the more than 500 women, men and students that were able to attend this year's conference and hope you enjoy this special post-conference edition of the WINning Edge, which features a variety of student perspectives from the conference.

If you were unable to attend, remember that you can access the presentations from the conference on the U.S. WIN website. Simply visit www.winus.org, log on, choose events, national and presentations. Consider sharing this information at your next chapter meeting and remember to save the date for the 2015 U.S. WIN National Conference (July 12-15, Austin, TX). ✨

Margaret B. Emmett Receives the Patricia Bryant Leadership Award (PBLA)

Written by: **Shilo Terek**, Employee Concerns Program, Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Diablo Canyon Power Plant, Region IV



PBLA Winner Margaret B. Emmett

Margaret B. Emmett, recipient of this year's PBLA, is retired from Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) where she spent fifty years working in the nuclear engineering field. Her expertise is in Monte Carlo Radiation Transport. She was group leader of nuclear code development for fifteen years, and served for more than twenty years as the work force diversity representative for her ORNL division.

The PBLA was established in 2006 to recognize U.S. WIN members who have made significant contributions and demonstrated leadership in the three strategic objectives of U.S. WIN. These values are:

- To support an environment in nuclear energy and nuclear technologies in which both women and men are able to succeed.
- To provide a network through which the women in these fields can further their professional development.
- To provide an organized association through which the public is informed about nuclear energy and nuclear technologies. ✨

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Do you need to use the U.S. WIN logo for a chapter activity such as an outreach event?

Remember, the logo is trademarked, so visit the U.S. WIN website to view your options (log on, choose member resources, choose publication materials). If you have specific questions, email logo@winus.org.

A Wonderful Experience

Written by: **Dorothy Benisha Johnson**, University of South Carolina

This summer I interned with Duke Energy, Catawba Nuclear Station in York, SC as a mechanical engineering intern in the Major Projects group. All Duke interns were introduced to U.S. WIN by our company and were highly encouraged to apply for the scholarship to attend the national conference. I was so excited because I heard great things about U.S. WIN but I never had the chance to get involved. I also thought that I would not be chosen for the sponsorship because I was not a nuclear major even though I planned on pursuing a master's in nuclear engineering, but I sent off the required documents to Richiey Hayes (U.S. WIN Coordinator) anyway and hoped for the best.

I was ecstatic to find out that I was one of the interns chosen to go - I really could not believe it. The opportunity to go to the U.S. WIN national conference, network with various people, and to go to Boston was the highlight of my summer.

My company paid for my travel to and from Boston and food expenses, and the U.S. WIN sponsorship covered basically everything else. When I first arrived to the hotel in Boston I was speechless. It was beautiful and so grand. I checked into my room and fell in love, I had a great view of the city and the room was beautiful. A few interns and I went downstairs where the conference would be held, made our nametags and introduced ourselves to companies that were there. We found our Duke Energy table and helped them setup before the crowd arrived.

After that, we prepared ourselves for the Student and Mentor Orientation. I was assigned a mentor for the conference, Peggy Hobbs from Areva, Inc. She was the best mentor I could ask for! She was kind, fun, and delightful to be around; her husband was a well. My mentor and I were stuck to each other like glue for almost the entire time in Boston!

The next day we had breakfast and attended the welcome. There were so many great speakers, and it was a privilege to see them. After the plenary opening, everyone went to breakout sessions. I went to the Comparing and Contrasting Fukushima, TMI (Three Mile Island), and Chernobyl session. I knew a little information about each of those events but the session really opened my eyes more about nuclear safety and how to improve from previous mistakes.

“The session really opened my eyes more about nuclear safety.”

After we were dismissed from part one of the conference, we got ready for the Special Event on a private island on the Boston Harbor. I had the best time of my life on the island, it was so wonderful! We all rode on a Ferryboat to the island, I thought I would have been scared but it was fun. When we all arrived to the island, we were directed to the center of the island where the tents and tables were. It was like a huge family cook-out; music was playing, they had games for everyone to play, and it was just a beautiful day. They served lobster, clam chowder, chicken, and more for dinner. I have had lobster tail before but I never had a whole lobster, it was ugly and I was scared of it. One of the interns had to show me how to crack the lobster open, but it was very delicious.

There was a scavenger hunt after dinner. The people who wanted to participate had to form teams and search the island for things on the list. It gave everyone a chance to explore the island and bond together. My team didn't win but we all still had loads of fun, and burned off our dinner! After the scavenger hunt there was a huge dance party, and everyone forgot about their shyness and danced the night away. That was such a magical time on the island.



Dorothy Benisha Johnson, University of South Carolina

The following day, part two of the conference, had even more speakers and we had a chance to network with the many participants there. Richiey Hayes (U.S. WIN Coordinator) really helped me out by sending me a copy of my resume, I brought my flash drive with me but it crashed and I really needed copies of my resume to give out. She was a lifesaver, and I networked with various companies and made new friends.

Later I went to the Social Media session. It really explained how important it is to make sure any social media you have is appropriate, and also how social media can help you network and benefit your career progress. Finally, the students and interns met again to take pictures and socialize. The conference continued for the next day, but many of the Duke interns including myself were leaving so we had to pack and get on the plane.

I really didn't want to leave, but while I was there I made memories I'll never forget. I learned so much valuable information during the conference that I would not have learned from anywhere else, and met multiple people I never thought I would meet in a lifetime. I would love the opportunity to go to the next U.S. WIN Conference next year, I would encourage anyone to go if they get the chance. It's a once in a lifetime experience! ✨

Your Words Matter

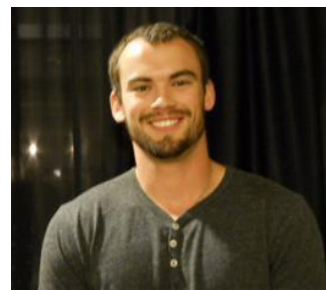
Written by: **Jordan McNeely**, Clemson University

The 2014 U.S. WIN National Conference was amazing. From attending “Comparing and Contrasting Fukushima, TMI, and Chernobyl,” I was able to see how much the nuclear industry has grown over the last 35 years from a nuclear safety perspective. This breakout session also showed me how appropriate communication to the public is very important, and how improper communication can have a long-lasting effect on public perspective.

Attending the plenary “Leadership Lessons for Crisis Recovery” taught me how to properly communicate with the public when asked tough questions about the nuclear industry, or when inaccurate comments are made about the industry. This plenary also showed me how different companies support each other during times of crisis.

Another breakout session that I really enjoyed was “New Builds at Home and Abroad.” This session showed me the direction that the nuclear industry is heading, and what potential opportunities will be available in the future.

The conference was truly amazing, and was an opportunity to meet lots of great people from a wide range of backgrounds within the nuclear industry. The conference really sparked an interest in me to continue working in the nuclear industry, and to look into more public outreach opportunities. ✨



Jordan McNeely, Clemson University

Nuclear: Not Just for Engineers

Written by: **Morgan Munera**, Texas A&M University

The trip to Boston for the U.S. WIN National Conference was a fun and informative experience that I would do again in a heartbeat. I am from Texas and currently a junior at Texas A&M University studying Radiological Health Engineering. I am the president of our U.S. WIN student chapter.



Morgan Munera, Texas A&M University

As a student, I had the opportunity to have a mentor who was a great help and was very knowledgeable about different jobs in the nuclear field. I email her days prior to the conference and she told me to wear sensible shoes and to look sharp for possible internship opportunities. She was a big help and I am grateful for all her guidance.

After my arrival to Boston, I attended the first time attendee's orientation. I learned about the origins of U.S. WIN and about WiN Global. I did not realize how new the U.S. WIN organization was and was proud to already have an active chapter at my university.

After the first day I was ready start planning different outreach events and think of fundraising ideas. The next morning I learned how large our region was, “everything west of the Mississippi River” I was told. I made an effort to try and meet different chapters in Texas, because that was ideal for us. I met some people trying to start chapters and others who already have very active chapters.

What surprised me the most was all the different disciplines these women came from. As an engineering student I expected that many women came from engineering back round, but I met women who were from the chemistry side, nuclear operations support staff, accountants, human resources, supply companies, and the list goes on. The diverse amount professional s was refreshing, and I was pleased to meet so many of them. From each person I met I learned about a different perspective about the nuclear industry.

One talk that I remember vividly was Leadership Lessons for Crisis Recovery, because hearing about how the different companies and how they handled the unexpected was an enlightening. I never thought about how a strike on the other side of the world could have such a large impact on industry. Another interesting talk was about nuclear medicine. The complexity of trying to attach different isotopes to organic material was inspiring as well as the push to find a decent detecting method for ovarian cancer.

I learned so much during this conference, and met so many people from across the country and the world. I am grateful to the conference sponsors for helping me get to the conference. I plan on attending the next conference in Austin and I hope to have just as much fun and more. ✨

“What surprised me the most was all the different disciplines these women came from.”

Reignited

Written by: **Minh-Thuy Nguyen**, Missouri University of Science and Technology



Minh-Thuy Nguyen, Missouri University of Science and Technology

Before I left Lancaster, Pennsylvania on July 27 for a week of back-to-back conferences, I was just floating along in the river of life – going with the flow and keeping my head above the water as best as I could. I felt like I was in a fog, unable to see clearly where I was going with anything, despite seeming like I knew what I wanted to do with myself when others asked. I somehow managed to exude a confidence that I wasn't sure if I really had, and it was why I was initially very nervous about attending the 2014 U.S. WIN National Conference.

I had found out about the conference and the sponsorship opportunity at the last possible moment, so I didn't have as much time as I would have liked to prepare myself for it. I had no idea what to expect, but I kept an open mind and my academic advisor, Dr. Ayodeji Alajo, reassured me that it will be a great experience for me. Great doesn't even begin to cover how the experience really was.

Honestly, I'm not sure where to begin as it was a lot for me to take in as a first time attendee and a sponsored student. All of the sessions that I attended were very informative and eye-opening, even though it initially felt like an overwhelming wealth of knowledge thrown at me. The sessions were engaging, and the speakers offered what I thought were great responses to questions at the end. What I especially liked the most from these sessions and speakers was that they all found a way to reignite my passion for the potential of nuclear anything – medicine, energy, research, the industry, etc. They reminded me of why I am going for a nuclear engineering degree, which is to be a better-informed and educated advocate of nuclear energy while hopefully working on medical applications and research. It's a thought.

“What I especially liked the most from these sessions and speakers was that they all found a way to reignite my passion for the potential of nuclear anything – medicine, energy, research, the industry, etc. They reminded me of why I am going for a nuclear engineering degree.”

While I thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of the conference, I believe that I benefited most from the Student and Mentor Program. I would have been even more lost than I already was when I first arrived in Boston if it weren't for my mentor, Micki Biltz. We connected right away, and she understood the problems I had been having with finding my niche in the industry. She shared with me her experiences in the industry, introduced me to her friends and co-workers, and checked in on me throughout the conference. She even had put together a folder of more information and resources for me to look over afterwards. It was such a plus to have an industry professional as a mentor. She offered me valuable insights which will help me better figure out where I want to go in the nuclear industry. It's nice to know that I have options other than the technically-inclined positions.



2014 U.S. WIN National Conference Students and Mentors

Overall this conference was a very beneficial and enjoyable experience for me, despite being overwhelmed at first. My time was well-spent, resulting in lifelong connections and an increase in my constantly growing wealth of nuclear-related resources. I will definitely recommend other students from my university attend the U.S. WIN conferences if the opportunity presents itself, and I hope that I will be able to attend more those conferences post-graduation. ✨

1 of 520

Written by: **Renee Frohnert**, Penn State University

It is Sunday, July 27. Today is the day the 2014 U.S. Women in Nuclear National Conference starts!

I cannot believe it was only one month ago that I received an email saying I had been selected to receive a sponsorship to attend. Strolling through a sea of green bags, I reach the registration table. Then, I select stickers that describe my interests and put them on my nametag: Student, Region I, Engineering, and IT/Computers/Web.

To my right, I read a large white sign, "Student and Mentor Orientation." Apparently, I am in the right place. I walk through the door to see approximately 20 tables draped in white. A myriad of questions are going through my head right now: How many students are here? Where is my mentor? Where should I sit?

I find my way to the middle of the room. While I wait to meet my mentor, I read the agenda. A woman in the front of the room asks everyone to take their seats. She starts calling names. I wait patiently. A few minutes pass; I hear two more names called, "Renee Frohnert and Melinda Otte." Raising my hand, I look around. A woman wearing a black and white shirt waves to me from the other side of the room.

We shake hands and introduce ourselves. Melinda starts talking about her experiences in the nuclear industry. Within minutes, I find out she works at the Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant in Fort Worth, Texas. She has been involved with the industry for 27 years!



Renee Frohnert, Penn State University

“As an electrical engineering student, I was not very informed about the nuclear industry before I started my internship. Throughout the conference, I learned more about ongoing projects and the direction the industry was taking moving forward.”

I start talking about my internship at Westinghouse. I tell her about my work with the nuclear plants in China and the Westinghouse Pittsburgh Chapter of U.S. WIN. For the last two months, I have been interning at Westinghouse Electric Company. Once I started my internship, I joined Westinghouse Chapter of U.S. WIN and applied to attend the national conference. Within a few days, I received an email saying I had received sponsorship! I had no idea how many wonderful experiences I would have within the three days of the conference...

As an electrical engineering student, I was not very informed about the nuclear industry before I started my internship. Throughout the conference, I learned more about ongoing projects and the direction the industry was taking moving forward. There were multiple sessions to attend and learn about the industry!

During the first plenary session, I found out that there were 520 people in attendance at the conference. I had never imagined that I would meet that many U.S. Women in Nuclear in my life! I could not believe that I had the opportunity to hear from over 500 women and their experiences in nuclear.

In fact, the day I returned from Boston, I organized a meeting for the next week with the Westinghouse Pittsburgh Chapter of U.S. WIN. I delivered an hour-long presentation about the professional and academic skills I acquired from attending the conference. I encouraged every one of the women to attend the conference and make connections of their own within the industry. Also, I encourage you to go to the 2015 U.S. Women in Nuclear conference! You never know who you will meet, and what you will learn! ✨

A Bright Future for Nuclear Energy

Written by: **Renae Lenhof**, Oregon State University



Renee Frohnert, Penn State University

The 2014 U.S. WIN National Conference began with a student and mentor orientation where students were given an opportunity to meet our conference mentors, individually selected to complement our intended career path and interests in the industry. My studies at Oregon State University and internship experience at NuScale Power in Corvallis, OR have cultivated a passion for reactor physics and core design. As luck would have it, I was paired with a talented pressurized water reactor core design engineer from Exelon with eight years of industry experience and a laundry list of accomplishments. From the moment we met, it was evident that her intentions as a mentor were to help facilitate opportunities to network, learn about the industry, and to grow as a professional.

The orientation was immediately followed by a welcome mixer where my mentor graciously introduced me to several of her coworkers and friends, all the while making new friends as the evening progressed. The mixer was my first opportunity to network at the conference, and the conversations were extremely insightful.

The conference agenda for day one began with regional breakfast meetings. This was a great opportunity to meet the members in our region and to hear from the leadership team regarding region specific accomplishments and opportunities. The first plenary session set a tone of excitement for the future of nuclear that endured throughout the conference. The basic takeaway from the plenary was a charge to individually and collectively advocate for the industry and educate the general public.

Following the plenary session, I attended a discussion comparing and contrasting Fukushima, TMI, and Chernobyl. While these accidents are often discussed in academia, the perspective and information presented added a different outlook. In particular, we were reminded to maintain a rigorous safety conscious work environment regardless of the amount of time that has passed without severe accident conditions, as we are always balancing protection and production of the plant.

Following the breakout session, a luncheon was provided where I had the opportunity to speak with individuals with varying roles in a power plant setting. This was particularly interesting to me coming from an academic background and interning a company that is early in the design phase. That evening culminated with a traditional New England Clambake and Lobster Boil on Thompson Island. The ferry ride to the island offered spectacular views of downtown Boston. The food was incredible and the lawn games, DJ, and fire pit made for an eventful and enjoyable evening with friends, new and old.

Day two started early with the Lesley Burns Memorial Fitness Walk where we walked through the Boston Commons, saw Cheers, and the finish line for the Boston Marathon. The walk was a great opportunity to meet new people and explore the city.

The first plenary session focused on leadership lessons for crisis recovery. A memorable moment of the session was when Edward Halpin, the CNO of PG&E, shared the San Luis Obispo County's commercial for zombie preparedness. The message suggested although a zombie apocalypse is unlikely, other disasters are more probable and being prepared is essential in maintaining safe and reliable operation of nuclear power plants.

Breakout sessions of interest included current technical issues of cyber security, seismic, and alkali silica reactions and what's new in academia. Each session offered new knowledge and an opportunity to engage in discussion with others with similar research interests. During the luncheon Leslie Dewan, the Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Transatomic Power Corporation, delivered an incredibly motivating presentation discussing her past mentors and how their influence on her paved the path for an extremely bright future in the industry. Her passion for nuclear technology was contagious and created a sense of pride to be a woman in nuclear with the ability to benefit the world through providing safe and reliable power. The last plenary session focused on industry economics, offering awareness of the role of economics in the nuclear industry.



Leslie Dewan, Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer, Transatomic Power Corporation

All in all, the conference was an absolutely invaluable experience as a student. The mentor program was a great opportunity to get to know somebody more established in the industry and to get the most out of the conference. I really valued my mentor's guidance on career path and higher education options and insight regarding her specific career path and day-to-day work activities. Having a mentor to help facilitate networking opportunities encouraged me to step outside of my comfort zone and engage people from all facets of the industry. As a result of attending the conference, I have acquired a deeper understanding of the industry as a whole, created lasting relationships, and I am personally compelled to become an advocate for the nuclear industry. I am encouraged by the enthusiasm of my colleagues and look forward to becoming a more active participant in the U.S. WIN community, leading the way toward a brighter future in the nuclear industry. ✨

A Man in a Woman's World

Written by: **Todd A. Davis**, Southeast Community College



*Mentor Heather Lewis, PG&E with mentee
Todd Davis, Southeast Community College*

I am a student at Southeast Community College in Milford, NE. I have just completed my first two quarters of study in the Energy Generation Operations Program and plan to pursue the nuclear focus in my final quarter. I am very active in the program and I am currently the President of the Future Operators of America (FOA) organization here at the Milford Campus. FOA is a student organization designed to promote networking and professionalism amongst the energy program students. I am also a member of the Phi Beta Lambda chapter (which is college level Future Business Leaders of America) at the Milford Campus. I have found the Energy Program to be quite interesting and challenging. I never realized before taking this program what it took to provide electricity to everyone, or how to meet the demands.

I want to thank my instructors at Southeast Community College for always pushing us (me in particular) to do more and take advantage of opportunities to expand our experience in the Energy Generation field of study. When they sent out the info about a scholarship to go to a women's nuclear energy conference in Boston, I must say I dismissed the notion at first. Our program chair and instructors emphasized the fact that this was open to men as well as women. Despite their encouragement for us to apply, the thought of going to a women's conference still seemed a bit unnerving. But as the weeks went on and the deadline was approaching (which was over summer break) I decided that I did not want to go back to school knowing that I did not even try. So I sent my application in the day it was due and was very surprised a few days later to find out that I was chosen to attend. I booked my flight and was set to head to the east coast for the first time in my life.

Now being a student (i.e.: limited budget) I did as much research as I could on how to get to the hotel from the airport in the least expensive way. That meant the subway which was a new experience! I found my way to the hotel and got checked in with plenty of time to check out the surrounding area before my scheduled meeting with my mentor. The student/mentor orientation went very well and found my mentor (Heather Lewis, PG&E's Diablo Canyon Power Plant) to be very helpful at guiding me through what to expect at the conference.

The conference was full of interesting speakers and topics that were pertinent to both male and female attendees. I learned quite a bit about the industry and other plants around the country as well as some of the companies that manage those plants. We also got to experience some of the sites of Boston while there for the conference. We had dinner one night was a traditional New England Clambake and Lobster Boil on Thompson Island, a private island in Boston Harbor, which was complete with games, activities, and a DJ playing music.

We made use of most every moment to learn about the nuclear energy industry, even at lunch we had a speaker or a presentation. One luncheon speaker was a very talented young woman by the name of Dr. Leslie Dewan. She had a very interesting presentation about herself and her company that is trying to develop an unused process of reclaiming spent fuel rods in a nuclear power plant. At the end of the conference, we had a special meeting of all the students and mentors and we were given a gift and had our pictures taken with our mentor. I had some time before my flight back to Nebraska to do some sightseeing in Boston, and despite the long flight home I had a great time at the US WIN Conference 2014. ✨

Each year, U.S. WIN recognizes small and large chapters who demonstrate excellence in carrying out the organization's strategic objectives: professional development, public outreach and networking. U.S. WIN also recognizes overall chapter excellence.

Congratulations to our 2014 Chapter Excellence Award Winners!

SMALL CHAPTERS

Public Outreach – **Callaway Energy-Ameren UE**
Professional Development – **CB&I Charlotte**
Networking – **ENERCON**
Overall Excellence – **Westinghouse Shoreview (tie)**
Overall Excellence – **Westinghouse Windsor (tie)**

LARGE CHAPTERS

Public Outreach – **Duke Energy - Central**
Professional Development – **Institute of Nuclear Power Operation**
Networking – **PSEG Nuclear**
Overall Excellence – **Duke Energy – Central**

Re-energize Your Future with U.S. WIN

Written by: **Enerel Munkhzul**, Virginia Commonwealth University



As a graduate student at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), I have been to a number of technical meetings and conferences in the past two years, but I had never been to a U.S. WIN conference before and I was not sure what to expect. After attending in July, I can tell you that the U.S. WIN National Conference offers a unique experience for students and professionals, focusing on professional development and networking. It just happens that the conference took place a few weeks before my graduation - perfect time for networking!

The conference pleasantly surprised me in a number of ways. One of my favorite sections of the conference was the student and mentor program. My mentor Julie Ezold, Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), contacted me about a week before the conference. In her email, she briefly summarized her role at ORNL and also mentioned that she has been active with U.S. WIN for the past ten years. Her email immediately made me feel welcome to the group and I was excited that we shared some common interests.

Everyone at the conference was very welcoming. At most conferences and career fairs, students typically have to fight over each other just to get five minutes of someone's time or even a recruiter's business cards. This was not the case at the U.S. WIN National Conference. After the student and mentor program on the first day, my mentor took me around the mixer and introduced me to everyone she knows, while hinting to them that I would be graduating very soon.

Since I was the only one attending the conference from VCU, I didn't know anyone before I arrived there. Whether you are at the conference with colleagues or classmates, I encourage you to break from your group and meet new people. At the mixer, I approached a table that a group of women from a company I was interested in, were hanging out at and I asked them if I could join. They politely said yes, and we started chatting immediately.

During our conversation, I mentioned to them that I was graduating in a few weeks and I was interested in working for their company. The next morning at breakfast, one of the employees I met at the mixer found me and told me to speak to their corporate recruiter who was at the company table at the time. I spoke to the recruiter about possible opportunities at the company and kept in touch with her after the conference.

To make a long story short, I was contacted for two different positions after the conference and I am more than halfway through the interview process for one of the positions.

One of the highlights of the conference was Dr. Leslie Dewan's speech at the luncheon on the second day. She is the Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer at Transatomic Power Corporation, a company commercializing an innovative molten salt reactor that uses nuclear waste to create clean, sustainable energy. Dr. Dewan was named a Time Magazine's "30 People Under 30 Changing the World," an MIT Technology Review's "Innovator Under 35" and a Forbes' "30 Under 30" in Energy. Dr. Dewan's speech covered everything from her childhood interest in science to her Ph.D. program experience at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and to how she started her own company. Her endearing speech along with her accomplishments inspired many young women and men, including me, to pursue their dreams and aspirations.

For those of you who are reading this article, I encourage you to plan to attend the next U.S. WIN National Conference. If you are a student, I highly recommend that you apply for the scholarship. Whether you are graduating soon or not, bring your resume and business cards. Know what companies are attending and see what opportunities are available at those companies. Opportunities exist. U.S. WIN National Conference is one of them. Go take it! I hope to see everyone at the 2015 U.S. WIN National Conference in Austin, TX. ✨

Be an Advocate

Written by: **Kristina Yancy**, Texas A&M University

I am a smart woman, but sometimes it takes me years to “get” certain messages or lessons. This summer was my second opportunity to attend a U.S. WIN National Conference and marked five years of being a member. You’d think that I would know U.S. WIN’s mission by now, but Boston was another “aha!” moment for me. The first time I attended as a rising nuclear engineering senior in 2009, I absorbed the message that women can be nuclear energy’s greatest advocates and came back to Texas A&M pumped to restart our own chapter with fellow student Chelsea Gorman.

At the conference this summer, it dawned on me that U.S. WIN also wants to support its members’ personal growth. I used to equate professional development with the seminars we host to satisfy our members’ focus on getting a good job after they graduate—it had nothing to do with making the world a better place. At the conference, I realized that professional development is the other side of public outreach. It is easy to be a student as a female because women are socialized to excel in that type of environment. That same socialization makes it somewhat difficult to excel in professional settings. Aside from new friendships, the best thing I took away from Boston was a challenge to reach out and advocate for myself as well as nuclear power in general.

Words. Words can give power and take it away. In terms of my resume, words create the picture of who I am for someone who has never met me, and before the U.S. WIN conference, I was confident that mine portrayed me at my best. The day before the national conference, I attended the U.S. WIN Region IV meeting, which included a breakout session to focus on resumes. This was the most useful resume session I have been to in five years! Three wiser U.S. WIN members showed me areas to highlight and pointed out classic female wording issues. I talked about “helping to build this” and “working with a team on that” instead of simply saying what I did. The point of a resume is not to be humble but to brag, and until then nobody had ever pointed out that I was downplaying myself. This is a great thing about U.S. WIN—the mission to foster the professional development of the members is not a fuzzy idea but is implemented in a warm, honest fashion.

Actions. In my research, I feel an imperative to always strive to do more, but in many other areas, I am careful to avoid overstepping my limited authority. At A&M, I feel comfortable leading other students, but the national level was reserved for professionals and experts in my mind. My mentor, Susan Downs, invited me to attend the communications committee meeting and it opened up my eyes. U.S. WIN is not only committed to diversity as a policy but also within our leadership. I saw all parts of the nuclear industry and all generations represented at the table. My conference roommate Savannah Fitzwater echoed this with her own involvement as a student. In Boston, I saw the mentorship program help students find their voice and find a place in the national organization to contribute. As Susan reminded me, it is silly to limit myself based on my status as a student.

This year, I am coming back from the U.S. WIN conference pumped to reach out to the public and to go outside my comfort zone a little more. I signed up for two committees while I was in Boston, and I hope I get involved with them this year. I am excited to stay in touch with U.S. WIN members outside of A&M and to learn from them. I also hope that I don’t slump back into old habits of being a little too humble but continue to grow as a woman, finding the right balance for me. I’ve realized that professional development is important because it helps promote and retain diversity in the industry, which ultimately makes it easier to do public outreach. U.S. WIN continues to surprise me in the most pleasant way, and I am lucky to be a part of this organization. ✨



Kristina Yancy, Texas A&M University

Follow U.S. WIN On Twitter!

Follow **@WomenInNuclear** to keep up with U.S. WIN happenings. We welcome your suggestions and comments by direct message on Twitter or by email to **CommComm@winus.org**. If you’d like to join the Twitter Team, please contact **Kara Lukehart** at **karalukehart@urs.com** for more information.



WHAT IS U.S. WOMEN IN NUCLEAR?

- U.S. Women in Nuclear (U.S. WIN) is the premier network of over 6,000 women and men who work in nuclear- and radiation-related fields around the country.
- U.S. WIN members participate in networking, professional development and outreach activities through local chapters, regional organizations, and the national organization. Local chapters are organized based on company, university/college, or geographic region.
- In addition, U.S. WIN is an affiliate of the Women in Nuclear Global organization (WiN-Global). The WiN-Global organization is made up of more than 3,800 members in 94 countries.



2014 NUCLEAR SCIENCE WEEK (NSW) – OCTOBER 20-24

NSW kicks off Oct. 20. Go to nuclearscienceweek.org for activity ideas

that your chapter can emulate. The U.S. WIN Communications Committee will award \$500 in U.S. WIN Wear to the chapter that is the most “re-active” in promoting NSW. Submit a short story to CommComm@winus.org by Friday, Nov. 14, describing:

Number of activities • Percentage of membership participating • Number of public reached • Public sectors reached (e.g., K-12, college, industry, civic organizations, government) • Variety of topics covered



**2015 U.S. WIN
National Conference**
July 12-15 Hilton Austin, Austin, TX

For more information visit us at winus.org

SUBMIT YOUR STORY TODAY

We want to know what your U.S. Women in Nuclear (U.S. WIN) Chapter is doing to support an environment in nuclear energy and technologies, provide a network for professional development or provide public education opportunities. This is how you can contribute:

1. COMPOSE YOUR STORY.

Brag about a great event you put on recently, tell us about something important happening at your facility, or highlight a personal achievement of a member of your chapter. You can type it in a word processor document, or even just put it in the body of an email. Make sure to include your name, plant and company, region, daytime phone number and email address.

2. ADD PHOTOS.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words so be sure to add a photo! Photos make your story pop and add that personal touch. Make sure that you follow the guidelines – get permission from everyone in the photo before you submit it. You can find a copy of the release form at the U.S. WIN website.

3. SUBMIT YOUR STORY.

Email your story and photos to CommComm@winus.org.

For a complete set of submission guidelines, go to www.winus.org, click on Member Resources, select Publication Materials, then U.S. WIN Newsletter Submission Guidelines.