



# Society of Women Engineers

Northwestern Section Newsletter Summer 2004

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If you're interested in writing about SWE, sign up at SWE general meetings or email me, Rebecca Pickens, at [r-pickens@northwestern.edu](mailto:r-pickens@northwestern.edu)

## Contacts:

- Become a National Member at <http://www.swe.org>, this makes you eligible for event subsidies, scholarships, and more.
- Email the NU SWE Exec board at [swe@northwestern.edu](mailto:swe@northwestern.edu).

## Focus On: Spring Outreach

The Northwestern chapter of SWE has a strong tradition of Outreach within the Evanston and Chicago communities. The enthusiasm and numbers of the SWE undergraduate membership do a lot to enable our broad, year-long volunteer effort. Our alumni and faculty are also active in the SWE Outreach efforts, especially at larger events. Meanwhile, we're happy to attract many members of the general undergraduate student body who may only have the time to volunteer for one or two events. Our most well-known program is Career Day for Girls, which is held every spring, and has introduced thousands of middle school and high school aged girls to science and engineering at a University-level. Northwestern SWE is extremely fond of hands-on projects that allow the participants of our events to come up with their own ideas for solving problems, and then make them realities – much like engineers do in the real world – albeit with slightly less sophisticated materials.

Smaller outreach events include participation at the Oasis Carnival for Evanston-area children, mentoring through Sisters for Science, and Take Your Daughter to Work Day, as well as participating in programs at local high schools. Three of these events are chronicled below by Laurie Dominijanni, our outreach coordinator, and Sara Salahi, our outreach committee chair.

### Sisters4Science

*Contributed by Laurie Dominijanni*

SWE is excited to begin a partnership with Sisters4Science this Spring. Sisters4Science is a weekly after school program for Latino and African-American middle and high school girls that combines science exploration with leadership development. Each month, several SWE members will visit one of the two participating schools - Triumphant Charter School in Chicago's Back of the Yards neighborhood and *Young Women's Leadership Charter School* on Chicago's Near South Side - to mentor and tutor the girls. Several SWE mentors attended *Girls' Health and Science Day* this past April, hosted by Sisters4Science, to speak and enjoy lunch with the girls at the Lincoln Park Zoo. We look forward to working with the girls of S4S during the school year and

coordinating our mentoring/tutoring program with the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE).

### The Oasis Spring Carnival

*Contributed by Sara Salahi*

On Friday May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2004 Northwestern University hosted their annual OASIS Spring Carnival at Norris University Center. Many student groups, including sororities and fraternities, had groups of volunteers at the event to work their individual booths. Booths included things like face painting, cookie decorating, temporary tattoos and various games.

The Society of Women Engineers had a booth at the OASIS Spring Carnival for children who wanted to help a newspaper boy deliver papers without further hurting his elbow (injured due to having thrown so many newspapers). The kids were asked to construct a sling shot for the newspaper boy out of a specified number and type of materials such as a hanger, paper clips, rubber bands etc. Children enjoyed the activity and learned a little about engineering while constructing their slingshots. Our presence at this outreach event was much appreciated and we were asked to return in years to come. Big thanks to all of the SWE girls who contributed to make the booth a big success! More information about the OASIS Spring Carnival and how to get involved can be found at <http://groups.northwestern.edu/oasis/>.

### Take Your Daughter to Work Day

*Contributed by Laurie Dominijanni*

Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2004 – SWE is an annual host of *Take Your Daughter to Work Day* for teenage girls, ages 12-17. This is an opportunity for female students to branch out beyond their schools and spend a day: touring the Northwestern campus, talking with college students and professors, and learning about different majors. SWE took this opportunity to teach the many facets of engineering and to discuss the possibility of pursuing such majors with the girls. Our diverse SWE majors – biomedical, environmental, electrical, civil, chemical, mechanical, and industrial – provided a forum for the girls to speak up and find out what it is to be an engineer. Also, the girls participated in a mini-competition to test their creativity, and watched a motivational video clip, *You can be anything!* When the session was completed, the girls left better prepared and well informed about engineering, and more confident; our event was a success!

### Upcoming SWE Events:

- **Industry Day**, - the largest engineering career fair at Northwestern - is coming soon, as well as the **SWE National Conference** in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- Go to <http://msgroups.tech.northwestern.edu/swe> for more event information.

## *All About NU SWE*

NU SWE is a part of the national Society of Women Engineers, which works to promote women in the sciences and engineering. NU SWE organizes networking, outreach, and social events for undergraduate engineers at Northwestern, to build their skills, and enrich their undergraduate experiences. The general membership is large and enthusiastic, and meets about once a month at SWE general meetings.

There are about 75 National SWE members who are active in NU SWE and many faculty and alumni who regularly volunteer their time and support, including our faculty advisor, Ellen Worsdall, and our section counselor, Deborah Resnick.

### *Ways to Be Involved in NU SWE*

**General Members** attend SWE general meetings and are involved as volunteers, participants, or leaders for individual programs. General Members are encouraged, but not required, to be members of the National SWE organization.

**SWE Exec** leads the efforts to organize SWE's major events, including Industry Day, Career Day for Girls, and the Spring Banquet. They are elected every spring by NU SWE members who are also National SWE members.

**Faculty and Alumni** serve as speakers or panelists at SWE meetings, and often donate their time for our largest outreach event, Career Day for Girls. NU SWE alumni also often work at the employer tables at Industry Day, our largest recruiting event.