

AWIS

ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE

Washington Wire

Edited by Rachel Britt

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Dear Rachel,

The Association for Women in Science (AWIS) strives to change and grow with the times, and I'm thrilled to announce that we're continually meeting these goals for our members.

We welcome a new [Central Massachusetts Chapter](#) and a new [Kentucky Affiliate Group](#) to the AWIS fold. The driving force behind the Kentucky Affiliate Group is Adriana Bankston, PhD, postdoctoral research associate at the University of Louisville.

Adriana is a peer of our latest [AWIS Magazine cover subject Isabel Escobar](#), PhD, professor of

Member Profile

Rachel Britt
Member Type:
Professional
Member Expiration:
6/4/2016 0:00

Featured Jobs

Bioinformatics
Scientist III

chemical and engineering at the University of Kentucky. I mention this because she recently interviewed Isabel for a fascinating blog article: "[Why do we still need an Association for Women in Science?](#)" I definitely recommend taking a few minutes to read it.

If you're thinking of starting an AWIS chapter or affiliate group, don't hesitate to [contact me](#) - I'm here to help.

Sincerely,

Sheri Potter
Director of Community and Stakeholder
Engagement
Association for Women in Science

Children's Hospital of
Philadelphia
Philadelphia, PA

**NIAAA Clinical
Director**

National Institute on
Alcohol Abuse and
Alcoholism (NIAAA)
Bethesda, MD

**Assistant Professor in
Virology**

Harvard Medical School
Boston, MA

**[Click here to visit the
AWIS Career Center!](#)**

Careers

Contributed by Keng Jin Lee

Women's Perspectives on Employee Satisfaction

Exactly what makes women happy at work? Research by a company that allows women to anonymously rate their companies and employers shows that women's job satisfaction is strongly correlated with work-life balance and other issues. Unsurprisingly, at the top of the list is overall gender equality observed in the workplace.

[Happy job, happy life](#)

Female Scientist/Entrepreneur Saving the World from Plastic Waste

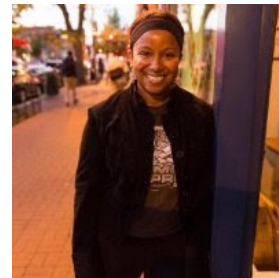
Brianne West always wondered if there was a way to reduce plastic waste from beauty products. With this idea in mind, she founded Ethique. Brianne's science background helped her formulate products without the excess water of traditional beauty products. Ethique instead produces solid beauty bars, which are more concentrated, longer-lasting and better for the environment. Ethique's products are even packaged in compostable paper and cardboard. Brianne's goal? To save a million bottles by 2020.

[One bottle at a time](#)

Education

Contributed by Sophia Jeon

AWIS Member Spotlight



Jennifer Blum, PhD

Jennifer Blum is an astrophysicist and a researcher for the Department of Defense. In 2011, she was the first African American in five years to obtain her PhD in astrophysics at the University of Michigan. Jen graduated from Columbia University in NYC with a BA in astrophysics. She is currently vice president for public relations and membership for the AWIS DC Metropolitan Chapter and has been a member since 2012.

**[Learn more about Jen
here.](#)**

Science Education Grants More PhDs, Regardless of the Lack of Academic Positions

A lack of funding was considered one of the major reasons research scientists left academia, but some say a bigger problem lies in the unbalanced equation of trainees entering the system on one side and scarce academic careers on the other. The current science education system simply is churning out more PhDs than academia can support. There are not enough positions, and the prospect of having stable funding even after getting hired does not look good. Scientists who trained for careers in academia are giving up on academic positions after years of research.

[Goodbye academia](#)

Keeping Your Volume Down Helps Toddlers Learn Words

If your toddler is having trouble learning new words, a new study confirms the reason could be a noisy learning environment. An original study in 1973 examined kids who lived in different parts of apartment buildings and concluded that kids who lived on higher floors had less trouble reading and learning language due to lower levels of background noise. In a more recent study, scientists reached the same conclusion in a lab by replicating real-life conditions in a more controlled environment.

[Shhhh . . .](#)

Science and Technology



Contributed by Sophia Jeon

New Gene-editing Technology Will Be Tested in Humans for the First Time in China

CRISPR has quickly become one of the hottest (and most controversial) techniques the biomedical science field has seen in recent years. It allows scientists to precisely and efficiently edit genes in cells, which opens many doors for not only basic research but also for therapies in health and disease. In August, Chinese scientists will try this relatively new technology in terminal lung cancer patients by injecting patients with immune cells that have been edited to attack cancer cells more aggressively.

[CRISPR](#)

Pokemon GO is Only the Tip of the Iceberg of Virtual Reality



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to make a difference

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Join the Conversation!



Pokemon GO has been successful in making players walk everywhere to catch cute Japanese monsters. However, Ken Perlin, a computer science professor and founding director of the New York University Media Research Lab, says there is a lot more to virtual reality than overlaying digital images atop the real world in a location-based entertainment like Pokemon GO. In this interview, Perlin discusses the differences between Pokemon GO and augmented reality, or what he prefers to call "mixed reality."

[Gotta catch 'em all](#)

Work-Life Integration

Contributed by Michelle Gomes

Managing Life's Four Burners

According to 'The Four Burner Theory' life can be divided like a stove into four burners, each representing an area of life: family, friends, health and work. Can we let all burners run while having a meaningful life? Or do we have to dial back? Life is filled with choices that involve trade-offs. Here are three ways to manage your four burners for a balanced life.

[Burn control](#)

Morning Mood Affects Work Day Performance

A new study suggests morning mood is an important factor dictating how an employee approaches work events, which in turn affects workplace performance. Since employees are rarely able to check their feelings at the door, managers who pay attention can help employees reset negative morning moods and boost employee performance.

[Happy start](#)

Say What You Mean, Don't Be Mean

We have all been in situations where we are faced with a difference of opinion from our spouses, co-workers or friends. Depending on the relationship, we may avoid voicing our opinions for fear of offending or alienating them. By diving deeper into the experiences that shape our opinions and then drawing logical comparisons, we can tactfully express our viewpoints and engage in healthy relationships.

[Say it with tact!](#)

Health

Contributed by Lauren M. Dembeck

Defective HIV Virus DNA Can Produce Proteins

People who have undergone suppressive HIV treatment and have undetectable levels of the virus often have persistent immune activation. Despite the increased longevity from HIV treatment, increased mortality is associated with persistent immune activation in both AIDS and non-AIDS patients. Researchers at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease recently showed that defective HIV DNA that cannot form a functioning virus can still produce protein products. The authors of the study speculate that these proteins may contribute to the persistent immune response.

[Proviral protein problem](#)

Neuroscientists Improve Map of the Human Cortical Connectome

The connectome is thought of as a "wiring diagram" for the brain. A team based at the University of Washington in St. Louis used multiple cross-validating techniques to map 180 distinct areas of the brain's cortex using data from 210 healthy participants. Knowledge of the connectome has the potential to improve the precision of brain surgeries and to boost our understanding of neural variation among individuals.

[Human connectome project](#)

Opportunities

Be a Part of the Solution: Submit a Proposal for Solve

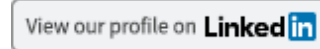
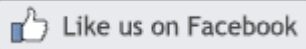
Solve is a live meeting series whose mission is to cultivate a community to discover, evaluate and advance technological solutions to global problems. MIT's President L. Rafael Reif announced Solve in 2014, and Solve first convened last fall.

The Solve program is organized around four pillars: Fuel, Learn, Cure and Make. This year's program poses [five challenges](#) within those pillars and are asking participants from around the globe to submit proposals for the challenges.

Individuals and organizations are encouraged to log

in to the [Solve CoLab platform](#) to propose solutions **through August 15** to qualify for the first wave of judging.

Selected challenges will be showcased through Solve at HUBweek, a city-wide festival in Boston held in the last week of September 2016, where attendees can propose their solutions. [Register here to attend.](#)



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