



AWIS

Association for Women in Science Gulf Coast Houston

Year 2016



Inside this issue

Address by the President3

Spotlight on Dr. Helen Piwnica-Worms..... 5

I-Corps Workshop.....6

Jobs in medical writing6

Excellence in communication.....7

AWIS GCH Scholarship award.....7

Creating a Professional Brand8

Laws of Leadership ..8

The Science of Networking.....8

OWIS Spring 2016....9

OWIS Fall 20169

Congratulations to...10

Immigration workshop10

Board member Profiles11

AWIS GCH was awarded the




AWIS proudly presents the
2016-2017 STAR CHAPTER AWARD

to the
AWIS Gulf Coast-Houston Chapter

For outstanding participation in working to achieve
the AWIS strategic plan goals in 2015-2016



x 
Janet Bandows Koster, AWIS Executive Director & CEO

President's Remarks

AWIS GCH-Translating Strengths to Opportunities



Triparna Sen, PhD

*President, AWIS GCH
MD Anderson Cancer Center,
AWIS Member Since -2015.*

It was my great honor and privilege in May, 2016 to begin my term as the President of the Association for Women in Science Gulf Coast Houston Chapter (AWIS GCH), an organization that not only works diligently to empower women in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields but also allows connections and friendships to be created within the community.

As the first woman in the family to have received a PhD, I was always aware of the challenges women face in pursuing their dreams of higher education and professional success in STEM fields. Being a part of the leadership of AWIS GCH has given me the platform, the courage and a great team to help the mission of promoting women in STEM.

In the past year, AWIS GCH has been a true leader. The Executive board set the strategic direction for the near future by defining organizational objectives that were aligned to our core mission and also had elements unique to the chapter and the Gulf Coast Houston region. We set specific, achievable, and time- bound goals; and always operated as a team with a focus to develop the organization. As a result, ideas have gained momentum, and there has been a tremendous growth in every area of the organization: career development programs, networking opportunities, outreach activities, scholarship and leadership efforts.

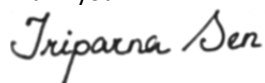
I believe the asset of this organization is its members, partners and sponsors who provided valuable ideas and support needed to achieve our goals. Additionally, our chapter has a unique strength----AWIS GCH is developing as an organization in an extremely rich intellectual environment with academic partners like MD Anderson Cancer Center, Baylor College of Medicine,

Methodist hospital and Memorial Hermann Health System; representatives from organization like The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on its advisory board; and collaboration with biotech companies in the area. We have been successful in making our strengths productive and translating them to opportunities, which I believe has contributed towards our success.

Going forward, we will expand our career development initiatives, explore innovative topics with our programming, and continue to amplify our funding resources. We look to partner with other nonprofits, academic institutes, businesses and individual funders to share knowledge, co-host events and foster collective action. As a part of our initiative to encourage more women to join STEM fields, we aim to educate on the importance and opportunities of STEM careers. Ensuring value of member benefits, improving member engagement, enhancing member satisfaction and increasing diversity in our membership base will always be the underlying goal of our daily operations.

As the President of the board I aim to lead with courage, confidence and patience. I truly believe in our vision and I am humbled to have the opportunity to steer this chapter forward.

Thank you



Triparna Sen, AWIS GCH President

triparnasen@gmail.com

PR and newsletter committee



Deepika Kumar
Editor in Chief

Lara Appleby
Associate Editor



Jen Fisher
Associate Editor



Deborah Bujnowski
Associate Editor



Maud Trommschlager
Associate Editor

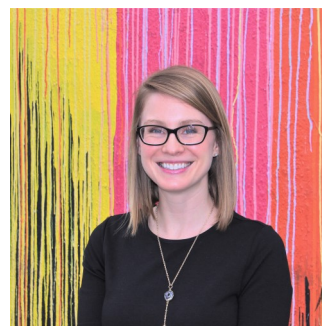
2016-2017 Board



President
Dr. Triparna Sen



Secretary
Dr. Kim Mankiewicz



OWIS Chair
Dr. Menton Deweese



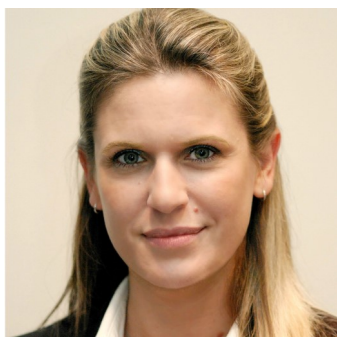
Senior Chapter Trustee
Dr. Brittany Parker-Kerrigan



Membership Chair
Dr. Sara Wright



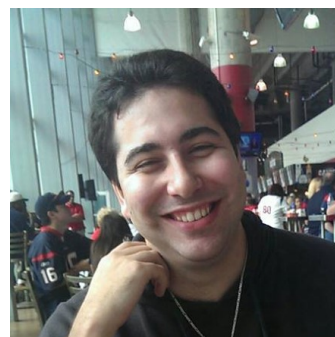
Fundraising Chair
Dr. Caitlin Nurik



Vice President
Dr. Delphine Boulbes



Career Development Chair
Dr. Lory Santiago-Vazquez



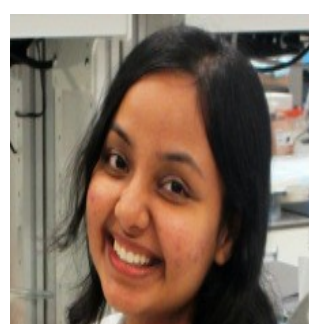
Community Outreach Chair
Marc Nurik



Treasurer
Dr. Yong Park



Public Relations Chair
Deepika Kumar MS



Scholarship Chair
Dr. Hima Vangapandu



Dr. Piwnica-Worms serves as Vice Provost of Science and Professor of Experimental Radiation Oncology. She completed a B.A. in Biology at St. Olaf College (1979), a Ph.D. degree in microbiology and immunology at Duke University Medical School (1984) and a postdoctoral fellowship in pathology at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (1988). She was Instructor of Pathology at Harvard Medical School and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute from 1988-1989 prior to moving to Tufts University Medical School where she was Assistant Professor of Physiology (1989-1992) followed by Harvard Medical School and Beth Israel Hospital, Boston where she was Associate Professor of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics (1992-1994). In 1994, Dr. Piwnica-Worms moved to Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis where she was the Gerty T. Cori Professor and Chair of Cell Biology and Physiology and Professor of Internal Medicine. She also served as Associate Director of Basic Science at the Alvin J. Siteman Cancer Center and co-directed the BRIGHT Institute at Washington University.

Spotlight on Dr. Helen Piwnica-Worms

- 1) **What attracted you to a career in STEM?** Math and science were always my favorite classes in school. As a child, I wanted to be an oceanographer. Later, I became fascinated with the human body and I decided to major in biology in college.
- 2) **Was there a defining moment when you knew that you wanted to be a scientist?** The media portrayal of scientists made this career very unappealing to me. I planned to go to graduate school and then teach at an undergraduate institution. When I got into the laboratory in graduate school and started to solve biological problems, I knew I had found my future career path.
- 3) **How did you get interested in cancer research and oncology? Who/what had the biggest influence?** I was first introduced to cancer biology by an inspiring professor in college.
- 4) **How has cancer research and oncology changed since the beginning of your career? What technological advancements brought about the greatest change?** When I started graduate school restriction enzymes were just being discovered. At that time, the best way to try and understand cancer was to study RNA and DNA tumor viruses. Today we can sequence whole cancer genomes and perform functional analyses using high throughput technologies. It's a new and exciting landscape for cancer researchers.
- 5) **What was the greatest challenge you faced in your career and how did you surmount that?** One was balancing an all-consuming career with the challenges (and joys) of being a parent. To be honest, I have no play book on how this is done. I was blessed with having two healthy children, the means to provide outstanding care and educational experiences for them and a supportive husband. A current challenge that all professional women face is the glass ceiling. Despite the high number of outstanding females training in STEM fields, we are still vastly outnumbered in key leadership positions.
- 6) **What is a typical day for a Vice provost and researcher at UT MD Anderson?** I typically arrive at MD Anderson between 7 or 8 am and begin meetings. As part of the Provost team, I oversee several important institutional initiatives. Intermixed with these administrative meetings are additional meetings with my research team and our collaborators. After 4 PM I usually focus on my research program. I still run a very active laboratory with outstanding trainees and staff. As my husband also has major administrative duties and runs an active research lab (and our children are grown), we are not confined to being home at any given time. Many nights we meet for quick bite at a restaurant and then collapse only to start all over again at 7 am the next morning.
- 7) **Any advice for young women pursuing career in STEM, specifically biomedical science?**
 - **Be consumed:** Become consumed by solving important biological problems. Recognition comes from contributing novel insight to important problems.
 - **Embrace Technological Advances:** Technological advances enable you to answer questions that were previously intractable.
 - **Go Deep:** Pick an area that you can own. It is important to become an expert in a field and publish novel discoveries in high impact journals. You need to be recognized in a specific area so that when promotion time comes referees can speak to your contributions.
 - **Be a good colleague.** *Science is a small town; you will be known.* Being a good scientist is only an entry point, many other characteristics define potential leaders. Peers will speak to your collegiality and other traits when considering you for new opportunities.
 - **Prioritize parenting.** A science career is long but parenthood is short. If you decide to have children, then devote time and energy to being a parent. You will be amazed at how quickly they grow and leave the nest, leaving you additional decades to focus on solving important biological problems.
 - **Be resilient.** Success in experiments and grants is one out of 10 if you are lucky. You will experience failure; this is for certain. As Jimmy V said: "Don't give up, don't ever give up."

I-Corps Workshop at MD Anderson

Deepika Kumar

AWIS GCH co-hosted the I-Corps workshop by Chris Taylor, Director, Office of Career & Entrepreneurship Advancement at UT MD Anderson Cancer Center, in February 2016. Innovation Corps (I-Corps) is a national cohort program which was created to support commercialization and development of research technology. The National I-Corps curriculum is a 7-week training program which includes innovation and risk reduction guided by the end user needs. It teaches the entrepreneurial and commercialization skills required to bring scientific discovery or innovation into the market. The National Sci-

ence Foundation (NSF) and National Institutes of Health (NIH) have their own I-Corps programs with different criteria for selection and training. The I-Corps regional program at MD Anderson prepares teams from MD Anderson, UTHSC and UTMB for selection to national I-Corps programs as well as for the SBIR and STTR grant application process. The I-Corps regional program organizes a full day preparatory workshop before the 6-week regional cohort program. For further details and questions please refer to the I-Corps page at the MD Anderson website.

Special thanks to our panelists:

Jill Delsigne, Ph.D., an Assistant Managing Editor in the Department of Neuro-oncology at MDACC.

Kimberly Mankiewicz, Ph.D., Technical Writer in the Department of Ophthalmology/Visual Science at UTHealth

Susan Marriott, Ph.D., founder and CEO of Bioscience Writers, LLC, and Professor at BCM

Stephen Palmer, Ph.D., Manager and Senior Scientific Medical Writer for Scientific Publications at Texas Heart Institute, President of AMWA Southwest Chapter

How to land a job in medical writing

Monica Reyes, Ph.D.

In March, AWIS GCH and the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) Southwest chapter hosted a discussion with medical writing experts about how to land a job in medical writing. Here are some of the main points shared by the panelists:

- Medical writing is a diverse field, including positions in continuing medical education (CME), the medical device industry, public relations and marketing, government (i.e. Center for Disease and Control), and regulatory affairs.
- If you have a love for writing and editing, this profession is for you. Some panelists are also motivated in their work by wanting to make writing services available to individuals and groups worldwide who otherwise lacked such resources and wanting to help researchers improve their publication records.
- To gain experience, you can freelance, but be sure to select reputable clients so that you can be sure that you'll get paid.
- Networking as a great way to secure opportunities for experience. An AMWA membership can help you network events and find jobs (via their web-based job board).
- To secure an interview for a position in medical writing, you generally need several writing samples, a passing score on a skills evaluation test (if this is a requirement by the hiring company), and most importantly, a well-formatted and error-free CV or resume.
- Hiring managers generally seek a scientific degree, basic writing and editing knowledge, and experience, but you can stand out with a certification, such as the Editor in Life Science (ELS) certification.

For more information about medical writing, visit www.amwa.org.



Clockwise from top left Amulya Sreekumar, Pavitra Viswanath, Tanya Kumar and Makenzie Maupin

AWIS GCH Award for Excellence in Communication Lara Appleby

The AWIS GCH Awards for Excellence in Communication are given annually to graduate and undergraduate students. Thanks to Drs. Christine Stellrecht, Associate Professor at MD Anderson Cancer Center, and Marenda Wilson-Pham, Assistant Dean of Diversity and Alumni Affairs at UT, for selecting this year's winners:

Amulya Sreekumar (1st place--tie)

Cash prize: \$225.00

Sreekumar wrote "Science is still considered an unconventional career choice for women in India and I am grateful to everyone who supported my choice." A Ph.D. candidate at Baylor College of Medicine, her research focuses on tumorigenesis in the mammary gland.

Pavitra Viswanath (1st place--tie)

Cash prize: \$225.00

Viswanath aspires to become a cancer biologist and teacher who fosters a passion for learning in the next generation of students. She is a Graduate Research Assistant at the UT Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

Makenzie Maupin (3rd place)

Cash prize: \$50.00

Maupin is an MPH candidate at UT School of Public Health and a research coordinator at MD Anderson Cancer Center with interests in cancer prevention, tobacco cessation, and maternal/child health.

AWIS GCH Scholarship Award 2016

Ms. Tanya Kumar, an eleventh grader from Clear Brook High School, received the 2016 AWIS GCH Scholarship Award, which was initiated in 2015 to encourage young talent in STEM. AWIS GCH was a special awarding agency at the Science and Engineering Fair of Houston (SEFH) on February 27th. Of 20 high school projects judged by 2015-2017 Scholarship Chair Hima Vangapandu, Ms. Kumar's project, "A Novel Dried Blood Spot Method: Next Generation Ovarian Reserve Testing", won top honors. The budding scientist received a \$100 prize and plaque from AWIS GCH.

Ms. Kumar has been performing scientific experiments since kindergarten, and became interested in medical science during an internship where she learned how research affects everyday life. The experience strengthened her resolve to pursue a career in medicine and develop tools enabling earlier diagnosis of medical issues. She said this award is a symbol of the possibilities science holds and the positive impact she can have on society.

Fannin Innovation studio

Lara Appleby

AWIS GCH and Fannin Innovation Studios co-hosted a workshop about commercializing inventions. At the workshop, which happened in the Innovation Studios this past October, attendees learned about the services and training opportunities provided by this professional early-stage life sciences development group.

The Studios support commercialization of laboratory discoveries and offer fellowships and internships to those interested in exploring the business side of science industry. At the workshop, attendees mingled in the modern Studios and then heard from Melissa Singh, Company Principle, who introduced and summarized the Studio's mission and advised attendees how to turn discoveries into commercially viable products.

The journey from discovery to marketability (e.g. for pharmaceuticals) can be long and expensive, and the Studio uses its expertise in grant writing to support researchers in this phase of product development. They specialize in facilitation of partnerships between industry and academia. Applications for the Studio's 2-year fellowship program in entrepreneurship and part-time internships are due yearly in May and late November.

How to Create a Professional Brand

Deborah Bujnowski

AWIS GCH members gathered in July 2016 for 'Are you on LinkedIn?', a professional development workshop led by Christopher Taylor, Project Director for the Office of Career and Entrepreneurship in Faculty & Academic Development at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. Taylor shared his expertise on using LinkedIn to create a professional brand, reminding attendees that online presence is important because perception is reality and offering guidance on differentiating oneself from competitors during the job search process. Specific advice for maximizing LinkedIn's benefits included strategies for catching re-

cruiters' attention and cultivating a professional network. After the workshop, attendees had the opportunity to obtain a professional photo for their LinkedIn profile at a complimentary photo booth.



Creating a Professional Brand

Laws of Leadership with Dr. Joanne Mitchell

Deborah Bujnowski

As part of its ongoing career development efforts, AWIS GCH welcomed Dr. Joanne Mitchell in May 2016 for a lunchtime workshop entitled 'Everything Rises and Falls with Leadership.' The workshop focused on 21 leadership laws that provide a framework for organizing talents and transforming potential into results. For example, one law is the law of process (i.e., leadership development is a process that happens over time) and another is the law of priorities, which entails self-assessment of accomplishments. Mitchell is a certified coach and speaker with the John Maxwell Team who assists professional women across the US with career development, leadership, and career transition. Mitchell holds a BSc in molecular biology and biochemistry, and a PhD in biochemistry.

AWIS GCH members learn The Science of Networking

Deepika Kumar

The Science of networking is a 3-month networking boot camp organized by AWIS GCH during Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. The workshop was conducted by Dr. Agathe Bourgogne, Associate Director of Program Management at Im-matics Biotechnologies. In the workshop participants learn the nuances of building a professional network successfully. As the workshop progresses participants learn to approach and effectively communicate with colleagues and professionals at networking events. They learn to identify their milestones and utilize their strengths to achieve their goals. This is accomplished by interactive exercises, feedback from Dr. Bourgogne and fellow participants, and application of these exercises in recommended networking events.

Deborah Bujnowski and Maud Trommenschlager

Dr. Rebecca
Richards-Kortum,
Malcolm Gillis
University
Professor,
Professor of
Bioengineering

Jen Fisher

From left to right: Dr. Menton Dewesee, Dr. Heather Paul and Dr. Triparna Sen.



Dr. Brittany Parker-Kerrigan



Dr. Triparna Sen



Dr. Caitlin Nurik



Panelists at the Immigration workshop.

Left: Networking Bootcamp with Dr. Agathe Bourgogne.
Right: Fannin innovation studio workshop with Dr. Singh.

Congratulations to..

1)**Dr. Brittany Parker-Kerrigan** was awarded a **T32 fellowship** between Rice University and MD Anderson for Translational Cancer Nanotechnology and the **Caroline Ross Award** for Brain Cancer Research. Congratulations, Dr. Parker-Kerrigan, on these prestigious awards!

2)**Dr. Triparna Sen**, a postdoctoral fellow at MD Anderson Cancer Center and president of AWIS GCH, was awarded a **Scholar-in-Training Award** from the American Association for Cancer Research for her paper entitled “Combining immune checkpoint inhibition and DNA damage repair (DDR) targeted therapy in small cell lung cancer (SCLC)”. This monetary award is presented to fewer than 10 percent of applicants. For the last two

years Sen has also received a **Jeffrey Lee Cousins Fellowship** for Lung Cancer Research from the University of Texas, MD Anderson Cancer Center. We are glad to have one of our own leading the way in this important field!

3)Congratulations to **Caitlin Edmunds Nurik**, AWIS GCH fundraising chair and graduate student at the University of Texas Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences! In June, a panel awarded Edmunds Nurik a **scholarship** for her ability to clearly communicate the scientific merit of her research to an audience of non-experts. The panel was led by UT faculty member, Jeffrey Actor, and also included last year’s first place winner and multiple UT alums, including renowned molecular biologist John Kopchick.

AWIS GCH members learn about their immigration options

Deepika Kumar

AWIS GCH hosted a workshop in November 2016 to address the immigration concerns of the many AWIS GCH members in Houston who are foreign nationals. A panel consisting of Eglantine Pauvarel Moss, immigration lawyer at Herrera and Associates and Michelle Stelljes- Supervisor of HR Immigration services and J-1 responsible officer for Houston Methodist and research Institute, focused mainly on questions about the process required for the H1-B visa. The panel educated the audience on the conditions that must be met for application for a STEM H1-B visa, which forms were required and what timelines to expect. After the initial discussion, the floor was opened for questions from the audience, and one participant won a one-hour consulta-



Interview with 2016-2017 male board members

1) How did you hear about AWIS-GCH?

Marc: I first learned about the organization through my wife, Catie who was an active board member at AWIS GCH.

Yong: I heard about AWIS GCH through my best friend, Brittany Parker Kerrigan, who was very involved with AWIS GCH as a member of the board.

2) Why did you choose to nominate yourself as a board member in AWIS-GCH?

M: There was an unexpected vacancy on the board at the time. As my wife, Catie and I are devoted to promoting STEM awareness, I felt that I was well suited to take the office of outreach chair.

Y: It was the vision of the chapter trustee, Dr. Brittany Parker Kerrigan, to have more men involved with the organization. She encouraged me to become part of the board, which made me the first male board member of AWIS GCH. I want to encourage more women to succeed in science, and felt I could do so best by taking on a leadership position within the chapter.

3) How do you think your participation has benefitted the goal of the chapter?

M: My goal with the position was to create a nice how-to manual for whoever followed me as well as building a small library of available activities aimed towards younger audiences for promoting interest in STEM. As long as you have an opportunity to fan the flames of curiosity, there is a good chance a passion for science can be ignited in the future.

Y: Bringing a male onto the executive board has increased male membership registration, attendance, and participation. It has provided additional awareness between both genders that we need to work together to succeed in our mission.

4) How have you benefitted (personally and professionally) because of your officer position at AWIS-GCH?

M: I enjoy what I do when it comes to aiding the AWIS-GCH board. It is fulfilling.

Y: Through AWIS GCH I have made several contacts through networking events. Being an officer of the organization has helped me to be more successful in my career and has given me opportunities that I did not have before.

5) How do you think the programs offered by the chapter benefit the male members of the chapter?

M: I view AWIS GCH as more of a STEM networking and promotion organization than a primarily female oriented one. AWIS GCH has an interest in bringing STEM individuals together and that benefits everyone.

Y: Not all events offered by AWIS GCH are geared toward any one particular gender, and many offer rich information that can benefit both genders equally. For example, networking and career development events (seminars for resume writing, how to get an interview, etc.) are beneficial to both genders. Furthermore, I also feel it is important to welcome men to events that are predominantly geared towards supporting hardships that women face. We must work together to ensure equality for all.

6) What are your goals for AWIS-GCH?

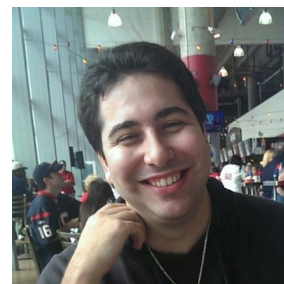
M: My goal with my position on the board was simple: to create a basic manual for my position for the next outreach chair. This includes creating an easy to use library and documentation for simple activities aimed at young, scientifically-curious individuals.

Y: I would like to increase awareness of different job opportunities that young women can pursue in the various fields of STEM. With the help of AWIS GCH chapter, I would like to create a high school mentoring program where members of AWIS GCH could give them advice and feedback. This mentoring program would also be relevant to in the workplace where senior level employees and management could mentor their juniors.

7) What would you like to say to other men when they consider a position on the board in an organization such as AWIS-GCH?

M: AWIS GCH has always seemed more of a 'STEM-first' organization to me. So, you have an interest in helping the STEM community, AWIS GCH is a great place to devote your efforts.

Y: Don't be intimidated. Support each other. As my Ph.D. mentor, Dr. Thomas Yorio, once advised me: "Accept every opportunity given to you, big or small. Say 'Yes' to opportunities. You can always say no afterwards if you don't like it. But if you say no in the beginning, those opportunities may be lost forever."



Marc Nurik



Dr. Yong Park



Monthly Networking event

"NETWORKING is the single most powerful marketing tactic to accelerate and sustain success for any individual or organization!" – Adam Small, founder of the Strategic Business Network. In May 2016, AWIS GCH began hosting monthly networking events at various restaurants and bars in the Houston area. These events now draw a regular crowd of about 50 people and are a great way to make new social and professional contacts. Like our FB page to hear about the next event in time to attend!



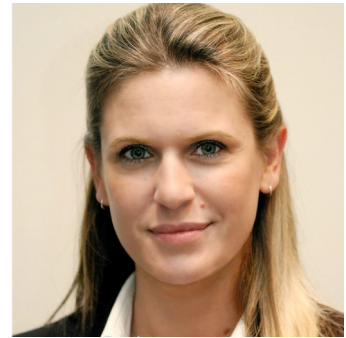
2017-2018 Board



President
Dr. Triparna Sen



Secretary
Ryan Black MS, MBA



OWIS Chair
Dr. Delphine Boulbes



Senior Chapter Trustee
Dr. Brittany Parker-Kerrigan



Membership Chair
Dr. Sara Wright



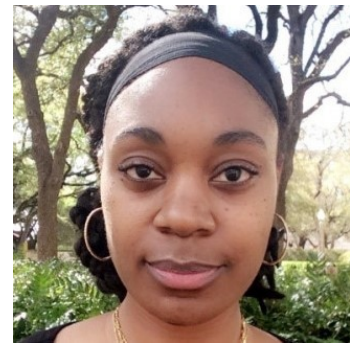
Fundraising Chair
Dr. Georgina Salazar



Vice President
Dr. Miriam-Rose Menezes



Career Development Chair
Dr. Tamara Laskowski



Community Outreach Chair
Angelique Harding, DrPH,
MPH, MAEd



Treasurer
Dr. Yong Park



Chair Social Media, Website
Kim Mankiewicz

Upcoming events

This would be a good place to insert a short paragraph about your organization. It might include the purpose of the organization, its mission, founding date, and a brief history. You could also include a brief list of the types of products, services, or programs your organization offers, the geographic area covered (for example, western U.S. or European markets), and a profile of the types of customers or members served.

It would also be useful to include a contact name for readers who want more information about the organization.

AWIS GCH is dedicated to supporting women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in Texas's Gulf Coast and Houston region by providing opportunities to participate in professional networking, mentoring, and leadership activities. AWIS membership provides a portfolio of personal benefits as well as the satisfaction of lending your voice to a multi-disciplinary grassroots movement supporting women in STEM.

To become a member visit <http://awisgch.org/membership/>

Application for students: <http://tinyurl.com/q8q8kxz>

For everyone else: <http://tinyurl.com/qg8cgsx>

AWIS GCH student members may join AWIS national for free. For more details and other membership questions please contact

awisgch.membership@gmail.com

AWIS GCH Logo contest

Put your creativity to work and design the next logo for AWIS GCH! The logo must include the words/phrases: Association for Women in Science, Gulf Coast Houston, and AWIS. AWIS colors are white and blue so that should also be incorporated. Judging will be done by email vote of our members. The criteria are as follows:

Relevance – Does the entry align with the theme and goals of AWIS GCH?

Originality – Is the entry an original design with creativity and imagination?

Aesthetic Quality – Is the entry aesthetically pleasing and do all the elements work together?

Please submit a logo in .eps format via email by December 1st 2017 at 5:00pm to awisgch.membership@gmail.com. The winner will be awarded a \$75 Amazon.com gift card, a free one year membership to AWIS GCH, and have their design featured in AWIS GCH flyers, presentations, on the AWIS GCH website, and on our social media. Looking forward to seeing your designs!

For more information about specific committees please contact them at their respective email addresses:

Thanks to Our Partners

