

## AWIS GCH Executive Board Nominees 2021-2022

### President

**Name:** Garima Vyas

**Occupation:** GIS Team Lead at LOGIC Solutions Group

**Please briefly describe how you plan to further the mission of AWIS GCH if elected for your chosen position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

As the President of AWIS GCH, if elected, I plan to empower the board members to engage and lead the membership of the chapter. According to Rosalind Franklin, science and everyday life cannot and should not be separated. I intend to focus on facilitating a positive environment for women with STEM careers, supporting their careers and raising awareness where needed. I am also interested in showcasing recognized speakers to motivate the membership base in the pursuit of their career goals.

**Have you held similar positions to the one for which you are applying in AWIS GCH or in other organizations? Please briefly describe your qualifications for this position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

As the current term President for AWIS GCH, I have been actively working towards the goals listed above. During the year of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was a challenge to kick off this board term in a manner where the members felt engaged and the board felt accomplished when executing their goals for the term. I am amazed at how well the board did this past year.

Everyone managed the transition to the virtual environment pretty well.

No one knows how things will be when the new term kicks off, nonetheless, I am excited to bring back in-person events and connect with members face-to-face. I look forward to the chapter growth in the next board term and to serving an organization driven by the purpose of supporting women in science.

**Please list your previous experience and involvement with AWIS GCH (e.g., attendance at networking events, outreach, etc.). If you have not yet been involved with AWIS GCH, please describe how you plan to be involved. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I have been an AWIS GCH member for a little over 2 years now. I have attended majority of the events which were organized, and I have enjoyed meeting the membership base a lot. It is an amazing networking platform allowing you to be in the same room (virtually or in person) with so many accomplished STEM women. I have also served on the board for two terms, one term as the Science Communication Chair and the second term as the chapter President. I look forward to networking with members, leaders and to drive the diversity and equity conversations in our respective STEM careers.

## Secretary

**Name:** Nicole Moringo

**Occupation:** Research Scientist at Rockwater Energy Solutions

**Please briefly describe how you plan to further the mission of AWIS GCH if elected for your chosen position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

Sending out emails and information to our members is imperative to maintaining communication and involvement. In addition, detailed meeting minutes are crucial to ensure that each board member is on the same page.

**Have you held similar positions to the one for which you are applying in AWIS GCH or in other organizations? Please briefly describe your qualifications for this position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I served as secretary for the graduate student association at Rice University for two years as well as AWIS GCH for one year.

**Please list your previous experience and involvement with AWIS GCH (e.g., attendance at networking events, outreach, etc.). If you have not yet been involved with AWIS GCH, please describe how you plan to be involved. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I served as a board member for the 2020-2021 year as well as attended events from 2019-2021

---

**Name:** Madison Crowell

**Occupation:** Quality Manager at CYCAT

**Please briefly describe how you plan to further the mission of AWIS GCH if elected for your chosen position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

Deepen my understanding of the association and find ways to expand my contributions.

**Have you held similar positions to the one for which you are applying in AWIS GCH or in other organizations? Please briefly describe your qualifications for this position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I was going to take the ASTM E20 sub-committee Secretary position prior to my job change.

**Please list your previous experience and involvement with AWIS GCH (e.g., attendance at networking events, outreach, etc.). If you have not yet been involved with AWIS GCH, please describe how you plan to be involved. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I would like to find my place in helping other women find the opportunities in industry.

### Career Development Chair

**Name:** Varsha Pednekar

**Occupation:** Patent Agent

**Please briefly describe how you plan to further the mission of AWIS GCH if elected for your chosen position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I plan on continuing the career development series and host other career related events.

**Have you held similar positions to the one for which you are applying in AWIS GCH or in other organizations? Please briefly describe your qualifications for this position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

Career development chair AWIS gch chair

**Please list your previous experience and involvement with AWIS GCH (e.g., attendance at networking events, outreach, etc.). If you have not yet been involved with AWIS GCH, please describe how you plan to be involved. (N/A if nominating someone):**

Past year awis gch career development chair

## Membership Chair

**Name:** Miriam Gavriiliuc

**Occupation:** Graduate Student at University of Houston

**Please briefly describe how you plan to further the mission of AWIS GCH if elected for your chosen position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

If elected, I plan to continue reaching women in science in order to introduce them to the community provided by AWIS GCH, just as I was introduced to AWIS GCH. I plan to get more graduate students involved with AWIS GCH through direct communication with institution departments.

**Have you held similar positions to the one for which you are applying in AWIS GCH or in other organizations? Please briefly describe your qualifications for this position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I am a current member of the Keck Seminar Planning Committee through the Gulf Coast Consortia. As a member, I am responsible for planning and maintaining a list of speakers for the seminars, as well as inviting and hosting the selected speakers.

**Please list your previous experience and involvement with AWIS GCH (e.g., attendance at networking events, outreach, etc.). If you have not yet been involved with AWIS GCH, please describe how you plan to be involved. (N/A if nominating someone):**

Since joining AWIS GCH, I have attended every monthly networking event, as well the career development events. I am also in the process of writing an article for AWIS GCH.

---

**Name:** Aparna Subramaniam

**Occupation:** Graduate Student at M D Anderson Cancer Center

**Please briefly describe how you plan to further the mission of AWIS GCH if elected for your chosen position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I would like to improve and enhance efforts to increase the membership of AWIS GCH

**Have you held similar positions to the one for which you are applying in AWIS GCH or in other organizations? Please briefly describe your qualifications for this position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I am currently the membership chair of AWIS GCH and would like to continue in the position to contribute further to the organization.

**Please list your previous experience and involvement with AWIS GCH (e.g., attendance at networking events, outreach, etc.). If you have not yet been involved with AWIS GCH, please describe how you plan to be involved. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I am currently the membership chair of AWIS GCH and have participated in networking and career development events.

## Community Outreach Chair

**Name:** Sri Lakshmi Chalasani

**Occupation:**

**Please briefly describe how you plan to further the mission of AWIS GCH if elected for your chosen position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I would like to continue my effort in community outreach activities by creating collaborating opportunities between AWIS GCH and other organizations, by planning virtual events and if possible live meet ups with fun activities.

**Have you held similar positions to the one for which you are applying in AWIS GCH or in other organizations? Please briefly describe your qualifications for this position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

Yes, I have been a community outreach chair for 2 years for various student organizations before AWIS GCH, during which I had the opportunity to organize drives and education awareness activities in the communities.

**Please list your previous experience and involvement with AWIS GCH (e.g., attendance at networking events, outreach, etc.). If you have not yet been involved with AWIS GCH, please describe how you plan to be involved. (N/A if nominating someone):**

As a part of AWIS GCH, I was given a wonderful opportunity to interact and collaborate with different organizations on different platforms. Participated in networking events, a quiz and presentations during the networking hour.

### Scholarship Chair

**Name:** Tapsi Kumar

**Occupation:** Graduate Student at MD Anderson Cancer Center

**Please briefly describe how you plan to further the mission of AWIS GCH if elected for your chosen position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

As an extension to my current tasks for the year 2020-2021, i plan to further expand the scholarship program by holding 2 events this year, The annual essay competition and The best donor statement. Both the activities focus on presenting one's scientific work to a non-scientific audience.

**Have you held similar positions to the one for which you are applying in AWIS GCH or in other organizations? Please briefly describe your qualifications for this position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I currently am the Chair of Scholarships at AWIS-GCH and have contributed in managing SEFH award scholarships on behalf of AWIS.

**Please list your previous experience and involvement with AWIS GCH (e.g., attendance at networking events, outreach, etc.). If you have not yet been involved with AWIS GCH, please describe how you plan to be involved. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I worked with other members of AWIS-GCH in managing and judging the SEFH awards this year.

-----

**Name:** Mabel Perez-Oquendo

**Occupation:** Graduate Student at MD Anderson Cancer Center

**Please briefly describe how you plan to further the mission of AWIS GCH if elected for your chosen position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

My name is Mabel Perez-Oquendo, and I am a PhD student at the MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS). I am running for the Scholarship Chair of the AWIS Gulf Coast Houston (AWIS GCH) chapter. As a Latina in science, I want to build upon the knowledge that I learn from my mentors, and to facilitate scientific careers to women in STEM as an academic administrator. In support of my career goal, I was the only GSBS student selected to be part of the Cancer Research Administration and Management (CRAM) Certificate Program Cohort II at MD Anderson, which provides in depth understanding of the broad field of biomedical science research administration. The CRAM Program offered me the Pre and Post award courses, which provided me with a fluency in policies and procedures at the frontline of our graduate school that facilitates further grant/scholarship administration and therefore high caliber research- with an eye toward fulfill the responsibilities of the Scholarship Chairperson. The AWIS GCH will give me the opportunity to work on career advancement and simultaneously contribute to my community through science outreach. If elected, I aim to further AWIS GCH's mission by increasing opportunities for the members to network with STEM professional

mentors in diverse careers. The outcome of the network events will be valuable insight in how to achieve their short and long-term goals, advise on how to overcome challenges in their training, and discover new professional development opportunities. The mentor-mentee relationships are the most impactful for success and gaining effective direction. I firmly believe that increasing awareness of AWIS GCH's activities, as well as deepen relationships along the Texas Medical Center (TMC), is key to recruit and engage chapter members and executive board members across all genders.

**Have you held similar positions to the one for which you are applying in AWIS GCH or in other organizations? Please briefly describe your qualifications for this position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I consider myself a good fit for this position because of my previous experience serving as the President of the American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) for three consecutive years at the University of Puerto Rico-Rio Piedras (UPRRP), where I organized events focused on outreach and community service, journal clubs, professional development seminars, and annual scientific meetings for UPRRP students. I had the opportunity to share the impact of our chapter and networks with the board members of the other ASBMBs at the national conference Experimental Biology 2016 and 2017. After transition to PhD, I had the opportunity to keep contributing to the STEM community by being the Media Relations Coordinator 2019 of the Association of Minority Biomedical Researchers (AMBR) at MD Anderson Cancer Center (MDACC). Our goals were to ensure that minorities or individuals that traditionally lack access to resources have access to higher education and are actively recruited to graduate school; to ensure that these students have a supportive community and access to resources that cater to their needs and assist them in their educational, academic, and career endeavors; and to work with other student organizations in serving our local community. Also, I was an event coordinator for the Summer Biomedical Academy 2019 and GSBS Community Outreach Program Science Night 2020; judge at the Rice Undergraduate Research Symposium & Poster Competition and CPRIT CURE Summer Undergraduate Research Program's 2019 Research Symposium & Poster Competition; recruiter for MDACC at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) 2019. Currently, I am an event coordinator for the Genetics & Epigenetics (G&E) Program's Community Standing Committee, G&E Historical Perspectives in Sciences series, G&E Program Retreat, and the G&E Seminar series. Our goals are to report recent research findings, volunteer outreach activities, and develop and implement the scientific and social events for other graduate students, faculty, and staff. I believe that my previous and current leadership experience, as well as my training in the CRAM Program, make me an ideal candidate for the Scholarship Chairperson. I was trained by both experience and courses in how to further scholarship administration, including define the criteria for the scholarship applicants, solicit applications, and select an appropriate application review Committee. I am eager to support women in STEM and work as a team with the Executive Board of the AWIS GCH.

**Please list your previous experience and involvement with AWIS GCH (e.g., attendance at networking events, outreach, etc.). If you have not yet been involved with AWIS GCH, please describe how you plan to be involved. (N/A if nominating someone):**

When I was accepted to graduate school, I had the opportunity to participate in events organized by the AWIS GCH immediately, since my freshman year. I choose to register and complete the AWIS GCH Networking Bootcamp Fall 2018. This event, led by Dr. Agathe Bourgogne, was one of my personal favorites. What I learned from it helped me to land the interview with PI and thoughtfully select lab rotations that set me to my current doctorate lab home. After this network event I keep participating in person and virtual networking events on the first Tuesday of each month.



## Outstanding Women in Science Chair

**Name:** Sandhya Sharma

**Occupation:** Graduate Student at Baylor College of Medicine

**Please briefly describe how you plan to further the mission of AWIS GCH if elected for your chosen position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

Ever since I joined AWIS-GCH as a OWIS-Seminar chair last year, I have learnt a quite deal on women empowerment, networking, and engagement with community outside of my work place, friend circle and my comfort bubble. This past year has been a learning experience amidst COVID-19 and other restrictions and I would like to run again for the position to really do the best at this position while incorporating my experiences and knowledge gained from the organization over this past year.

**Have you held similar positions to the one for which you are applying in AWIS GCH or in other organizations? Please briefly describe your qualifications for this position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

I served as a chair for OWIS Seminar 2020-2021. I did learn a lot in the position and successfully conducted Fall 2020 OWIS seminar and am planning OWIS 2021 Fall seminar. I have realized that there's a lot more I can do, contribute from my side to strengthen AWIS mission and also enhance the advantages of OWIS seminar - like expanding on social media PR by doing "Highlight of the month - Women In Science " where we can do a short blurb and recognize any women in Houston area with STEM contribution; networking with TMC and other industries to celebrate any women presenters and seminars on diversity and inclusions; and I would like to be given that chance.

**Please list your previous experience and involvement with AWIS GCH (e.g., attendance at networking events, outreach, etc.). If you have not yet been involved with AWIS GCH, please describe how you plan to be involved. (N/A if nominating someone):**

AWISH-GCH OWIS seminar Chair

## Liaison to Industry

**Name:** Alyssa Johnston

**Occupation:** Medical science liaison at AstraZeneca

**Please briefly describe how you plan to further the mission of AWIS GCH if elected for your chosen position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

Continuing to bring industry panelists and events to AWIS members for career Development and networking

**Have you held similar positions to the one for which you are applying in AWIS GCH or in other organizations? Please briefly describe your qualifications for this position. (N/A if nominating someone):**

Yes. Past chair person for two years

**Please list your previous experience and involvement with AWIS GCH (e.g., attendance at networking events, outreach, etc.). If you have not yet been involved with AWIS GCH, please describe how you plan to be involved. (N/A if nominating someone):**

Active member and chairperson In AWIS