

2005 Report from the Committee on the Status of Women in Astronomy

by Patricia Knezek

The 2004-2005 year was an active one for the committee. It underwent a normal membership rotation, with CSWA committee members Liliya Williams (U. Minnesota) and Michael Rupen (NRAO) completing their tenure in June of 2004. Both members made many contributions to the committee, and we would like to thank them. In particular, Michael served as a co-editor of AASWOMEN for six months beyond the end of his tenure on the CSWA, and for that we are deeply grateful. Amy Simon-Miller (GSFC) graciously agreed to serve an additional term on the CSWA. She joins new members Francesca Primas (ESO) and Joan Schmelz (U. Memphis), on the committee until June of 2007. I continued to chair the committee for the 2004-2005 year.

For this past year the main focus of the committee has been the creation of a set of recommendations based on the outcome of the conference "Women in Astronomy II: Ten Years After" (WIA II), held in Pasadena in June 2003. The proceedings of the conference itself are being edited by Fran Bagenal (U. Colorado) and Meg Urry (Yale U.), and will be available from the link <http://www.aas.org/~cswa/WIA2003.html> when finished. In the meantime, the set of recommendations, entitled "Equity Now: The Pasadena Recommendations for Gender Equality in Astronomy," were completed. This set of recommendations was the result of the efforts of numerous people throughout the astronomical community, including participants who attended the WIA II meeting, various past and present CSWA committee members, and AAS members who reviewed and commented on the draft document while it was posted on the AAS Members-Only website from July-September 2004. The Recommendations follow from these guiding principles:

- Women and men are equally talented and deserve equal opportunity.
- Full participation of men and women will maximize excellence in the field.
- The measure of equal opportunity is outcome, *i.e.*, gender equity will have been attained when the percentage of women in the next level of advancement equals the percentage in the pool.
- Long-term change requires periodic evaluation of progress and consequent action to address areas where improvement is necessary.

This set of Recommendations focuses on five individual areas: A. Tenure-Track Hiring, B. Career Advancement and Recognition, C. Institutional

Policies, D. Varied Career Paths, E. Cultural Issues, and F. Statistical Information. The Recommendations are seen by the CSWA as a first step towards overall equity in astronomy, with the recognition that subsequent recommendations that focus on different areas and/or groups will be necessary to continue progress in the future. The CSWA was extremely pleased when the AAS Council voted without opposition to endorse the Pasadena Recommendations on 9 January 2005. The endorsed version of the Recommendations can be downloaded from the CSWA website in either pdf or word format, see: <http://www.aas.org/~cswa>. The committee members would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the many members of our community who helped us with this document, and I would personally like to thank my fellow committee members for the outstanding job they did in putting together a document that really reflects a consensus of community opinion. We encourage everyone who has not done so to download it and read through it.

Once the Recommendations document was endorsed, the CSWA began to actively work on ways to implement the various recommendations. A first step was to hold a panel discussion during the CSWA session at the January 2005 AAS meeting in San Diego. Panel members were Karen Bjorkman (U. Toledo), John Feldmeier (NOAO), Katy Garmany (Columbia U./NOAO), Barbara Mattson (GSFC), and Tammy Smecker-Hane (U.C. Irvine). The panelists were asked to prioritize the Recommendations from the perspective of their current career path (panelists represented graduate students to senior scientists). All five of the sections were highlighted by one or more of the panel members. This sparked an interesting discussion including some practical methods for implementation of some of the Recommendations. The CSWA is now forming subcommittees to work on how to implement the individual sections of the Recommendations. We plan to use our website as a central location for the information we gather. This website is discussed in more detail below.

The CSWA co-sponsored a special session with Fran Bagenal and the Committee on the Status of Minorities in Astronomy on "The Astronomy Workforce" at the June 2004 AAS meeting in Denver. This session covered topics such as workforce supply and demand in astronomy and physics, the statistics of AAS membership, and how to approach family issues in the workforce. The speakers were Fran Bagenal (U. Colorado), Kevin Marvel (AAS), and Rachel Ivie (AIP). The first two talks are available linked off the CSWA website.

The CSWA also successfully proposed for a special session that will be held at the June 2005 AAS meeting in Minneapolis. We are co-sponsoring this session, entitled "Institutional Solutions to the 'Two-Body' Problem," with the Employment Committee. The session will focus on the

approaches that institutions are taking to help dual-career couples. Speakers will include Eileen Friel (NSF), Tammy Smecker-Hane (U.C. Irvine), Roberta Humphreys (U. Minnesota), and Ellen Zweibel (U. Wisconsin – Madison). Details of this special session will be covered in the next annual report.

In addition to the committee's work on the Pasadena Recommendations and collaborating with other committees on special sessions, we have also continued the basic activities of the CSWA. Amy Simon-Miller continues to do an exemplary job maintaining our website, <http://www.aas.org/~cswa>. This website contains information about our ongoing activities, including meetings, surveys, and back issues of our publications. It also provides a link to the Women in Astronomy Database produced by the CSWA, which can be used to find speakers for colloquia, scientific meetings, or school visits, to solicit job applicants, or to sort by education, expertise, research interests, etc. for statistical or search purposes. We also provide links to other websites targeted at women in science. As a part of our ongoing efforts to help institutions implement the Pasadena Recommendations, we plan to redesign our website over the coming year to incorporate helpful information and links.

Our committee continues to publish *STATUS* (the twice-yearly paper magazine). Fran Bagenal of the University of Colorado has now taken over as the *STATUS* editor. I serve as an associate editor, and Joannah Hinz continues in her role as an associate editor as well. Krista Wildt at STScI continues to excel at the task of designing the layout. Recent issues have included articles on astronomers Beatrice Tinsley and Henrietta Leavitt, as well as number of statistical studies of the progress of women in astronomy, both in the United States and in Canada, and information on how graduate students can effectively select a graduate school.

We have also continued *AASWOMEN* (the weekly electronic newsletter). Through January 2005, it was edited by Michael Rupen, Jim Ulvestad, and myself. In January 2005, Michael rotated off, and Lisa Frattare joined our editorial team. She will serve as a co-editor through June 2005. Like *STATUS*, the *AASWOMEN* newsletter focuses on information on the situation of women in science and engineering, with particular emphasis on astronomy, and back issues are available linked from the CSWA website. This year *AASWOMEN* has covered the recent extensive press coverage of studies on genetic differences between men and women that followed remarks made by Harvard President Lawrence Summers. Other items have included: grants and awards of interest, such as those for women re-entering the fields of physics and astronomy after leaving for an extended period of time; the potential applications of Title IX to science

and engineering; and mentoring opportunities for women students. We also publish job ads that are submitted to the editorial staff.