

AAS Committee on the Status of Women

Issue of August 30, 2019

eds: JoEllen McBride, Nicolle Zellner, Heather Flewelling, Maria Patterson, and
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1. AAS Board Reflections: Christine Jones

From: JoEllen McBride via womeninastronomy.blogspot.com

In order to familiarize the astronomy community with the AAS Board and encourage participation, the CSWA created a Reflection Survey for outgoing AAS Board members to complete after their terms ended in June. Over the coming weeks, we will feature the responses we've received on the Women in Astronomy blog. Enjoy!

Our second participant in our AAS Board Reflections project is Christine Jones, PhD. Dr. Jones is a senior astrophysicist at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. She is currently the past president of the American Astronomical Society and the director of the Smithsonian Institution's Consortium for Unlocking the Mysteries of the Universe. She earned her Ph.D. in Astronomy in 1974 from Harvard and has made significant contributions to the field of high energy astrophysics through her work on X-ray emission from early-type galaxies.

Read more at

<http://womeninastronomy.blogspot.com/2019/08/aas-board-reflections-christine-jones.html>

2. Dr. Martha P. Haynes, Goldwin Smith Professor of Astronomy at Cornell

University, to receive the 2019 Bruce Gold Medal

From Nancy Morrison [nancy.morrison@utoledo.edu]

The Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP) is proud to announce the 2019 recipient of its most prestigious award, the Catherine Wolfe Bruce Gold Medal honoring Dr. Martha P. Haynes, in recognition as an international leader and pioneer of radio studies of galaxies.

Dr. Haynes has made major contributions to our understanding of the composition, interactions, distribution, and evolution of galaxies in the universe throughout an impressive research career spanning over 40 years. Haynes is an internationally recognized leader and pioneer in radio studies of galaxies,

specifically observations of the 21 cm wavelength of neutral hydrogen (HI).

Read more at

<https://astrosociety.org/who-we-are/awards/catherine-wolfe-bruce-gold-medal.html>

3. In Support of the Vera C. Rubin Observatory
From: Alessandra Aloisi [alosisi_at_stsci.edu]

By Megan Donahue

"On July 23, the U.S. House of Representatives approved H.R. 3196, the Vera C. Rubin Observatory Designation Act, which was introduced by Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas and Representative Jennifer González-Colón of Puerto Rico (at large). If the Senate agrees, it will name the facility housing the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope the Vera C. Rubin Observatory in honor of Carnegie Institution for Science researcher Vera Cooper Rubin, who died in 2016."

Read more at

<https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/in-support-of-the-vera-c-rubin-observatory/>

4. Did this Woman Really Discover What 'the Universe is Made of'?
From: Heather Flewelling [flewelling.heather_at_gmail.com]

By Alex Kasprak

"A Facebook post, first published in September 2018 and reshared virally in July 2019, discussed the career of Harvard astronomer Cecilia Payne and her contribution to our modern understanding of the universe.

Cecilia Payne (who went by Cecilia Payne-Gaposchkin most of her life) was instrumental in discovering the ubiquity of hydrogen in our universe, and the data she derived for her 1925 dissertation are likely the most significant contributions to our modern understanding of the true composition of stars. Despite this, she was, at the time, encouraged to downplay her paradigm-challenging results at the behest of men who would later verify them as accurate. That said, the viral post takes a few liberties. This article provides historical and scientific context about Payne-Gaposchkin, and then addresses each specific statement in the post."

Read more at

<https://www.snopes.com/news/2019/08/23/cecilia-payne-harvard-astronomy/>

5. Rosa Parks And Sally Ride Are Getting Their Very Own Barbies
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

By Alanna Vagianos

"Kids around the world will be able to play with Barbie's newest dolls -- Rosa Parks and Sally Ride -- very soon.

The company announced on Monday that the two iconic women are the newest additions to Barbie's Inspiring Women series. Parks, a famed civil rights activist, and Ride, the first woman and youngest American to travel to space, will each come with educational information about their historic contributions so that children can learn while playing. "

Read more at

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/rosa-parks-sally-ride-barbies_n_5d600237e4b0dfcbd48c9260

6. 'Mission Mangal' Tells the True Story of the Women Behind India's First Mission to Mars

From: Nicolle Zellner [nzellner_at_albion.edu]

By Chelsea Gohd

"The film, [likened by some](#) to the 2017 U.S. film "Hidden Figures," showcases the team behind the historic mission which included a number of women. In the film, the characters who make up the MOM team were changed from the original women who worked on the mission. Still, the fictional characters representing the women who sent India's first satellite to the moon did a fantastic job representing the dedication, struggle and scientific accomplishments of the women on the team."

Read more and see the trailer at

<https://www.space.com/mission-mangal-true-story-women-india-mars.html>

7. A 24-year-old entrepreneur was bored in science class "so she started this company

From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

By Elizabeth Schulze

"Komal Dadlani was 24 years-old when she completed her Master's degree in biochemistry from the University of Chile.

"She loved science -- but would often leave class feeling bored."

"Dadlani's frustration prompted an idea: A start-up that would make learning science more accessible, and fun, for students like her across Latin America, where fewer than 15% of students earn degrees in STEM (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics) fields, according to the National Science Foundation. The premise was to use the sensors and processing power of smartphones and tablets for science experiments."

Read more at

<https://www.cNBC.com/2019/08/23/komal-dadlani-co-founded-lab4u-at-age-24-to-teach-science-on-phones.html>

8. Fall research symposium at New York University

From: Nicolle Zellner [nzellner_at_albion.edu]

By Matthew Kleban

"The Department of Physics at New York University seeks emerging and early career physicists for a Fall research symposium featuring new work, new voices and new perspectives. We aim to build a vibrant, diverse and inclusive community of scholars and educators and this symposium forms a part of our efforts to achieve these goals. The event is open to scholars that have completed their doctoral degree and are now or soon will be on the market for a faculty position, a minimum of one year of postdoctoral experience is required. To broaden our scope, we will give preference to scholars from underrepresented minority or minority (including women) backgrounds and those with a disability. We particularly welcome scholars in areas of theoretical soft condensed matter physics, theoretical cosmology and astroparticle physics, and theoretical or computational quantum physics."

Read more and apply at

<http://as.nyu.edu/physics/information/jobs.html#4>

9. Younger scientists need better support

From: Heather Flewelling [flewelling.heather_at_gmail.com]

By Alison Mitchell

"Letters from research funders to university leaders rarely raise eyebrows. But a letter sent this month by the heads of the United Kingdom's three largest medical-research funders did just that.

"It says that some types of funding could be withheld unless universities provide better support for early- and mid-career staff -- particularly women and trainees. And it warns that institutions could be prevented from bidding for funded posts unless they change their ways. The letter is signed by the heads of the Medical Research Council, the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and Wellcome."

Read more at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-02561-0>

10. The Publications Arms Race

From: Nicolle Zellner [nzellner_at_albion.edu]

By Lisa Feldman Barrett

"Psychological science today is locked in an arms race: a heated competition for superiority and status. This competition is not fought with weapons, material wealth, or even truth. It's fought in publications.

"Published papers have always served two purposes in the economy of scientific inquiry: They convey knowledge, but they're also the currency that buys you status and a successful scientific career. We are hired, paid, and promoted largely on the basis of the papers we publish -- not just their content but also their quantity (Lawrence, 2007). Of course, there are other metrics for success -- grants, invited addresses and lectures, and so on -- but publications are the primary currency of scientific distinction and standing."

"It's long been known that incentive structures that favor quantity over quality, status over substance, are a risk to the progress and integrity of science ..."

Read more at

<https://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/the-publications-arms-race>

11. Female-free speaker list causes PHP show to collapse when diversity-oriented devs jump ship

From: Heather Flewelling [flewelling.heather_at_gmail.com]

By Thomas Claburn

'Under the heading, "Diversity Matters!" the [website](#) for the PHP Central Europe developer conference (PHP.CE) says, "PHP Central Europe Conference is committed to creating a conference that is as inclusive as possible."

'Over the weekend, organizers of the conference, which had been scheduled for October 4-6 in Dresden, Germany, ended the event evermore after two scheduled speakers issued public statements that they would not be attending this year, citing concerns about the lack of diversity.'

Read more at

https://www.theregister.co.uk/2019/08/27/php_europe_cancelled/

12. Biased Evaluation Committees Promote Fewer Women

From: Heather Flewelling [heather_at_ifa.hawaii.edu] and Alessandra Aloisi [alosisi_at_stsci.edu]

By Nicoletta Lanese

"Evaluation committees that hold implicit biases against women in science promote fewer women than men to elite research positions--but only if they don't explicitly believe that gender bias exists, researchers reported today (August 26) in *Nature Human Behavior*. According to their analysis of real-world hires at France's national research agency, when committees acknowledge that bias may color their decision-making, the link between their implicit stereotypes and promotion decisions disappears."

Read more at

<https://www.the-scientist.com/news-opinion/biased-evaluation-committees-promote-fewer-women-66355>

13. More Birthdays Needed for the AAS Wall Calendar

From: Heather Flewelling [heather_at_ifa.hawaii.edu]

By Richard Tresch Fienberg

"Last month we explained why all but one of the astronomers whose birthdays are noted in the 2019 AAS Wall Calendar are white men and invited AAS members to help us address this lack of gender and racial balance for future editions. Oddly, despite a flurry of comments on social media, we received very few recommendations for female astronomers and astronomers of color whose birthdays should be noted on the calendar. Accordingly, we're asking again."

To add more birthdays, please visit

<https://aas.org/posts/news/2019/08/more-birthdays-needed-aas-wall-calendar>

14. Job Opportunities

For those interested in increasing excellence and diversity in their organizations, a list of resources and advice is here:

<https://cswa.aas.org/diversity.html#howtoincrease>

- Tenure-track position, Computational Astrophysics or Computational Condensed-matter Physics, Boise State University

<https://boisestate.taleo.net/careersection/exfac/jobdetail.ftl?job=190686>

- Assistant Professor, Planetary Geology/Geophysics, Western Washington University

<https://employment.wvu.edu/cw/en-us/job/497337/assistant-professor-of-planetary-geologygeophysics>

15. How to Submit to the *AASWOMEN* newsletter

To submit an item to the *AASWOMEN* newsletter, including replies to topics, send email to aaswomen_at_aas.org

All material will be posted unless you tell us otherwise, including your email address.

When submitting a job posting for inclusion in the newsletter, please include a one-line description and a link to the full job posting.

Please remember to replace "_at_" in the e-mail address above.

16. How to Subscribe or Unsubscribe to the *AASWOMEN* newsletter

Join AAS Women List by email:

Send an email to aaswomen_at_aas.org. A list moderator will add your email to the list. They will reply to your message to confirm that they have added you.

Join AAS Women List through the online portal:

Go to <https://lists.aas.org/postorius/lists/aaswlist.lists.aas.org> and enter the email address you wish to subscribe in the 'Your email address' field. You will receive an email from 'aaswlist-confirm' that you must reply to. There may be a delay between entering your email and receiving the confirmation message. Check your Spam or Junk mail folders for the message if you have not received it after 2 hours.

To unsubscribe from AAS Women by email:

Send an email to aaswlist-leave_at_lists.aas.org from the email address you wish to remove from the list. You will receive an email from 'aaswlist-confirm' that you must reply to which will complete the unsubscribe.

Leave AAS Women or change your membership settings through the online portal:

Go to <https://lists.aas.org/accounts/signup> to create an account with the online portal. After confirming your account you can see the lists you are subscribed to and update your settings.

17. Access to Past Issues

<https://cswa.aas.org/AASWOMEN.html>

Each annual summary includes an index of topics covered.

AASWomen Newsletter mailing list -- aaswlist@lists.aas.org
To unsubscribe send an email to aaswlist-leave@lists.aas.org