

AAS Committee on the Status of Women

Issue of November 15, 2019

eds: JoEllen McBride, Nicolle Zellner, Heather Flewelling, Maria Patterson, and  
Alessandra Aloisi

This week's issues:

1. Cross-post: Increasing gender diversity in the STEM research workforce
2. Math Looks The Same In The Brains Of Boys And Girls, Study Finds
3. Why they stay: These factors keep women in STEM careers
4. Celebrating Two Women In Science - Marie Curie And Lise Meitner
5. It's tough being small in a big-suit world. We still spacewalked.
6. 'Equity in Design' Panel Discussion
7. PhDs: the tortuous truth
8. What the US can learn from women in the Soviet workforce
9. Six female scientists won recognition for their outstanding efforts in pioneering research in scientific development in the region
10. How to Submit to the AASWOMEN newsletter
11. How to Subscribe or Unsubscribe to the AASWOMEN newsletter
12. Access to Past Issues of the AASWOMEN newsletter

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1. Cross-post: Increasing gender diversity in the STEM research workforce  
From: Katie Eckert via womeninastronomy.blogspot.com

"Women experience substantial, gender-specific barriers that can impede their advancement in research careers...We outline here specific, potentially high-impact policy changes that build upon existing mechanisms for research funding and governance and that can be rapidly implemented to counteract barriers facing women in science. These approaches must be coupled to vigorous and continuous outcomes-based monitoring, so that the most successful strategies can be disseminated and widely implemented. Though our professional focus is primarily academic biomedical research in U.S. institutions, we suggest that some of the approaches that we discuss may be broadly useful across STEM disciplines and outside of academia as well."

<https://womeninastronomy.blogspot.com/2019/11/cross-post-increasing-gender-diversity.html>

Read more at

<https://science.sciencemag.org/content/366/6466/692>

The CSWA is currently working on their own set of recommendations to the AAS for a more inclusive astronomy in the form of a *Bulletin of the American Astronomical Society (BAAS)* article. Those recommendations will be presented at AAS by Rachel Wexler, a senior at Georgia Tech who is working with the CSWA on this project.

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2. Math Looks The Same In The Brains Of Boys And Girls, Study Finds  
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com] and Alessandra Aloisi [aloisi\_at\_stsci.edu]

By Jon Hamilton

"There's new evidence that girls start out with the same math abilities as boys.

"A study of 104 children from ages 3 to 10 found similar patterns of brain activity in boys and girls as they engaged in basic math tasks, researchers reported Friday in the journal *Science of Learning*."

Read more at

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/11/08/777187543/math-looks-the-same-in-the-brains-of-boys-and-girls-study-finds>

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3. Why they stay: These factors keep women in STEM careers  
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Anne Stych

"Family-friendly policies and support are second in importance only to grant funding among factors that keep women working in STEM careers, according to

alumni of L'Oréal USA's For Women in Science (FWIS) fellowship program."

Read more at

<https://www.bizjournals.com/bizwomen/news/latest-news/2019/11/why-they-staythese-factors-keep-women-in-stem.html>

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4. Celebrating Two Women In Science - Marie Curie And Lise Meitner  
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Melanie Fine

"Since IUPAC approved the elemental name Oganesson in 2006, there are officially 118 elements on the periodic table. Only 19 of these are named after people, and of these 19, only two are named after women -- Element number 96 Curium, named for Marie Curie, and element number 109 Meitnerium, named for Lise Meitner.

"Both women were physicists, and curiously, both women were born on November 7, eleven years apart."

Read more at

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/melaniefine/2019/11/07/marie-curie-and-lise-meitner/#204cd78f683d>

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5. It's tough being small in a big-suit world. We still spacewalked.  
From: Nicolle Zellner [nzellner\_at\_albion.edu]

By Christina Koch and Jessica Meir

"Although the first spacewalk by a man happened in 1965, it took until 1984 for a woman to step out into the vacuum of space. Since then, a total of 15 women have ventured into it. Of the 221 spacewalks at the International Space Station, 37 have included a woman, and now, just one has included two.

"Those women who did break through before us became our heroines. As the sentiment and demographics of the astronaut corps moved toward gender equality, the range of suit sizes remained an anachronism tethered to the era of its birth by technical constraints and long redevelopment timelines. In this instance, the ramifications of a different epoch of space exploration diminished slowly because of technology, not intention."

Read more at

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/11/11/its-tough-being-small-big-suit-world-we-still-spacewalked/>

See also

<http://nasawatch.com/archives/2019/11/orbital-op-ed-f.html>

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6. 'Equity in Design' Panel Discussion  
From: Nancy Morrison [nancyastrol26\_at\_gmail.com]

"What does 'Equity in Design' mean to you? Come join three scholars as they discuss how algorithms, education, policy, and language can and should incorporate equity in their design. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine welcomes you to a panel discussion and reception at the National Academy of Sciences Building on December 2 at 6 pm (registration open at 5:30pm)."

This invitation does not indicate whether a webcast of the event will be available.

Date and Time

Monday, December 2, 2019  
5:30 PM – 9:00 PM EST

Location

National Academy of Sciences Building  
2101 Constitution Ave, NW  
West Court  
Washington, DC 20418

Register at

<https://nationalacademies.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5dc4a6f3f17fd11adf3be4912&id=b3a419fd2f&e=b7b7650ba6>

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7. PhDs: the tortuous truth  
From: Nicolle Zellner [nzellner\_at\_albion.edu]

By Chris Woolston

"The results of *Nature's* fifth survey of PhD students [tell] a story of personal reward and resilience against a backdrop of stress, uncertainty and struggles with depression and anxiety. The survey drew self-selecting responses from more than 6,300 early-career researchers -- the most in the survey's ten-year history. The respondents hail from every part of the globe and represent the full spectrum of scientific fields.

"The positives generally outweighed the negatives: 75% of respondents said they were at least somewhat satisfied with their decision to get a PhD, a slight decline from 78% in *Nature's* most recent PhD-student survey, conducted two years ago."

Read more at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03459-7>

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8. What the US can learn from women in the Soviet workforce  
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Kristen R. Ghodsee

"In episode two of HBO's 10-Emmy award-winning series *Chernobyl*, lead character Ulana Khomyuk (played by Emily Watson) delivers a scathing line to a male Soviet Communist Party leader: 'I am a nuclear physicist. Before you were deputy secretary, you worked in a shoe factory.'"

"The dialogue hints at a fascinating reversal of traditional gender roles. In fact, writer Craig Mazin invented the fictional character of Khomyuk in recognition of the important scientific contributions of socialist women."

Read more at

<https://qz.com/1746284/socialist-countries-employ-more-women-in-math-and-science/>

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9. Six female scientists won recognition for their outstanding efforts in pioneering research in scientific development in the region  
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Kasia Truscott

"Six leading female scientists in the Middle East have been recognised for their notable contributions to the scientific community in the region, at the sixth edition of the L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science Middle East Fellowship, which took place on Sunday evening."

Read more about the event and fellows at

<https://www.harpersbazaararabia.com/people/culture/loreal-unesco-women-in-science-recognises-for-outstanding-efforts>

<https://www.ku.ac.ae/loreal-unesco-for-women-in-science-program-2019-recognizes-outstanding-female-scientists-in-the-middle-east/>

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10. How to Submit to the AASWOMEN newsletter

To submit an item to the AASWOMEN newsletter, including replies to

topics, send email to [aaswomen\\_at\\_lists.aas.org](mailto:aaswomen_at_lists.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.

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#### 11. How to Subscribe or Unsubscribe to the AASWOMEN newsletter

Join AAS Women List by email:

Send an email to [aaswomen\\_at\\_lists.aas.org](mailto:aaswomen_at_lists.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](mailto: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.

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#### 12. Access to Past Issues

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

Each annual summary includes an index of topics covered.

AASWomen Newsletter mailing list -- [aaswlist@lists.aas.org](mailto:aaswlist@lists.aas.org)  
To unsubscribe send an email to [aaswlist-leave@lists.aas.org](mailto:aaswlist-leave@lists.aas.org)