

AAS Committee on the Status of Women  
Issue of January 10, 2020

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

This week's issues:

1. Cross-Post: Task Force Recommendations Outline Changes Needed to Increase African American Physics and Astronomy Students
2. Meet Your CSWA, Tiffany Wolbrecht
3. Astro2020 Panel on the State of the Profession and Societal Impacts
4. Sign-Up for AAS Congressional Visits Day (CVD) 2020!
5. Call for Volunteers: 2020 Astronomy Olympiad
6. Call for Mentors: Central American - Caribbean astro program
7. Pre-proposal teleconference: NASA Fellowship Activity 2020
8. LSST named Vera C. Rubin Observatory
9. Am I The Only Black Trans Woman In Physics
10. All-Female Crew Sets Off for Historic 'Mars' Mission
11. Gender pay gap identified at some US science agencies
12. NASA set for two more all-female spacewalks on the ISS in January
13. How to Submit to the AASWomen Newsletter
14. How to Subscribe or Unsubscribe to the AASWomen Newsletter
15. Access to Past Issues of the AASWomen Newsletter

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1. Cross-Post: Task Force Recommendations Outline Changes Needed to Increase African American Physics and Astronomy Students  
From: Katie Eckert via womeninastronomy.blogspot.com

There have been fewer than 100 PhDs in physics granted to African-American women as tracked by the AAWIP. Such depressing statistics require that physics and astronomy communities work to understand and change systemic barriers to African Americans succeeding in these fields. The National Task Force to Elevate African American representation in Undergraduate Physics & Astronomy (TEAM-UP) is working towards this goal and below we cross-post their January 5th press release made at the American Astronomical Society meeting.

Read more at

<http://womeninastronomy.blogspot.com/2020/01/cross-post-task-force-recommendations.html>

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2. Meet Your CSWA, Tiffany Wolbrecht  
From: Katie Eckert via womeninastronomy.blogspot.com

Tiffany is the Planetarium Lecturer at Youngstown State University's Ward Beecher Planetarium where she coordinates and leads programming. In 2018, Tiffany was selected for the Astronomy in Chile Educator's Ambassadors Program, or ACEAP, and traveled to Chile touring NSF-supported astronomy facilities and receiving extensive training about the observatories and their telescopes, instruments, science, and data. Tiffany currently serves on the leadership team for an NSF-funded project developing a planetarium show about astronomy in Chile along with web-based and hands-on resources.

Read more at

<http://womeninastronomy.blogspot.com/2020/01/meet-your-cswa-tiffany-wolbrecht.html>

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3. Astro2020 Panel on the State of the Profession and Societal Impacts  
From: Nicolle Zellner [nzellner\_at\_albion.edu]

"Astro2020 is the first decadal survey of astronomy and astrophysics to establish a Panel on the State of the Profession and Societal Impacts. Its goal is to assess the health of the community, including topics such as demographics, diversity and inclusion, workplace climate, workforce development, education, and public engagement. Community input is critical for this endeavor, and we invite you to share your thoughts, ideas, and comments with the panel by completing this form. This input will help the panel make actionable suggestions to the Astro2020 steering committee on what the profession should

look like in 2030 and how that vision can be realized. Submissions can be made either anonymously or signed. Only comments received by March 6, 2020, will be considered by the panel."

Submit input at

<https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5358271/Astro2020-Panel-on-the-State-of-the-Profession-and-Societal-Imp>

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#### 4. Sign-Up for AAS Congressional Visits Day (CVD) 2020!

From: Kelsie Krafton [Kelsie.Krafton\_at\_aas.org]

Every year the AAS brings volunteers to Washington, DC, to advocate for federal support of their science with their members of Congress for a Congressional Visits Day (CVD). To volunteer for this opportunity you must be an AAS member and you must be eligible to vote in the United States. The AAS will cover the majority of travel expenses for volunteers selected to participate, as our budget allows. Selected volunteers will be notified by mid-February 2020. This year the AAS CVD will be held Monday - Wednesday, 23 - 25 March 2020. We aim to select approximately 15 volunteers who balance the program by location, career stage, and experience. We especially encourage graduate students and early-career professionals to volunteer.

The deadline for application to AAS CVD 2020 is 11:59 pm on Saturday, 25 January.

More information and sign-up form at

<https://aas.org/advocacy/how-aas-advocates/congressional-visits-days>

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#### 5. Call for Volunteers: 2020 Astronomy Olympiad

From: Patricia Reiff [reiff\_at\_rice.edu]

I was the sponsor for the US team to the International Astronomy Olympiad this fall in Romania. It was the first time the US had participated in that largely Eastern Europe - Asia sponsored event (in fact, we were the only team from the Western Hemisphere!)

We are assembling the management team now. If anyone would like to participate, let me know. Note: this is NOT the same as the "International Olympiad of Astronomy and Astrophysics." The event will be in October in southern Italy.

Anyone who is interested, please let me know. I need:

1. Folks that will help me select questions for the qualifying exam
2. Folks that can help select students and mentor students who have been selected
3. Folks that can financially help support the students to go.
4. Folks who want to be on the board of the US team structure.

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#### 6. Call for Mentors: Central American - Caribbean astro program

From: Antonio Porras-Valverde [aporrasval\_at\_gmail.com]

The Central American - Caribbean bridge in astrophysics is a program created to mentor and train the next generation of students in astrophysics from that region. We hold monthly webinars and invite a speaker every month to talk about their personal life, academic obstacles, and research. The goal is for the students to feel represented, motivated, and capable, especially women in our group.

More recently, we began a remote-REU like internship where students are able to complete a mini-project within a four-month period. This would be a great opportunity for some women astronomers from AAS to mentor and advise one student from our group per semester and establish a connection.

Read more about the program at

<https://cencabridgeastro.weebly.com/>

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7. Pre-proposal teleconference: NASA Fellowship Activity 2020

From: Nicolle Zellner [nzellner\_at\_albion.edu]

NASA Office of STEM Engagement (OSE) opened a call for graduate research proposals on December 23, 2019. The NASA Research Announcement (NRA) NNH20ZHA001N: NASA Fellowship Activity 2020 is seeking student-authored and independently conceived graduate research proposals responding to a NASA Research Opportunity listed in the solicitation.

A first informational webinar about this fellowship research activity will be presented on Wednesday, January 08 at 5:00 pm ET (2:00 pm PT).

Read the solicitation and find the webinar information at

<https://nspires.nasaprs.com/external/solicitations/summary!init.do?solId={FE34FF68-88DA-AE12-9C18-A309B190C3F5}&path=open>

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8. LSST named Vera C. Rubin Observatory

From: Alessandra Aloisi [aloisi\_at\_stsci.edu] and JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

Here are a number of articles highlighting the LSST being named after Vera Rubin.

Read more at

First US observatory named in honor of a female astronomer, Vera Rubin

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/01/07/world/vera-rubin-observatory-scen-trnd/index.html>

Vera Rubin, giant of astronomy

<https://www.symmetrymagazine.org/article/vera-rubin-giant-of-astronomy>

For the First Time, a National U.S. Observatory Has Been Named for a Female Astronomer: Vera Rubin

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/new-telescope-facility-renamed-commemorate-dark-matter-scientist-vera-rubin-180973923/>

National U.S. Observatory Named After Female Astronomer Vera Rubin

<https://www.geek.com/news/national-u-s-observatory-named-after-female-astronomer-vera-rubin-1815691/>

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9. Am I The Only Black Trans Woman In Physics

From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Hontas Farmer

"Transgender women of color who have an advanced degree, MS or PhD, in Physics, and who have made, or make some part of their living by doing physics are rare. So far as I know I am the only one. It is [said there are only six Black American women with PhD's in theoretical high energy physics](#). A rough guess would be that there are less than sixty Black women with any advanced degree in any area of physics. There is no social justice point made here, no theory as to the cause for why beyond this. There are few transwomen of color in the world. Only ten to twelve percent of people have a MS or PhD in any subject, let alone physics. The intersection of these sets would naturally be quite small even without any sociological, discriminatory, barriers."

Read more at

[https://www.science20.com/hontas\\_farmer/am\\_i\\_the\\_only\\_black\\_trans\\_woman\\_in\\_physics-244298](https://www.science20.com/hontas_farmer/am_i_the_only_black_trans_woman_in_physics-244298)

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10. All-Female Crew Sets Off for Historic 'Mars' Mission

From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Chelsea Gohd

"This past Saturday (Jan. 4) in Hawaii, on the remote slopes of Mauna Loa, the largest volcano in the world, six scientists embarked on a historic "mission to Mars."

Analog astronaut missions place scientists and explorers in remote locations on Earth that physically resemble cosmic destinations like the moon and Mars. There, the researchers explore and perform research as if they were in space. This both generates important scientific data and informs space agencies about what it might be like to step foot on those far-off surfaces."

Read more at

<https://www.space.com/sensoria-hi-seas-all-female-mars-analog-mission.html>

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11. Gender pay gap identified at some US science agencies

From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Nature Career News

"Male scientists and other employees of some US federal agencies, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), earn more money than their female counterparts. A study published in the American Journal of Sociology finds that this wage gap is largely due to hiring methods that circumvent rules intended to ensure equity, and to higher salaries for the types of position that the agencies hire men to fill, among other factors."

Read more at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-00023-6>

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12. NASA set for two more all-female spacewalks on the ISS in January

From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Amanda Kooser

"Soon, the first all-woman spacewalk will no longer stand alone in history.

"[NASA shared details for its January schedule](#) of International Space Station spacewalks on Wednesday. Two of the three scheduled walks will be undertaken by astronauts Jessica Meir and Christina Koch, the two women who went on the [historic first all-female spacewalk](#) in October 2019."

Read more at

<https://www.cnet.com/news/nasa-set-for-two-more-all-female-spacewalks-in-january/>

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13. 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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14. 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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15. Access to Past Issues

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

Each annual summary includes an index of topics covered.

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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)