

Southwest Michigan SWE Section

Stay connected with SWE as we continue to work from home - join our recently created [SWE SWMI LinkedIn group](#), check out our [website](#) as well as our [Facebook group](#), and keep an eye out for stories on the WHR360 GPO and Twin Cities Channels!

Q3 2020 Newsletter

September 30, 2020



Southwest MI SWE Leadership Team

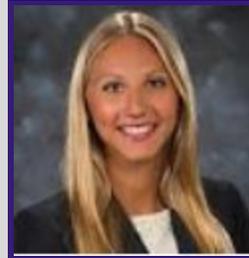
Executive Board:

President - Nicole Ernat
Vice President - Himabindu Yamana
Treasurer - Brianne Anderson
Secretary - Patricia Davis

Chair Positions:

Social - Brooke Gundersen
Membership - Michele Wilcox
Professional Development - Pervin Taleyarkhan
Social Media - Lisa Blumenthal
Outreach - Christine Golden & Randi Gelisse

President's Corner



Nicole Ernat

Happy fall fellow SWEsters! The Southwest Michigan chapter is excited to continue connecting with you all - you can look forward to a new professional development event and continued networking events in this upcoming quarter. As the SWE team continues to grow and strive to best support the STEM community, we are looking to connect with more professionals in the area. If you know of any other professionals who may be interested in SWE please reach out!



Professional Development Update

Pervin Taleyarkhan

Be on the lookout for a calendar invite for our Quarterly [Professional Development Panel Discussion](#) on October 20 at 4pm ET. This quarter's theme will be centered around "Developing Leadership Abilities." Our local SWE President, Nicole Ernat, will moderate a panel discussion featuring leaders from Whirlpool's product development teams (Binglai Chen, Mike Farrington, Simona Pappalardo, and Fang Deng) who will share their experiences in dealing with the changes and challenges of this past year and will answer questions on how to develop your own leadership abilities. Contact Pervin Taleyarkhan with any questions!



SWE 2020 Conference Update

Kathryn D'Alessandro

It's official - this year's WE20 conference will be 100% virtual! Parts of the conference will look the same - we'll still have a (virtual) booth for recruiting, and will be hosting a Whirlpool info session as we continue to spread awareness of our employer brand. As the conference is now being held over a two-week period, the virtual format presents more opportunities than ever for virtual conference attendees to work on their personal and professional development. Be on the lookout for more info on the application to attend!

Treasurer Report



Treasurer's Report Brienne Anderson

We're currently working through creating our budget for this year, meeting with each of the officers to understand their plans for outreach, social activities, and professional development. This planning will be used as a framework for budgets in future years as well.



SWMI SWE Member Highlight Patricia Davis, Secretary

Michele Wilcox – An S.W.E. Leader
With 30 patents to her name, Michele Wilcox was part of the original group of female engineers at Whirlpool Corporation that petitioned to form a local section in southwest Michigan for the Society of Women Engineers. In 2002, Section H013 was formed and has increased in size ever since 2002.

Michele has held a variety of positions within the section that has included being on the planning committee for Whirlpool Corp's first appearance at the 2002 SWE National Conference. She went on to co-lead Whirlpool's presence at the 2003 conference.

Michele has been membership chair for the section for 11 years, and has been instrumental in growing the size of the section by fostering an easy renewal process for members. The section now includes over 100 Whirlpool employees. In April, the section received the "SWE WE Local 2020 Membership Retention Award." This award is presented to the top 20 sections with the highest retention rates.

"It was an honor to receive this award and shows how far our section has come



Michele Wilcox, Membership Chair

since its start in 2002," says Wilcox.



Networking Lunches & Social Events:

Brooke Gunderson

At the end of July, SWMI SWE welcomed the summer interns at Whirlpool virtually by hosting a Lunch & Learn to introduce them to our professional organization. We gave a short presentation to highlight the social events, development workshops, community outreach, and conferences we do each year. Then, we hosted breakout rooms to give the attendees a chance to participate in a fun activity while meeting a few of our members in a smaller setting. Thank you to all who attended. There were multiple emails from the interns thanking us for hosting the event and getting to connect with a few more female engineers and SWE advocates!

September brought about our first in-person networking lunch since March! On Thursday the 24th, we practiced social distancing while spacing out among the seats at the John Howard Bandshell in downtown St. Joseph to enjoy the lovely weather, our lunches, and most importantly, each other's company. It was wonderful to see those that were able to make it and just catch up a bit on life. It has truly been a wild year.

Invites will be sent out soon for a fun fall event in October! We hope you are staying healthy, happy, and connected.



10 Tips For Working Remotely During Coronavirus