President’s Corner:

Happy Holidays to the Southwest Michigan Society of Women Engineer members and all supporters of the SWE organization! Thank you for making this a year of growth and many incredible firsts. This was a year with record national conference attendance, new social events, added outreach events in the community and increased networking. I hope you all take time over the holidays to recharge and be with your friends and family! Looking forward to many exciting initiatives in the year ahead!

- Nicole Ernat, SWMI SWE President
On November 6-9, over 30 Whirlpool employees attended the national WE19 conference for recruiting and professional development. Whirlpool recruiters reviewed more than 400 resumes and conducted 100 interviews for various roles in the platforms, EES, and the LDP programs. For the first time, Whirlpool was a corporate sponsor of the conference, and Smart Oven team members Seth Herndon and Kathryn D'Alessandro presented a technology talk on smart appliances. We are looking forward to expanding our presence at the conference even further in the coming years. Thank you to SWE executive sponsor Pam Klyn, and to all who helped make this year's event a success! For more information, please reach out to Priya Dadd or Kathryn D'Alessandro.
**Professional Development Update:**
As we close out 2019 and welcome the new year, we in SWE would like to highlight and utilize the various valuable resources available to us as SWE members.

Based on the feedback we received from the survey we sent out asking you all how we in SWE can help fuel your career path, it appears that Lunch n’ Learn presentations on the topics of (1) Career Planning and (2) How to Self-Promote are the most popular. So we are planning events for 2020 that will meet these needs that you communicated to us, starting with communicating our “SWE’s Spotlighted Resource” in each quarter’s Newsletter.

SWE’s Spotlighted Resource for Q4 2019: [SWE’s Leadership Competency Model Guide](#)

**LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY MODEL GUIDE**

This Guide is meant to help us self-assess our competency in leadership characteristics and identify areas that may need further development and drive us to improve leadership skills.

**Your Task this Quarter:** Skim the [SWE Leadership Competency Model Guide](#) and think about your own leadership skills mentioned in the Guide that may need development in the coming year.

We will then start off 2020 with events geared toward motivating you to create goals for your own development and set attainable plans for growth. The output of these exercises can valuably be incorporated into our Mid-year and Year-end reviews.

Stay tuned for more updates on using the Guide and events geared toward helping us follow and develop our own unique Competency Models!
Outreach Update:
SWE members were involved in long-standing as well as new outreach activities this quarter. One member has been a long-standing mentor of a local High School FIRST® robotics team. She contributes engineering knowledge to the team, as well as serving as a role model for female engineers. FIRST®, whose acronym means For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology, can always use more volunteers, with varying time commitments. FIRST® volunteers build and bolster young people to embrace innovation and collaboration. They work with FIRST® participants to build their leadership and problem-solving skills and, more importantly, their sense of belonging and self-confidence. More information for volunteering for this outreach opportunity is at this link: https://www.firstinspires.org/ways-to-help/volunteer.

One new opportunity this quarter was presented at the Thanksgiving Potluck on November 19 by Michael Evens of the Kalamazoo Area Literacy Council (KALC). Mr. Evens shared the statistics about adult literacy in Berrien County, explained the role literacy plays on employment, and detailed KALC’s partnership with the local Bridge academy to help with tutoring in adult literacy. Each of you will have an opportunity to volunteer as we set up rotational slots for sign up in early 2020. SWE members that would like to support beyond a rotational basis or desire more information, can contact Michael directly at: mevens@goodwillswmi.org.

The second new outreach activity this quarter has been mentorship of two area High School teams in the Whirlpool Innovation challenge. These teams competed by presenting ideas for new products that Whirlpool can market. Two SWE mentors were able to contribute engineering knowledge, leverage relationships and resources, and give advice on presentation details. Both teams made it to the final 10 (of 29 teams) and one, the Lake Michigan Catholic team, came in first place. Hopefully we’ll all see their concept in production someday. Regardless of the results, this mentoring experience is not time consuming, and is very rewarding. The mentors are already looking forward to next year’s challenge! Contact Christine Golden or Himabindu Yamana for more information, or to be contacted for next year’s event.

Future events: The most immediate need for outreach activity in 2020 starts in early January with Science Olympiad. Science Olympiad (SO) has been demonstrating science and engineering principles to students in a hands-on and engaging way for many years. The organizer of this year’s event is in need of mentors to lead Machines, Circuit Lab, Density Lab, Code Busters, and Game On. Generally, SO meets after school 3-5 pm, sometimes on Saturdays, and other times that work for the kids and their mentors. It’s flexible, and runs January 6-April 25, with two competitions, March 3 (regional), and April 25 (state). Read more about SO at: https://www.soinc.org/events/2020-event-table. Contact Christine Golden for details or to be connected to the local event organizer.

Plans for 2020 outreach include the vastly popular Girl Scout event at Whirlpool in April, High School Career Day visits, and further exploration of programs in place though professional societies, such as SWE, IEEE, and ASME. SWE can also help raise awareness of college programs to educate and recruit women to engineering fields.
FALL SOCIAL EVENTS RECAP

October 10 Waterstreet GlassWorks
What a turn out! With only 10 spots available, we also had a waiting list of members hoping to participate! The feedback on this social event was nothing but positive and we will definitely be scheduling another opportunity for those who were unable to attend.

November 19 Thanksgiving Potluck
More than 15 SWMI SWE Team Members gathered for the 4th Annual Thanksgiving Potluck located at Whirlpool’s Benton Harbor Tech Center in Benton Harbor, MI. It was a great time for fellowship and for catching up with SWMI SWE Members and meeting some of the newest members that have recently joined! Thank you to everyone for the delicious food, fun and laughter. We also had the privilege of having Mr. Evens from the Kalamazoo Area Literacy Council join us for lunch and talk to us about the need for tutoring in our area!

December 12 Holiday Gathering
We had 11 SWMI SWE Members come out and celebrate the Holiday Season together at 221 Main. Much of the time was spent visiting with one another, followed by food & drink and the annual ornament exchange. MANY, MANY, MANY THANKS to everyone who brought gifts for donation to the Greater Berrien County TOYS FOR TOTS!

Don’t forget to check out Waterstreet’s Story here!
Southwest Michigan Section of SWE reaches 100 members

We are thrilled to announce that our local section has just reached 100 members! 91 members are from Whirlpool and 9 members represent other companies in the SWMI area.

We are always looking for our section to grow. Please reach out to our section membership chair, Michele Wilcox (michele_wilcox@whirlpool.com), for more information on how to become a member!

Networking Lunches Update:

September 12, 2019 - Memories of India
October 2, 2018 - bread+bar
November 5, 2019 - Azul Tequila
December 12, 2019 - 221 Main, Holiday Gathering
January 8, 2019 - NEW YEAR with Zoup

In September we started identifying a 'Theme' with each Networking Lunch. In the Month of September, in honor of Engineering Day in India we had our lunch at Memories of India and invited one of our SWEsters from India, Nagapooja Seeba, as our guest. In November the Theme was Day of the Dead with Lunch at Azul Tequila and our SWEster from Mexico, Delfina Casique was our guest. Each Networking lunch is hosted by an Executive Board Team Member. Recommendations or feedback on Networking lunches are always welcome and can be emailed to Himabindu Yamana, Social Chair.

In January the Networking Lunch will be at Zoup in Saint Joseph with the theme being New Year Resolutions! Come prepared to share with everyone your Resolutions! Hope to see you there!
Check out the link above as inspiration to setting attainable Career Goals as part of your New Year’s Resolutions!

Women have increased their numbers in many professions previously dominated by men, including law, business, medicine, and other STEM fields in the U.S; however, the number of women in engineering in the U.S. has not increased since the early 2000s.

Each year, significant quantities of scholarly research on women in engineering and STEM are published. The Society of Women Engineers would like [this research](#) to be used to understand the causes of the gender disparity in engineering and technology in order to close the gap.