

Women in Toxicology

ANNUAL REPORT: 2015-2016

May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016

I. Officers/Committees:

<u>Officers</u>	<u>2014-2015</u>	<u>2015-2016</u>
President:	Brenda Faiola	Tao Wang
President-Elect:	Tao Wang	Sharmilee Sawant
Vice President:	Sharmilee P Sawant	Laurie Haws
Secretary/Treasurer:	Courtney Horvath	Courtney Horvath
Past President	Prathibha Rao	Brenda Faiola
Councilors:	Laurie Haws	Alexandria Lau
	Alexandra Lau	Marie Fortin
PDA Representative:	Phoebe Stapleton	Jaime Mirowsky
GSLC Representative:	Jessica Sapiro	Jessica Sapiro

Committees: If applicable

2015-2016 WIT-SIG Program Review Committee: Jessica Sapiro, Palma Ann Marone, PhD., Sakina E. Eltom, D.V.M., MS., PhD., Rebecca Walker Comba, PhD, Jaime Mirowsky, PhD, Laurie C. Haws, PhD., DABT, (co-chair) and Sharmilee Sawant, PhD, DABT (chair).

2015-2016 WIT-SIG SOT Award Nomination Committee: Brittany Baisch, Leigh Ann Burns, Jaya Chilakapati, Laurie Haws, (co-chair), Janis Hulla, Nikita Joshi, Alex Lau, Jessica Sapiro, Stacie Schulze, Phoebe Stapleton, Mercedes Salvador-Silva, and Sharmilee Sawant, (chair).

2015-2016 WIT-SIG Awards Committee: Emma Bowen, Michelle Homer, Colleen McLoughlin, Phoebe Stapleton, Priyanka Trivedi, Haiyan Tong Katherine Zychowski, Marie Fortin (co-chair), and Alex Lau (Chair)

WIT-SIG Newsletter: Courtney Horvath and Elissa Wong

WIT-SIG Historical Timeline Doc group: Jessica Sapiro, Nicole Olgun, Lisa Prince, Tao Wang, Michelle Hooth, Virginia Moser, and Kristina Chadwick

II. Activities:

2016 SOT Annual Meeting Reception was held in New Orleans, LA on (March 16th 2016).

Approximately 200-250 people were in attendance. Dr. Wang called the meeting to order at 5pm. Business Meeting Speakers include Dr. Tao Wang (President, WIT), Dr. Peter Goering (SOT President), Mrs. Shawn Lamb (ex-Executive Director for SOT, endowment fund speaker), Dr.

Jacqueline Smith (formerly served on SOT Council, endowment fund contributor and speaker), Dr. Sharmilee Sawant (President-Elect, WIT), Dr. Alexandria Lau (Senior Councilor WIT) and [Dr. Marie Fortin](#) (Junior Councilor WIT). WIT had a great business meeting and reception during the annual meeting in New Orleans this year. WIT had a very productive year and the Executive Committee reported on our numerous accomplishments (see below).

Awards:

WIT Executive Committee introduced a new award *Celebrating Women in Toxicology* for students and postdocs, and the following awards were presented at the 2016 SOT reception.

- Dr. James Luyendyk from Michigan State University won the *WIT Mentoring Award*, which recognizes his positive influence on the growth of women scientists entering the field of toxicology, and his passion for and dedication to mentoring women.
- Logeswari Ponnusamy from Texas Tech University won the *Vera W. Hudson and Elizabeth K. Weisburger Scholarship Fund Student Award* in recognition of her scholastic achievement and leadership.
- Kyla Walters from the University of California Davis won the *Graduate Student Achievement Award*.
- Samantha Snow from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency won the *Postdoctoral Achievement Award*.
- Kristin Licko from Michigan State University, Dana Lauterstein from New York University was recipient of the *Celebrating Women in Toxicology Award*.
- Kimberly Keil from the University of California Davis was recipient of the *Celebrating Women in Toxicology Award*.

2016 SOT Annual Meeting Courses/Sessions:

Five scientific proposals requested WIT Endorsement. All were pre-reviewed by WIT Program Committee. All were endorsed by WIT (2 out of 5 were endorsed with suggestions for significant revisions). The following three were accepted for 2016 SOT annual meeting:

- Trichloroethylene exposure and development of fetal cardiac malformations: what do the data tell us about inhalation exposures resulting from vapor intrusion and potential risks to pregnant women?(workshop)
- The role of the epigenome in exposure effects, susceptibility, and public health (workshop)
- Which human cell lines should I use? Choosing the appropriate biological systems for high-throughput toxicity testing (workshop)

Endowment Fund Details:

WIT had the very good fortune of establishing the new “Celebrating Women in Toxicology Award Endowment Fund” in little more than a year. This award was inspired and initiated by a generous donation of \$8000 from the estate of Ms. Anne Wolven Garrett by Mrs. Shawn Lamb.

At the annual reception, Mrs. Shawn Lamb spoke about how the fund was established. The Executive Committee expressed their gratitude to all donors for their generous gifts, especially Dr.

Jacqueline Smith (formerly served on SOT Council) and Dr. Jerry Hook (SOT Past President) for their significant contributions that helped to push this WIT endowment fund over the threshold! Dr. Smith spoke to the audience about how she and Dr. Hook were impressed by WIT's strategies for facilitating the recognition and career development of women in toxicology, and encouraged all WIT members to be confident and excel! The endowment fund will support the mission of WIT and its members for many years to come.

In 2007, a generous donation from Elizabeth K. Weisburger, in memory of her longtime friend Vera W. Hudson, enabled the establishment of our first endowment fund. The Vera W. Hudson and Elizabeth K. Weisburger Scholarship Fund continues to do well.

Newsletters:

WIT published 3 newsletters (2015 summer, 2015 fall, and 2016 spring)

Teleseminars:

In 2015 fall WIT conducted a survey on webinar topics. A broad range of our membership, ranging from students to people with long career tenures responded to our survey. The most frequently identified topics were career development, science-based topics, work-life balance, and mentoring. We announced a new webinar series at the annual reception in March 2016. In April 2016, WIT hosted the first webinar on career development. Our panel of experts addressed common issues encountered by female trainees and professionals, including negotiation of competitive salaries, moving up the career ladder, speaking up without being viewed as “aggressive,” and effective networking. The inaugural webinar was a huge success with over 230 participants, and more than 50 questions were received from the participants. The panel members’ answers to these questions and a recording of the webinar are available on the WIT website.

Contributions to SOT website:

WIT updated WIT website in 2015 and 2016.

Other WIT SIG 2015-2016 Activities:

- In June 2015, in order to enhance the recognition of women toxicologists within SOT, WIT Executive officers together with senior SOT leaders, such as [Drs. Linda Birnbaum](#), Cheryl Walker, Leigh Ann Burns Naas, Myrtle Davis and Ofelia Olivero published a blog and then a Communique article entitled “*Beyond the Glass Ceiling: Unconscious Bias within the SOT?*”. This article is for igniting the conversation and recognizing that SOT should be aware of the issue that anyone can potentially fall into.
- In August-Oct 2015, WIT worked on nominating 6 outstanding female toxicologists for the major SOT Awards including the *Distinguished Toxicology Scholar Award*, the *Education Award*, the *Arnold Lehman Award*, the *Merit Award*, and the *Achievement Award*.

- In March 2016 (during the SOT annual meeting), with [Dr. Leigh Ann Burns Naas](#)'s help, WIT executive officers met with the previous Chair of the SOT award committee, [Dr. Barbara Beck](#). SOT Executive Director, Clarissa Russell, and Councilor [Dr. Ofelia Olivero](#) also attended the meeting. The purpose was to get some suggestions and feedback about nominating women toxicologists for various SOT awards.
- In fall 2015 to spring 2016, the Executive Committee created new awards to enhance the recognition of young and senior toxicologists among WIT members.
 - For students and postdoctoral fellows, WIT inaugurated the Celebrating Women in Toxicology Awards. The awards were issued at 2016 WIT annual reception
 - For professionals, WIT created two new awards: one recognizing investigators who have made significant contributions to the field of toxicology in the early stage of their career, and the other recognizing senior leaders for their longstanding support to the SOT and WIT. These awards will be issued in 2017. Application will open in fall 2016.
- In fall 2015, WIT established a LinkedIn group: WIT members meet once a year at the annual meeting, but our mission ties us to each other throughout the year. WIT executive board explored additional mechanisms to enhance communication and form stronger bonds among our members, with the ultimate goal of promoting retention of women in the toxicological sciences as a profession. After much discussion and several test runs, the WIT Executive Committee has released a LinkedIn group that provides a platform for members to network and share scientific discussions.
- Throughout the year, WIT also worked actively to increase the visibility of women within SOT by publishing four Communique articles on various topics.
- Throughout the year, we also released Monthly message from WIT President to share new initiatives and news with WIT members.
- In winter 2015 to spring 2016, WIT executive board also compiled and released a historical document entitled WIT timelines.
- WIT Executive board also actively provided the opportunities that will allow WIT members to gain leadership experience. Based on personal experiences, we feel that not only do volunteer efforts benefit the Society; they also provide training and learning experiences to build future leaders. We made a conscious decision to open volunteer opportunities on every committee or activity possible in 2015-2016. We ended up working with 30-40 volunteers on various activities. The WIT Executive Committee hopes the volunteers found their service to the Society rewarding, especially our newest volunteers who have started down their own road towards more active involvement in the Society.