

Annual Report

2017-2018

Advocacy, Networking & Support for Alberta
STEM Programs that Promote Diversity & Inclusion



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This version of the AWSN Annual Report reflects programming from September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018 and the Financial Year of March 1, 2017 to February 28, 2018.

What is AWSN?

AWSN is a not-for-profit that supports advocacy towards a more diverse and inclusive STEM future. We have been doing so for a quarter of a century! AWSN's primary focus is to connect, unite, support and promote STEM programs throughout the province. As a network, AWSN creates a collaborative environment where member groups and volunteers help each other, learning from each others' experiences, successes and challenges. Along with our long-term volunteers, we have been fortunate this past year to gain many new creative minds, who are lending their time and expertise across the board and our various committees.

AWSN activities concentrate on supporting grassroots efforts. This includes funding, in-kind support and volunteer resource connections for both hosted and community programs. We categorized these activities under three core 'pillars':

Recruitment, **Retention** and **Recognition**.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Wow what a year this has been! Our AWSN programs have been busy through a variety of grant funding, and we are honoured to have over 50 community sponsors and/or partners who have supported our efforts towards STEM advocacy through diversity and inclusion.

We have many highlights to share from this past year, as AWSN hosted or supported several events. Fall 2017 saw the launch of WinSTEM week celebrating Alberta Women in STEM - past, present and future. The week had 22 events and activities including turning the Calgary Tower and the Edmonton High Level Bridge purple for Women in STEM. The week ended with a BANG! AWSN hosted the STEM Affair, a fundraiser that highlighted STEM mentorship in Alberta. We would like to thank our organizing committee and guest speakers.



The year wrapped up simultaneously with the conclusion of our three year Status of Women Canada grant. The grant funded the Work Re-engagement Program. This program output included two documents. One document focused on supporting female STEM professionals who are re-engaging back into the workforce after an extended leave. The second document was designed to support STEM companies for two reasons. Firstly, to support STEM companies to onramp this often overlooked population. The second objective was to support STEM companies to design more inclusive and diverse working environments. We would like to thank our partners APEGA and CCDI for assisting in the distribution of the document to a larger population. If you would like copies of these documents, we have posted them on our website for all to access : <https://www.awsn.org/wwin>

Finally, I would like to thank all AWSN employees and volunteers for their efforts over the past year. This BIG year would not have happened without you!

Alicia Bjarnason
President



STEM:

SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY,
ENGINEERING &
MATHEMATICS

OUR VISION & MISSION

VISION

A transformed future with equal opportunity for all in STEM.

With strong STEM literacy at a public level, and where all can contribute to and have access to STEM.

MISSION

Enabling a culture of diversity and inclusivity through STEM Programs.

AWSN is acting as the platform that initiates or supports programs, partners and stakeholders who amplify, magnify, or accelerate systemic and social change within the greater community, allowing all to participate to their full capacity in STEM.

WE have passion for STEM and the STEM community.

WE aim to transform the STEM landscape.

WE are champions through Leadership and Advocacy.

WE use guiding principles of integrity, collaboration, and empowerment.

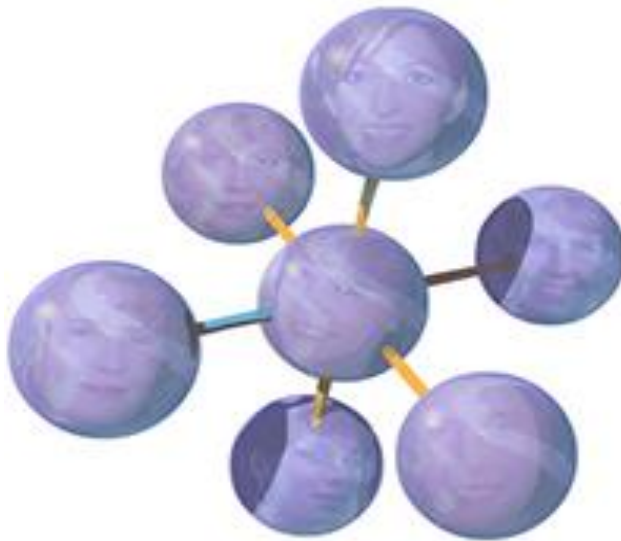
AWSN assists both hosted and member programs through grants, mentorship, non-profit status for new initiatives, advertising of events, volunteer recruitment and opportunities to communicate and learn from like-minded organizations and people.

THREE 'R' PILLARS

AWSN's initial focus was supporting programs for girls and young women. Soon after, it grew to include scholarships and the Minerva Mentoring Award, recognizing significant contributions in mentorship. With the continued growth of the organization over the past 24+ years, AWSN found itself connecting an increasing number of diverse groups and programs.

AWSN has evolved, focusing its strategic direction under the guise of three pillars - **Recruitment**, **Retention** and **Recognition**. Each pillar focuses on specific programs, services and activities, ensuring direct support for these populations and programs under that pillar. Interconnectivity between the pillars further serves to facilitate collaboration and aid the programs in supporting one another.

The **Inner Core – AWSN**, supports programs by providing services to these STEM based programs, including mentoring, grants, program promotion and IT support. For hosted programs, this also includes: not-for-profit status, insurance coverage and financial reporting.



RECRUITMENT

It's about giving young people the opportunity to **EXPLORE** STEM subjects and careers.

RETENTION

It's about assisting the talent that exists in the STEM fields and reducing the struggle and **CHALLENGE** to advance their careers.

RECOGNITION

It's about the recognition of excellence in STEM - the people who **INSPIRE** us.

AWSN provides support through event funding, services, and information sharing that recruits young women and Aboriginal youth into STEM careers. We help new ideas and fledgling projects evolve into long-term, sustainable endeavours. Below are the groups we supported this year, many of which are long time members.



Operation Minerva Calgary: Providing grade eight girls the opportunity to experience STEM career choices through job shadowing activities with female role models in STEM workplaces.

Power To Choose: Aboriginal youth grades seven to 12 attend science summer camps that encourage aboriginal careers in STEM, with Aboriginal focused mentorship and science programs.

Intimitrons from Area 51: Inspiring and encouraging young women in engineering, science, and technical vocations through building robots and competing in the FIRST Robotics Competitions.

WISEST: A University of Alberta network, empowering women in the fields of science, engineering and technology with conferences, lecture series and summer research programs.



AWSN supports individuals at all stages of their STEM careers, including undergraduate students who are learning about careers options, advanced degree holders trying to break into industry, individuals trying to come back to work after an extended leave, those seeking mentoring to advance their careers or those looking for a supportive community of like-minded individuals. Below are the groups we supported this year, many of which are long time members.



AVE Network: Fostering passion for geoscience, engineering and technologist roles in Calgary through speaker series and networking events.

GeoWomen: An AWSN hosted program providing speaker series events and other networking resources to advance the careers of women working in the geoscience professions in Calgary.

MentorUP Alberta: Supporting under-represented young STEM professional populations with early career networks.

SAIT-WISE: Student led, this group is focused on supporting and encouraging females interested in STEM fields.



Work Re-Engagement: AWSN program that identifies barriers to STEM-trained women as they are re-entering the workforce after an extended leave.

WISER: A WISEST Network, designed to help early career professionals connect with each other and with resources, support, and professional development opportunities.

UA-WISE: University of Alberta WISEST Network, designed to help support undergraduate students in the science and engineering fields.

UC-WISE: University of Calgary network, engaging female undergraduate students in activities with faculty and peers to promote their success in the science and engineering professions.

WWIN: Developed by AWSN to support women in the STEM professions with access to childcare.

One of the most important things AWSN does is recognize individuals and organizations that are making a difference in the community and/or their STEM field. Recognition comes in the form of biographies, mentor stories, Minerva Mentoring Award, AWSN scholarships and educational bursaries.

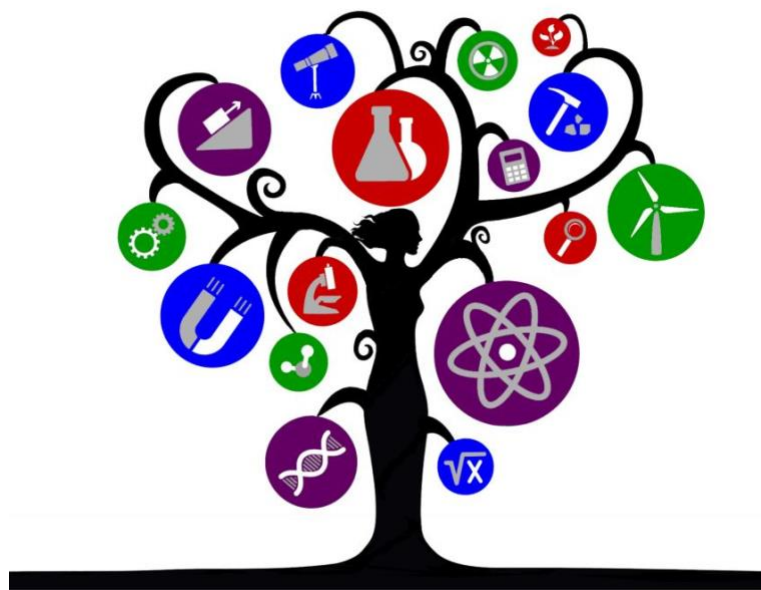


Minerva Mentoring Award: AWSN recognizes a single individual each year, who has made an inspirational contribution towards the mentoring of women and girls in the areas of STEM.

AWSN Scholarship: This annual \$3,000 scholarship is offered Alberta-wide and is awarded to a third year or above post-secondary student (with approximately 50 or more applicants).

WinSTEM Week: Celebrating the careers of women in STEM, AWSN supports this week-long celebration by communicating the many events held in the province. WinSTEM week always begins the second Tuesday in October, coinciding with Ada Lovelace Day.

STEM Affair: Honouring leaders in the community and celebrating the achievements of AWSN, members programs and others in the community who have supported further STEM initiatives.



LEADERSHIP

AWSN has modernized our organizational structure and leadership team. The new structure allows for greater efficiency and accountability. In addition, we have launched an Advisory Board to support strategic initiatives during our time of rapid growth.

EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT Alicia Bjarnason <i>(Geology & Human Geography)</i>	CO-PRESIDENT Samia Sarkar <i>(Engineering)</i>	PAST PRESIDENT Shoma Sinha <i>(Nanotechnology)</i>
VICE PRESIDENT Karen Sagar <i>(Engineering)</i>	CO-VICE PRESIDENT Suzanne Checkryn <i>(Engineering)</i>	TREASURER Jenni Richardson <i>(Accounting)</i>
CO-TREASURER Daniel Warwick <i>(Accounting)</i>	SECRETARY Shagufta Tasneem <i>(Electrical/Computer Engineer)</i>	CO-SECRETARY Wendy Hutchins <i>(Biomedical Research)</i>
COMMUNICATIONS Sandra Meagher <i>(Environmental Geography)</i>	CO-COMMUNICATIONS Emily Taylor <i>(Environmental Management)</i>	PROGRAMS MANAGER Anne Marie Hearn <i>(Chemist/Chemical Engineer)</i>

BOARD

RECRUITMENT Jacqueline Gorman <i>(Hydrogeology)</i> Patty Rooks <i>(Psychology)</i>	RETENTION Madeleine Jenson-Fontaine <i>(Chemistry)</i> Minji Kim <i>(Chemist)</i> Mengmeng Miao <i>(Engineering)</i>	RECOGNITION Anne Marie Hearn <i>(Chemist/Chemical Engineer)</i> Geetha Nicodemus <i>(Computer Science)</i>
ADVISORY Gail Powley <i>(Industrial Automation)</i>		SPEAKER SERIES Bitra Nikoukar <i>(Bachler of Arts)</i>

We can only serve our community when we work cohesively as a well-rounded team of Executive and Board Members.

AWSN continues to build on the beginning years of our strategic plan. The long term plan is to create a resilient future for AWSN, as we enhances our efforts in promoting diversity in STEM. Led by an advisory committee, work focused on establishing a thorough organizational and marketing analysis. This work included setting 1-year, 5-year and 10-year goals, outcomes, key performance measures and action plans. The direction includes:

Years 1 & 2 – Planting Seeds

We are in year two of this journey. Our first focus has been participating in successful celebrations including:

- The CCWEST Conference held in Alberta for the first time in several years
- Ada Lovelace day 2017 – including the STEM Affair
- The completion of a large federal grant from Status of Women Canada

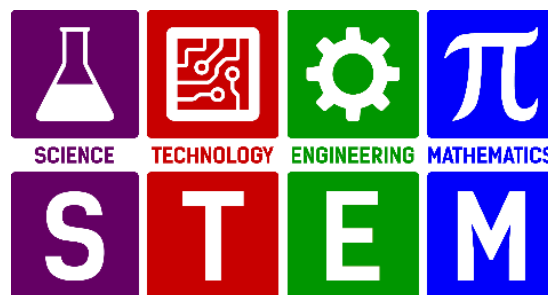
Year 5 – Building the Canopy

As the organization focuses on supporting members in the initial years of the strategic plan, AWSN will continue to develop its presence as a leader and platform through:

- Continued partnerships
- By supporting and influencing government policy on topics related to diversity and inclusion in STEM
- Providing service support to assist in program sustainability
- Having a dedicated home space

Year 10 – Maintaining the Forest

- Established and long running presence, provincially and federally
- Top tier influencers on policy for industry and local/provincial governments
- Financial viability, with long-term partnerships and corporate programming



WinSTEM Week



In recognition of Ada Lovelace Day, AWSN for the second year hosted WinSTEM Week in October 2017, celebrating the achievements of women who study, research or contribute to STEM subjects. Throughout the week, groups across Alberta organized and celebrated Women in STEM! There were 22 events and initiatives including the lighting of the Calgary Tower and Edmonton High Level bridge purple!



We encourage all groups to participate in this annual event by planning their own WinSTEM week activity, big or small. See all the great events on AWSN's social media channels at #WinSTEMWeek.

STEM Affair



To bring WinSTEM Week 2017 to a close, AWSN hosted the 3rd annual STEM Affair. The evening's formal program included award presentations, greeting from the Government of Alberta, and the presentation of the 2017 Minerva Mentoring Award to Kim Burley. Attendees were then treated to an amazing keynote speech from Dr. Gina Cherkowski, Founder & CEO of STEM Learning Labs, on *Changing the Equation on Women in STEM Starts with Our Girls*.

Work Re-engagement Program



Work
Re-engagement
Program
HOSTED BY  AWSN

This program was funded by Status of Women Canada and finished the third and final year of the grant. The program is now working with community partners such as APEGA and CCDI to bring the learning and supporting documents to a larger audience. AWSN would like to thank all community partners and stakeholders for helping with the success of this project!

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

Speaker Series



The AWSN Speaker Series returned in March 2018 with the focus of *Connecting Employers & Female STEM Professionals with a Career Gap*. The event included an interactive panel discussion, a mini-trade fair and networking. Panelists included Deanna Burgart (Entrepreneur), James Johansen (STEM Employer), Farrah Al-Alami (Entrepreneur), Vanessa Bellardinelli (Re-engaging STEM professional), Karla Gould (Re-engaging STEM professional) and Zakeana Reid (CCDI). Special guest was the Hon. Stephanie McLean. AWSN thanks the many sponsors of the Speaker Series.

CCWESTT 2018



Alberta was fortunate to have the 17th bi-annual conference in our own backyards! CCWESTT Learn Grow Act: Redefining the Future was held in Edmonton May 30-June 2, 2018. A variety of AWSN members were on the organizing committee and many from the greater network presented at the event.

Operation Minerva NSERC Grant



Operation Minerva was successful in receiving a 3 year NSERC grant to broaden the 29 year program. The funds will be used to pair grade 8 girls from underprivileged schools with female STEM mentors from supportive STEM companies. More to come over the next few years!

M2I NSERC Grant



AWSN received a \$29,633 NSERC grant for a program called Motivate to Innovate. This one year program will work with youth on STEM initiatives to encourage a love for innovation.

Balance Sheet FY18 vs. FY17 Income	2018	2017
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	82,201	64,570
Accounts receivable	38,563	134,605
Prepaid expenses	-	2000
	120,764	201,175
Grant receivable	18,467	18,722
Property and equipment, net of accumulated amortization	500	550
	139,731	201,725
Liabilities and fund balances		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	13,737	18,719
Deferred income	38,563	-
	52,300	18,719
Deferred income	18,467	118,775
	70,767	137,494
Net assets	68,964	64,231
	139,731	201,725

AWSN financial year is from February 28, 2017 – February 28, 2018.



SPONSORS



SPONSORS



AWSN is grateful to our sponsors and partners for their support of our programming.



AWSN

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