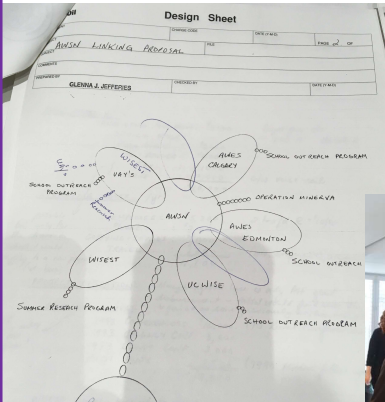




Advocacy, Networking & Support for Alberta STEM
Programs that Promote Diversity & Inclusion

Annual Report

2018-2019



514 The Canadian Journal, Thursday, October 16, 1992

Women enriching the formulas of modern discovery

By FRUZZUK Journal Staff Writer

Edmonton
Natalie Strzalka's entry into the world of scientific research was like a commercial endeavor. It was to be a successful one, she says. Last year she won the National Science and Engineering Research Council's award for the best PhD thesis. This year, she is among the 100th female recipients of the University of Alberta on an anniversary that will last until 2000.

After that, she hopes to go to Oxford University to study with one of the best people working in the field. "The work that I'm doing is exciting, and the job possibilities are really exciting," she says.

both a career and a hobby, and I'd like to see how other people might enjoy their own research. It could be a successful thing, she says. Last year she won the National Science and Engineering Research Council's award for the best PhD thesis. This year, she is among the 100th female recipients of the University of Alberta on an anniversary that will last until 2000.

After that, she hopes to go to Oxford University to study with one of the best people working in the field. "The work that I'm doing is exciting, and the job possibilities are really exciting," she says.

Edmonton career runs almost 20 years, and her experience in research is what helped her to win the award. She says she is really proud of the fact that she is a woman in science. "For a long time, I really didn't think there was a difference between men and women in science," she says. "And I would have been the first in my field to be a woman in science. I think I've worked hard, and I'm proud of that."

For example, Edmonds believes that when it comes to innovation, there is no difference between men and women. "Men have a much more hierarchical approach to their work," she says. "Women have a much more collaborative approach to their work. I think it's a matter of perspective. From an employer's point of view, and I'm not afraid to express it to men, who work with



Women in STEM
Mon, Mar 18: Alicia Bjarnason, President of the Alberta Women's Service Network, joins Global News Morning Calgary to talk about the importance of recruiting women into science, technology, engineering and math.

LIGHT THE BRIDGE



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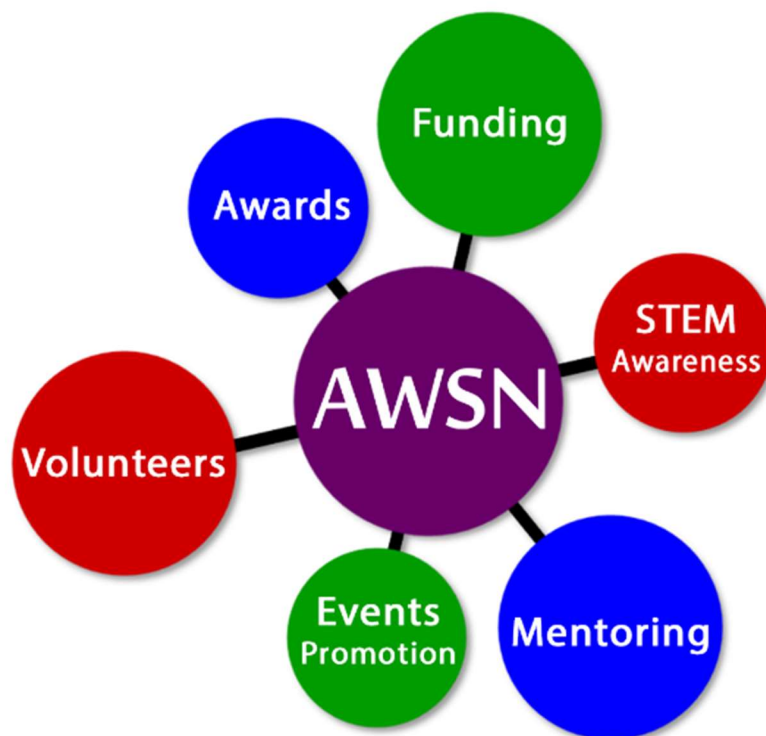
This version of the AWSN Annual Report reflects programming from September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019 and the Financial Year of March 1, 2018 to February 28, 2019.

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 over 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.

In the past 25 years, AWSN has contributed close to \$2 million to the Alberta STEM ecosystem! 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

A quarter of a century, that sounds significant! I have been honoured to be part of the past six years of AWSN's distinguished story! And though funding sources and volunteers may come and go, the general passion that AWSN has had for the greater Alberta STEM community always remains present.

We have many highlights to share from this past year. Fall 2018 included the 3rd annual WinSTEM week, celebrating Alberta Women in STEM - past, present and future. The week had 17 events and activities including turning the Calgary Tower and the Edmonton High Level Bridge purple for Women in STEM. Two of AWSN's program members celebrated BIG anniversaries - WiSER turned 10 and Operation Minerva turned 30! Thank you to the volunteers from both groups for their long-term commitment and support to underrepresented populations in STEM!

AWSN enjoys supporting groups as they develop and grow. This years AWSN watched as one of our programs went out on their own. Congratulations to Power to Choose and IndigeSTEAM on your not-for-profit status! We wish you well in all of your future endeavours. We know your groups will do BIG things!
<https://indigesteam.ca/>

This 25th year also had its share of sadness. The greater STEM community lost one of their biggest supports, Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour. Dr. Armour had a long list of achievements, but to us, she was one of our founders. In honour of her commitment to the STEM community and to AWSN, we are introducing a new award in her honour, The Athena – AWSN's Outstanding Volunteer Award in memory of Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour.

Finally, I would like to thank all AWSN employees and volunteers. These past 25 years would not have happened without you! Here is to another 25 years and beyond!

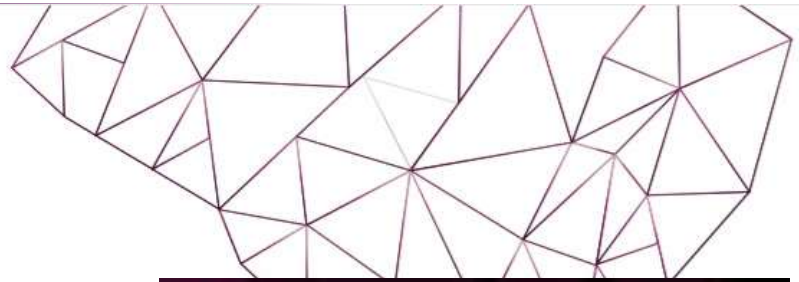


Alicia Bjarnason
President



STEM:

SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY,
ENGINEERING &
MATHEMATICS



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.

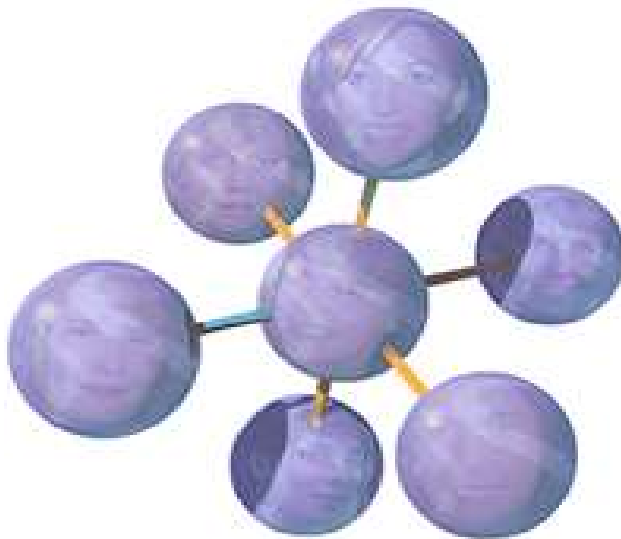
AWSN assists both hosted and member programs through grants, mentorship, non-profit status for new initiatives, advertising of events, volunteer recruitment and opportunities to communicate and learn from like-minded organizations and people.

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 25 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: For the past 30 years, OM has been providing grade eight girls the opportunity to experience STEM career choices through job shadowing activities with female role models in STEM workplaces.

Motivate 2 Innovate: This initiative was designed through an NSERC grant to teach both students and teachers how to be innovative in STEM!

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.

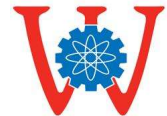


AVE Network: Fostering passion for geoscience, engineering and technologist roles in Calgary through speaker series and networking events.

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: An 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.



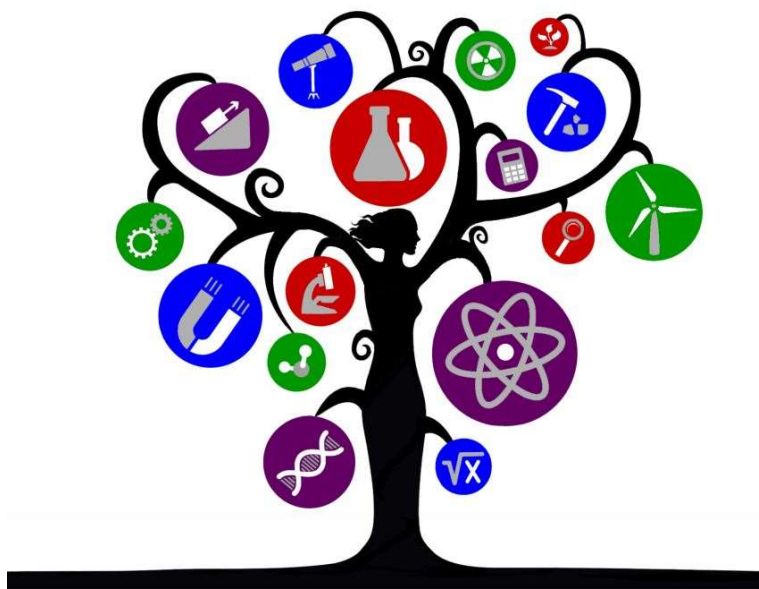
Minerva Mentoring Award: AWSN recognizes a single individual each year, who has made an inspirational contribution towards the mentoring of women and girls in the areas of STEM.

NEW!

The Athena - AWSN's Outstanding Volunteer Award in memory of Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour: AWSN recognizes a single individual each year, who has made an outstanding contribution as a volunteer to the greater STEM community.

AWSN Scholarship: This annual \$3,000 scholarship is offered Alberta-wide and is awarded to a third year and above post-secondary student.

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.



EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT Alicia Bjarnason <i>(Geology & Human Geography)</i>	CO-PRESIDENT Alexandra Edie <i>(Geophysics)</i>	PAST PRESIDENT Shoma Sinha <i>(Nanotechnology)</i>
VICE PRESIDENT Suzanne Checkryn <i>(Engineering)</i>	CO-VICE PRESIDENT Shaina Mahajan <i>(Engineering)</i>	TREASURER Jenni Richardson <i>(Accounting)</i>
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COMMUNICATIONS Sandra Meagher <i>(Environmental Geography)</i>	CO-COMMUNICATIONS Kim Nguyen <i>(Engineering)</i>	PROGRAMS MANAGER Renee Kirby <i>(Engineering)</i>

BOARD

RECRUITMENT Jacqueline Gorman <i>(Hydrogeology)</i> Patty Rooks <i>(Psychology)</i>	RETENTION Madeleine Jenson-Fontaine <i>(Chemistry)</i> Kristen Kavich <i>(Engineering)</i>	RECOGNITION Fervone Goings <i>(Microbiology)</i> Geetha Nicodemus <i>(Computer Science)</i>
ADVISORY Gail Powley <i>(Industrial Automation)</i>		MEMBER AT LARGE Karen Sager <i>(Geoscience/Engineering)</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 enhance 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, Year 3-4 Structuring Long-term Relationships

We are in year three of this journey. Our first focus has been participating in successful celebrations and partnerships.

- Ada Lovelace Day 2018 – including celebrating WiSER and Operation Minerva
- The completion and kickoff of two NSERC grants
- Partnerships development with groups such as STEM Learning Labs, Telus Spark, CCDI (Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion) and APEGA (Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists in Alberta)

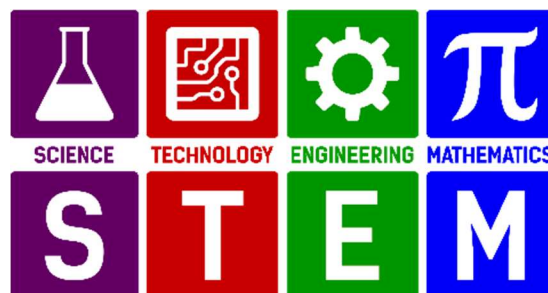
Year 5 – Building the Canopy

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 third year hosted WinSTEM Week in October 2018, 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 17 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.



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WiSER turns 10



WiSER (Women in Science, Engineering & Research) is a sub-community of WISEST, aimed at serving the needs of early-career professionals. The community is comprised of individuals in the fields of STEM from academia, government, and industry. WiSER celebrated 10 years during WinSTEM week in 2018. The evening included a keynote speaker, Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour, a panel discussion, networking, and (of course) cake!

Work Re-engagement Program



Work
Re-engagement
Program

HOSTED BY AWSN

This initiative was funded by Status of Women Canada and finished in the summer of 2018. 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! <https://www.awsn.org/wwin>

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

AWSN in the News



Women in STEM

Mon, Mar 18: Alicia Bjarnason, President of the Alberta Women's Service Network, joins Global News Morning Calgary to talk about the importance of recruiting women into science, technology, engineering and math.

In March 2018 AWSN had the opportunity to speak on Calgary Global Morning News. AWSN President, Alicia Bjarnason, spoke to the advocacy AWSN has in STEM across Alberta.

https://globalnews.ca/video/5067592/women-in-stem?fbclid=IwAR2HUNdLWUdU1eLzcoq6vuMXdoO3959g0oV29gPYhxoLlTpz1DjJVGr_9A

Art of Leadership Conference



AWSN was asked by the coordinators for the *Art of Leadership for Women* Conference to help advertise the 2018 event in Calgary. As a thank you, we received two free tickets to the event. Four AWSN volunteers/employees attended the event, which included hearing Malala Yousafzai speak.

Operation Minerva NSERC Grant



The 2019 program was a huge success with 140 girls and over 200 mentors participating! Operation Minerva was also successful in receiving a 3-year NSERC grant to broaden this 30-year program. The funds will be used to pair grade 8 girls from underprivileged schools with female STEM mentors from 3 STEM work environments. Year One is now complete. A curriculum has been developed, two classrooms have been chosen and three STEM companies have agreed to take part.

M2I NSERC Grant



AWSN received a \$29,633 NSERC grant for a program called Motivate 2 Innovate. This one-year program worked with youth and teachers on STEM initiatives to encourage a love for innovation. The program included 5 training days with teachers from a variety of Calgary schools, and 5 one-day workshops/fieldtrips with the teachers and their students. In total 5 teachers and 125 students participated in this program.

FINANCIALS

Balance Sheet FY19 vs. FY18 Income	2019	2018
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	49,030	82,201
Grant Receivable	9,234	18,467
Accounts Receivable	-	38,563
	58,264	139,231
Property and Equipment, Net of Accumulated Amortization	450	500
	58,714	139,731
Liabilities and Fund Balances		
Current		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	5,000	13,737
Deferred Income	9,234	38,563
	14,234	52,300
Deferred Income	-	18,467
	14,234	70,767
Net Assets	44,480	68,964
	58,714	139,731

AWSN financial year is from February 28, 2018 – February 28, 2019.



SPONSORS



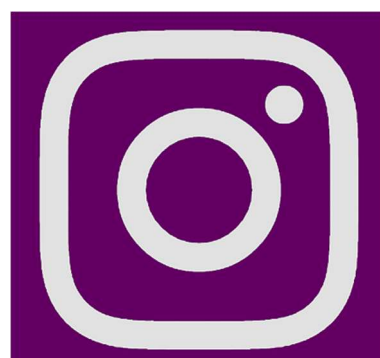
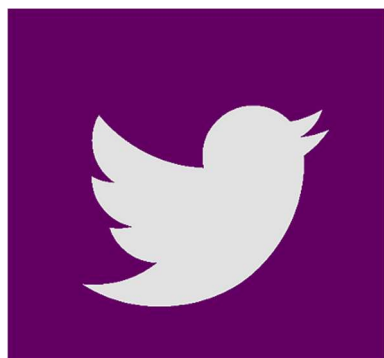
HILLBERG & BERK



SPONSORS



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



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