Branching out with 2nd annual newsletter!

The UF Women in Science & Engineering (WiSE) student organization has made great strides in the past three years: creating a thriving network of women and hosting activities that foster personal and professional success. In our annual newsletter, we reflect on our progress and highlight what is in store for the upcoming year!

Mentorship and Networking. In 2014-2015, our major events were focused on developing professional mentoring relationships and expanding our professional networks. During our fall panel (page 4), we received valuable mentoring advice from women in academia and industry. Then, in the spring workshop (page 5), we learned about online networking on LinkedIn (with the UF Career Resources Center) and Twitter (with special guest, science writer Cynthia Barnett).

Student Government. In terms of the WiSE organization, the 2014-2015 theme meant BRANCHING out to form more collaborations on campus. In 2014, we secured annual funding from UF Student Government as an umbrella group under the Women’s Student Association (WSA). The secured funding not only helps WiSE to put on successful and well-attended events, but thanks in part to the WSA alliance, we have developed new partnerships and broadened our exposure with undergraduate STEM students.

WiSE Blog. Following the 2014 spring career workshop, members recognized the importance of messaging. For women in STEM, this includes clearly describing yourself, your research, and your goals, while making it relevant to people of different disciplines. With that in mind, our WiSE blog was born! The WiSE website now features monthly posts from our members with a diverse range of topics from seagrass to wildlife conservation to ceramics (page 8).

New Leadership. Our 2015-2016 theme is:

The Scientific Spectrum

WiSE aims to create a safe space for scientists of all identities in our organization. We are excited to see the momentum of WiSE increasing with a set of new and diverse officers (page 9).

Call for 2015-2016 Liaisons!

WiSE has grown as a grassroots organization through spreading the word about our meetings and events. To reach more people, we rely on the leadership of WiSE Department Liaisons who can help send WiSE announcements to their department. We are recruiting new liaisons for the upcoming year (page 11).
Who and what is WiSE?

WiSE stands for Women in Science and Engineering. We are an officially registered UF student group that receives annual funding from Student Government. As such, our membership is primarily UF undergraduate and graduate students from a variety of STEM majors (science, technology, engineering, and math).

PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

The purpose of WiSE at UF is to bring together students, post docs, faculty and staff in STEM fields. The activities we plan are aimed at professional and academic development as well as providing support to the women in these fields. We welcome all genders to our meetings and events. Our activities fall into 5 broad categories.

DISCUSSIONS AND NETWORKING

One of our primary areas of focus on is engaging in dialogue with others about issues for women in STEM fields and with that, increasing our personal and professional network. We do this by organizing 2 monthly events: a general body meeting held on campus, and an informal current event discussion (page 3) held in downtown Gainesville.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Most of our events focus on developing professional skills for success in graduate school and beyond. Each year we host 2 events in the style of a panel and a workshop. Topics for these events are decided by members at the beginning of each semester. See pages 4-5 for more information about our 2014-2015 events.

OUTREACH AND MENTORSHIP

We recognize the need to engage with girls and women at all stages of their education and career. We have regular involvement with the following groups/programs:

- Alachua County Science Fair judging
- Cade Museum events (page 7)
- University Minority Mentorship Program
- WiSE Girlz Spring Camp (page 5)

WiSE LEADERSHIP

WiSE is completely run by UF students and post-docs, along with the help of our faculty advisor (page 8). Each year the WiSE officer list grows as more students take the lead in helping guide and run our organization (page 9). Last year we recruited Department Liaisons (page 10), who helped build stronger connections between WiSE and other UF departments.

GAINESVILLE CONNECTIONS

To extend our activities to the greater Gainesville community, we also interact with other local organizations. Our primary involvement has been with:

- AWIS – North Central Florida Chapter of the Association for Women in Science
- eWiTS – a 10-week entrepreneurship workshop held by the UF Innovation Hub
DISCUSSIONS AND NETWORKING

WiSE Up!

Our most popular event is probably our monthly WiSE Up! happy hour discussion. These meetings are lively and low-key.

The purpose of these discussions is to (1) stay informed on new research and/or current events relating to women in STEM fields, (2) discuss challenges our members face and how to overcome them, and (3) provide a casual activity to attract more people and build our network.

Each discussion is organized by a WiSE member who helps pick the topic, finds relevant articles, and guides the discussion. In 2014-2015 year, we posted summaries of each discussion on the WiSE blog. The blog not only offers a recap of the event, but also extends the dialogue to others who cannot attend the discussion in person.

Last year’s topics:

- Why do so few women have mentors?
- Special Women’s History Month collaboration with OutGrad: Grilled Cheese and Gender Roles
- #HeForShe: what does feminism mean today?
- Susan Colantuono’s TED talk: The Career Advice You Probably Didn’t Get!
- Leaning In But Getting Pushed Back

What’s in store for this year? YOU DECIDE! We select monthly leaders and topics at our monthly the general body meetings. Join us to give your ideas and hear what others have to say!

HAVE AN IDEA? LET US KNOW!

Come to our monthly general body meetings or email UF.WiSE@gmail.com

All WiSE Up! discussions are held at The Midnight, with snacks provided by Student Government funding.

Follow us on Facebook to hear all the news about upcoming WiSE Up discussions!
Fall Panel

Building Your Personal Board of Directors: Women & Mentorship

We all had a great time planning and hosting this event. Below is a recap of some of the wonderful advice we received from our panelists. Under the umbrella topic of mentorship, there were two main questions:

QUESTION 1. What advice can you offer on the subject of approaching potential mentors? How might strategies for initiating a mentoring relationship differ depending on the setting or level of familiarity?

- Look for an overlap in interests if it is a person you do not already know and approach them with genuine curiosity about them
- Be genuine, open, and honest about what you are looking for
- Some level of familiarity is desirable when approaching someone to be your mentor because a level of vulnerability is required in the relationship
- Women often “wait to be asked to the party” but should try to get past that and invite themselves
- Ask the person for a 10-15 minute informational interview and let them know you would like to spend more time with them and find out how you can get where they are

QUESTION 2: Please speak on qualities that you find appealing in potential mentees and that you have found contribute to successful mentoring relationships.

- Courage
- Willingness to (courteously) challenge views and ask questions (shows the mentee is engaging)
- Punctuality (said by every panelist)
- Enthusiasm
- Have goals and some sort of direction – if you don’t have this, you are not ready for a mentor. Try shadowing people to gain direction.
- Willingness to confront personal weakness

Following general Q&A, the panelists were available for small group discussions, where members could interact more personally to discuss specific questions.

We thank our panelists

Shirley Baker, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences, UF
Robin Boughton, Wildlife Research Section Leader, FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Keith Allaun, Executive Chairman, PowerHouse Energy
Corey Toler-Franklin, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Computer & Information Science & Engineering, UF
Gayle Dykeman, Manager, Florida Innovation Hub at UF, The Hatchery
Kimberly Newsom, Ph.D, MB(ASCP)℠, Senior Biological Scientist, UF Health Pathology Laboratories
Spring Workshop

Linking & Branching Out

The 2015 WiSE Workshop kicked off with Matthew Cowley from the Career Resource Center talking about how to take advantage of the online networking site LinkedIn. Highlights include:

- 94% of recruiters use social networks, including LinkedIn, when looking for job candidates. However, only 36% of job seekers are using LinkedIn – if you’re not among that number you could be missing out!
- When building your profile be sure to pay special attention to placing keywords in your headline, summary, current position, past experience, skills, and endorsements sections because these are emphasized by the LinkedIn ranking algorithm. Tailor these sections to contain keywords related to your industry and do not worry about redundancies across sections as Mr. Cowley advises that most recruiters only read certain sections of your profile rather than the entire thing.
- Be sure to complete your profile with an industry-appropriate headshot and pictures of you in your previous jobs or at conferences, etc.
- Finally, connect early and often with people in your industry with personalized connection requests and try to limit non-industry connections, as these will not help your LinkedIn rank.

The second half of the workshop consisted of an advice session from award-winning journalist and Hearst Visiting Professional Cynthia Barnett about effective online communication for scientists, especially focusing on blogging and Twitter. We learned that:

- Twitter is a two-way relationship, with retweeting and “favoriting” among ways to increase followers and strengthen online relationships with other tweeters.
- The best tweeters are those that mostly tweet interesting links, photos, and articles and only have a pinch of self-promotion mixed in.
- If you open a Twitter account, tweet at least once a week to maintain your presence and avoid losing followers.

Approximately 45 WiSE members, mostly PhD and Masters students, attended the workshop and gave highly positive feedback, finding both halves of the workshop very useful.

Quotes from attendees:

“Linked in was really helpful as I’ve never thought about spending the energy (or knew how to) in order to make it do more active work for me”

“Love you all :) Events are super high quality”

“Congratulations. Important workshop. Excellent speakers”

“The second presentation helped me consider the balance of media types”
WiSE Girlz Spring Camp

Studies show that as girls transfer from middle to high school, they can perceive science as ‘uncool’ and subsequently lose interest in scientific careers before reaching college. WiSE external vice-president Dr. Charlotte Germain-Aubrey proposed a WiSE Girlz Spring Science Camp to contradict this notion. The camp is aiming at girls from public schools (or other non-fee schools) who are interested in STEM disciplines but would not otherwise have the opportunity to come to campus and meet scientists, hear about their research and do hands-on experiments. She sent a call for help organizing different days in different departments and the response by faculty, staff and students across campus was amazing!

And so, sponsored in part by iDigBio and run March 23-27, 2015 through the Florida Museum of Natural History (FLMNH), the 2nd edition of the WiSE Girlz Camp welcomed 11 girls and was an explosion of fun activities and discoveries. Engineering, computer science, chemistry, astronomy, geology and biology days were filled with hands-on activities and meeting students and researchers alike. The girls then have to present what they learned about the STEM disciplines and the career possibilities to their class and school, and become advocates of women in sciences and engineering.

The camp made it into the wider public’s community, and Charlotte Germain-Aubrey was invited to visit a mentoring program in Connecticut, and give a workshop on inspiring girls in STEM disciplines to middle-school teachers there too.

Finally, the camp was recently featured by the local WUFT news:

**WUFT NEWS**

Postdoctoral Student Creates STEM Program For Girls

By Ariana Figueroa on July 12th, 2015

*WISE thanks the support of these wonderful organizations for helping make the camp a success!*
Mentoring incoming UF undergraduate students

We are happy to announce our partnership with the University Minority Mentor Program (UMMP) on campus for the THIRD year!

This partnership allows for WiSE members to mentor an incoming undergraduate student interested in science or engineering disciplines. The mentoring involves meeting the mentee once a month and being a point of contact for the mentee as they learn to navigate the campus and academic resources. WiSE also coordinates various activities for all mentors and mentees, providing opportunities for mentees to meet fellow students interested in science and engineering.

The first partnership with WiSE for the 2013-2014 school year allowed over 30 WiSE members to be matched with a mentee, with nearly 60 additional mentees wanting to be matched with a WiSE mentor.

In 2014-2015, over 100 incoming students specifically requested to be matched with a WiSE mentor. We are excited about the growth of this program, and we hope that our organization can grow to meet this demand!

WiSE Student Awards

Each year, WiSE presents two awards to outstanding WiSE members who exemplify our dual mission of 1) service within WiSE and 2) participation in outreach beyond WiSE & UF. The 2014-2015 recipients were:

Alison Trachet
PhD Student, Materials Science & Engineering

Savanna Barry
PhD Student, Fisheries, SFRC

Alison and Savanna received a copy of Rain by Cynthia Barnett.
Thank you both for helping to make WiSE a success this year!
Faculty advisor, Dr. Emily Sessa!

Emily Sessa joined the Biology Department at UF as an Assistant Professor in August of 2013. She is originally from New York and comes to UF by way of Cornell University (BA, 2005), the University of Wisconsin–Madison (PhD, 2012), and the University of Arizona (postdoc, 2012-2013). Her research focuses on plant evolution and diversity, and she is particularly interested in how hybridization and genome merger (polyploidy) influence patterns of relationships, biogeographic distributions, genome evolution, and physiological ecology. Dr. Sessa has always been interested in science, and can’t remember a time when she wasn’t fascinated by plants. Issues surrounding women in science and society have also long been important to her, and she is thrilled to be WiSE’s new faculty advisor.

"Women face a unique set of challenges in academic and professional settings, but more women than ever are joining and thriving in the STEM fields. WiSE gives us opportunities to address the challenges, celebrate our successes, and continue to change the status quo for ourselves and the women who will follow us."

WiSE is blogging!

WiSE is fully embracing social media by joining the Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and the blog world. Our new blog is designed to provide an outlet for our members to practice communicating their research to a general audience. Prior to posting, these articles are “peer-reviewed” by a group of WiSE members and run through a “readability test” to evaluate the complexity of the writing.

The blog also includes posts of relevant articles and discussion questions that coincide with our monthly WiSE Up discussion. This provides members with a forum to continue the discussion online.
We welcome a new group of officers for the 2014-2015 school year! Officers are elected each spring semester and serve for one year. Each year the number of officers grows, as does our membership and activities. As a grassroots organization, officers are WiSE members who now play a crucial role in determining the direction of our group. We also thank all the work of previous officers!

**WiSE 2015-2016 officers**

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Major/Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Michelle Nolan, PhD student, Chemistry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice President of Events</td>
<td>Kylie Mitchell, PhD student, Chemistry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice President of Outreach</td>
<td>Judit Ungvari, PhD Student, Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Leah Bisbee, Junior, Industrial Engineering</td>
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<td>Publicity Chair</td>
<td>Ratna Suthar, MS student, Agricultural &amp; Bio Engineering</td>
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<td>Meeting Secretary</td>
<td>Sienna Turner, Sophomore,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Webmaster</td>
<td>Sarah Graves, PhD student, Forest Resources and Conservation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Officer-at-large</td>
<td>Stephanie Zick, PhD student, Geography</td>
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</tbody>
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**Outgoing officers:**
Stephanie Zick (President)
Savanna Barry (VP of Events)
Charlotte Germain (VP of Outreach)
Hannah Pohlmann (Treasurer)
Tania Quesada (Secretary)
Michelle Nolan (Publicity)

"[Leadership is] Ordinary people doing ordinary things to impact people in EXTRAORDINARY ways."
Why are YOU a part of WiSE?

We polled our members to find you exactly why they are part of WiSE and why it is a valuable organization.

“WiSE is the best platform for me to do the professional things that are important to me outside of academia: talking about careers, raising awareness about women in sciences and engineering and organizing outreach event.”

“I love being a member because I can connect with like-minded women scientists but also be exposed to new viewpoints and perspectives I wouldn't have experienced otherwise. WiSE is an intellectually and socially enriching group of intelligent women!”

“I am a part of WiSE at UF because the focus of the group is one that is empowering and meaningful to me!”

“I am a part of WiSE at UF to support and connect with fellow women in STEM!

“During the time I've been a member it has helped me have a broader perspective on possibilities and opportunities in the different professional fields.”
Recruiting Department Liaisons!

WiSE has been active on the UF campus for over 4 years. To serve as a professional and social network at UF, and to develop projects to directly benefit our members, we need to represent ALL women from ALL STEM departments. We are recruiting our second group of Department Liaisons. Liaisons require less commitment than officers, but are still a crucial piece of building a strong WiSE group at UF.

What is a Department Liaison?
For a minimum of 1 semester, the WiSE department liaison will have the responsibilities of:
1. Attending 1 WiSE general body meeting/month &
2. Disseminating monthly WiSE announcements to your department.

What are the benefits of being a Liaison?
- Play an active role in WiSE
- Be a leader for your department
- Add leadership and involvement experiences to your résumé or CV

We are continuously recruiting new liaisons from all departments. Please contact us if you are interested in being an active part of WiSE!

Want MORE information about WiSE?

For the most recent information, including links to other pages, visit our website:
http://wise.group.ufl.edu/

1. Become a member
   Fill out our Google form at this link. You can also register through the UF Gator Connect page with this link.

2. Come to meeting or discussion
   Monthly general body meetings are held on Fridays at noon in Carr 222. Monthly WiSE Up! happy hour discussions are held Wednesday at 5:30pm in a restaurant, usually the Midnight Bar in downtown Gainesville.

3. Find us online
   - Visit our website: http://wise.group.ufl.edu/
   - Facebook page: www.facebook.com/UFWiSE
   - Twitter: https://twitter.com/WiSEatUF

4. Send us a message
   Email: UF.WISE@gmail.com
Interested in becoming a Department Liaison?

WiSE has been active on the UF campus for over 4 years. We are recruiting representatives from all campus departments to increase awareness of our activities and events. To fulfill our goal of being a professional and social network for WiSE at UF, and to develop projects to directly benefit our members, we need to represent ALL women from ALL STEM departments. That means you!

What does WiSE do for you?
- Group networking activities
- Science-specific career development events
- Mentoring opportunities
- Discussions of topics concerning women in STEM fields

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What are the benefits of being a Department Liaison?
- Play an active role in WiSE
- Be a leader for your department
- Add leadership and involvement experiences to your résumé or CV!

If you are interested in becoming a WiSE department liaison, please cut off and detach this page with your responses to the requested information below, or email your responses to UF.WiSE@gmail.com. If more than 1 person from your department is interested, we will select based on previous involvement and availability. Please respond by October 15th.

1. Name: ______________________________________________
2. Department: _________________________________________
3. Have you participated in any WiSE meetings or events (please specify)?
   __________________________________________________________________________
4. Can you attend general body meetings from 12:35-1:30pm on (circle/list all that apply):
   October 31  November 21  December 13 (this is a Saturday!)