New President of AWIS Educational Foundation
As many of you may remember, Barbara Filner resigned last year as President of the AWIS Educational Foundation after serving ten rewarding years. When I took over the position early in 2008, I was delighted to find that Barbara had prepared detailed instructions for all parts of the application and award process, including electronic templates for letters and reviewer forms. I want to publicly thank Barbara for making the transition so easy for me and for AWIS staff, and for continuing to give me her valuable advice and perspective.

New Awards for 2009
We are making two major changes for the 2009 awards. First, updated computer software is allowing the AWIS Educational Foundation to take the giant step of replacing paper applications with electronic applications. We expect this change to save time and effort for applicants, AWIS staff, and reviewers. Second, we are replacing our awards for high school seniors with awards for undergraduates in their first, second, or third year of college, when they will have a clearer idea of their interests and goals.

Contributors
I want to thank AWIS members and others who have contributed to the AWIS Educational Foundation. Special thanks go to Eric Rechel and the Amy Lutz Rechel Foundation for their ongoing contributions to the Amy Lutz Award, and more generally to the predoctoral awards program. Thanks also to the family of Kirsten Lorentzen for their continuing support for the award in her memory.

Several other awards honor women scientists. These include awards in memory of Luise Meyer-Schutzmeister, Diane Russell, Ruth Satter, and Joan Wright Goodman. Friends and colleagues of Helen Davies set up an award to honor her on her 80th birthday. For biographical information about these outstanding women, please go to www.awis.org/careers/educationbio.html.

Letters from awardees emphasize that the benefits of the awards go far beyond their monetary value. Nonetheless, I encourage AWIS members to consider a contribution to the AWIS Educational Foundation when you renew your membership. Contributions of any amount enable us to select additional outstanding awardees.

Reviewers
Another kind of contribution is sharing expertise. Thanks to the women and men who reviewed the outstanding applications for these 2008 awards, and made the difficult decisions about which applicants to recommend for awards. If you are interested in volunteering as a reviewer, please send a brief note and c.v. to awisedfd@awis.org.

2008 Awardees
It is my pleasure to present the remarkable young women who have received awards in 2008 from the AWIS Educational Foundation. We had three fellowship programs for 2008: one for high school seniors who planned to attend college and to pursue a career in science by doing research or teaching; the Lorentzen award for a college sophomore or junior studying physics or geoscience who also excels in non-academic activities; and a predoctoral awards program for graduate students pursuing a PhD in science and related fields.

Entering College Students
Full Award ($1,000): (Name, high school and location, college, planned major)

Kelly Michelle Chacon
American Heritage School, Pembroke Pines, Florida, Yale, Biology

Kelly Chacon provided the following background information: “Born and raised in the beautiful suburbs of Miami and Fort Lauderdale, Kelly Michelle is an avid Scuba Diver who is most inspired by one of the foremost rules in diving: “Feet First”, a phrase that has truly shown her the joys of spontaneity and attempting the unknown. Through her love of discovery, Kelly has also started, coordinated, and participated in a variety of musical ensembles and scientific research projects, ranging from her role as a flutist in the marching band to a second place winner at the International Science and Engineering Fair. Although her long-term aspirations include becoming a physician and medical researcher, Kelly’s current goal is to finally see snow, a goal she looks forward to achieving at Yale University.”
KIRSTEN R. LORENTZEN AWARD ($1,000)

Tamela Maciel
University of Oregon, Physics,
Kirsten R. Lorentzen Award

Tamela Maciel writes, “There has never been a time when I haven’t been passionately intrigued by how the universe works. It always amazed me that the same laws that governed the motion of a leaf as it fell to the ground might also apply to the motions of stars and galaxies millions of light years away. I have long been impatient to study physics so that I might better be able to make those connections between our familiar world and the extremely remote world of space. I grew up in Grants Pass, Oregon and graduated valedictorian a year early from Grants Pass High School.

“Starting in Fall 2008, I will be a junior at the University of Oregon where I study physics, astronomy, and chemistry. I volunteer at a local planetarium and give hour-long presentations to the public. I am also co-president of the UO Society of Physics Students and help to plan talks, discussions, lab tours, and field trips for the group. Outside of school, I love to sail, hike, run, bike, practice my violin, and of course, star gaze. I was part of the 2007 “Motivating Undergraduates in Science and Technology” (MUST) summer program where I spent ten weeks at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center researching active galactic nuclei. In a few years, I plan to attend graduate school and earn my Ph.D. in astrophysics.”

Predoctoral Awards ($1,000)
(Name, department, university, mentor, project title, expected PhD completion date)

Alice Dennis
Biological Sciences, Louisiana State University, M.E. Hellberg, “The evolution of freeze tolerance in a historically tropical snail,” May 2009

Alice Dennis writes that she “grew up in rural northern California, where she was inspired by the animals she encountered in tidepools at the nearby coast. The weekend hobby of visiting the coast turned into a career as she completed a B.S. in Biology, which included two independent research projects studying marine invertebrates and learning molecular biology techniques. Following college graduation, Alice worked in several marine labs before beginning graduate research. For her Ph.D. research, she has gone on several collecting trips that in-

Citation of Merit ($500)

Janice Chen
Troy High School, Troy, Michigan, Yale, Physics & Applied Mathematics

Janice Chen writes the following: “I always was interested in the sciences as a child, but it was not until my Junior year in high school that I realized a career in Physics research was what I truly wanted…. I have held several leadership positions at my high school, including: Co-Captain of the Physics Team; Co-President of the Chess Team; Founder and Director of Project Rook (a Chess mentoring program); and Vice-President of the Quiz Bowl Team.”

Molly Hritzo
Villa Joseph Marie High School, Holland, Pennsylvania, University of Scranton, Biochemistry, Cell, and Molecular Biology, Helen Davies Award

Mollie Hritzo writes that she loves learning and helping others. She enjoys reading, classical piano, violin, and clarinet, in addition to running cross country and track. “Helping younger athletes as an assistant coach for an elementary school track and cross country team has been a wonderful experience,” she says. Her Girl Scout troop focused many of its activities on community service, which helped her realize how much she liked helping others. She writes, “It makes me happy to see that I’m helping others and lessening their burden. My free time is happily spent birding, enjoying the outdoors, drawing, and learning new things.”

Citation of Merit ($500)

Alison Oreh
Hathaway Brown School, Shaker Heights, Ohio, University of Michigan, School of Literature, Science and the Arts Honors Program, Biomedical Engineering

Jenny Zhou
Niles West, Skokie, Illinois, MIT, Biological Engineering

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included the marshes of Louisiana and the mangrove swamps of Panama and Florida. As a mentor of two undergraduates, she has enjoyed passing her research skills on to them. When she receives her doctoral degree in 2009, Alice plans to continue her research as a postdoctoral researcher before starting her own lab.

**Natalie Gilks Farny**

Biological and Biomedical Sciences Program, Harvard Medical School and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Pamela A. Silver, "A genome-wide study of metazoan mRNA export," May 2009

Natalie Farny writes that she “attended Boston College, where she double-majored in biology and philosophy. After graduation, she spent three years as a Research Assistant before beginning her graduate studies. She is studying the mechanism and regulation of mRNA export from the nucleus. Natalie has spent time during her graduate career teaching cell biology and biochemistry to Harvard University undergraduates. After completing her graduate studies in 2009, Natalie hopes to obtain a post where she can continue both her teaching and her research interests. Natalie has always appreciated the natural world and loves traveling. She recently spent time backpacking in New Zealand with her husband. In her spare time, Natalie enjoys kayaking, useless trivia, and quilting.”

**Jessica A. Homyack**


Jessica A. Homyack writes that she “was raised in southeastern Pennsylvania on a small farm where her affinity for learning about ecology and wildlife developed. She received a B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Resources from West Virginia University in 1999 and was named the Outstanding Senior in her department. In 2003, she received a M.S. in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Maine and the award for the Outstanding Graduate Student in Wildlife Ecology. She then worked for several federal and state natural resource agencies before entering a doctoral program. At Virginia Tech, Jessica was the first graduate student in her college to receive an NSF-Advance FT doctoral fellowship. As part of her fellowship, she organized and moderated a panel discussion for dual-career couples in the sciences, and mentored the independent research of three undergraduate women. Jessica is interested in strengthening the link between academic research and on-the-ground management of wildlife populations and their habitats. She lives near Blacksburg, Virginia with her husband and their two dogs.”

**Lydia Mosi**

Microbiology, University of Tennessee, Pamela L.C. Small, "Investigations into the role of the proposed aquatic reservoirs, Naucoridae and Belostomatidae, in the transmission of the Buruli ulcer (Mycobacterium ulcerans disease),” June 2009

Lydia Mosi writes, “I was born in Ghana 27 years ago. My parents instilled in me the necessity of getting a good education, believing that based on my view of life, my goal as a woman is to contribute in matters of importance. My secondary education was at the Achimota Secondary school where I pursued a major in Agricultural Science. I was admitted into the University of Ghana where I graduated with a double major in Zoology and Biochemistry. As part of my thesis, I was privileged to work at the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research on a project that introduced me to the problems of Buruli ulcer in Ghana. I returned to Noguchi where I worked as a field agent and research assistant, visiting Buruli ulcer endemic areas to assess the possible risk factors and encouraging affect-
ed individuals to seek medical help. There is a lot I see myself doing to contribute to the development of my country."

Elizabeth O’Hare

Elizabeth O’Hare writes that she received her B.A. in Psychology and Neuroscience from Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania, in 2000. Her research interests are in developmental cognitive neuroscience. Specifically, she uses functional and structural Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to examine relationships between brain growth and improving cognitive capacities in typically developing children and adolescents, and in those with prenatal exposure to alcohol. In addition to her research interests, Elizabeth is committed to expanding the representation of non-traditional groups in science and has devoted considerable time and effort to developing and promoting community outreach programs as a graduate student. In her free time she enjoys hiking and camping, international and domestic travel, reading, and film.”

Jennie Schulze

Jennie Schultz writes that she graduated as a double-major in Political Science and History from Boston College in 2001. She is now pursuing a Ph.D. in international relations and comparative politics. She is currently living in Tallinn, Estonia with her husband, their dog and their cat. Jennie is an early-stage researcher in the context of “The Integration of the European Second Generation” (TIES) project at the Institute of International and Social Studies at Tallinn University. Both she and her husband are also currently serving as lecturers in international relations at Tallinn University. Jennie’s doctoral research concerns the effect of international actors on the process of minority policy formation in the Baltic States and the theoretical importance this has for democratic consolidation in Eastern Europe. Her other research interests include the role of language in the process of national identity formation, and the relationship between globalization and language transformation in international processes. She would like to pursue postdoctoral research studies in the United States, and then obtain a position in academia.”

Branwen Williams
School of Earth Sciences, Ohio State University, Andrea Grottoli, “Biogeochemistry of soft coral and black coral skeletal records: implications for paleoceanography in the western Pacific warm pool,” June 2009 - Joan Wright Goodman Award

Branwen Williams writes that she “completed her B.Sc. at the University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario in 2003 and her M.Sc. at the University of Quebec at Montreal in 2005. Her research centers on developing and using soft corals and black corals as proxy tools. For her M.Sc., she examined anthropogenic signals in deep-water black corals from off the southeastern United States coast. For her Ph.D., she is testing the ability of shallow-water soft corals and black corals to record ambient water geochemistry in the western Pacific warm pool. Branwen is interested in paleoceanography, particularly in the tropical Pacific, and how it relates to global climate variability. Her goal is to continue research while teaching as a university professor.”

Predoctoral Citation of Merit for 2008 ($500)

Emily Cushnie

Hiam Koury
Civil & Environmental Engineering, University of Michigan, Vineet R. Kamat, “A Ubiquitous Location - Aware Methodology for Contextual Information Support in Construction,” April 2009

Natalia Shustova

Barbara Mandula grew up in New York City and received her doctorate in Biochemistry from Brandeis University. After several postdoctoral research positions, she became a science writer/project director in Washington DC. There she reconnected with Barbara Filner, whom she had met in graduate school, and who introduced her to AWIS in approximately 1980. When Barbara Filner recently stepped down after ten years as President of the AWIS Educational Foundation, Barbara Mandula accepted the position. She retired from EPA and is happily living in Seattle with her husband, while wondering where all the promised spare time is.