

*Special Interest
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- Sabbatical in Chilean Fjord
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East Bay Chapter of the Association for Women in Science
www.ebAWIS.org

Managing Up by Leala Thomas

"What goes on in the workplace?" was the first question asked by Rosella Derickson, PhD and Krista Henley at the chapter meeting on November 19th. Both women are professional coaches and can be found at www.corporate-wisdom.com.

What was the answer to their question? Technical competence is rewarded, and then promoted, sometimes without the requisite soft management skills. We were challenged to

consider the qualities of our best boss -(fair, inspirational, shares perspectives) vs. the quirks of our worst- (poorly informed, insecure, reactionary). A difficult boss can be a threat to job security, can cause conflict throughout the organization, and can add stress to the workplace.

We were further asked to **consider the difficult boss as a gift**. If we could approach the situation with compassion, we could

change the dynamic and reduce the power struggle. Since we have no control over the behavior of the other person, our boss, we must be aware of our part in the drama.

The key to effective "managing up" is in building rapport. By knowing yourself and your boss and understanding the trigger points that prompt a power struggle, you can find a way to approach him/her and have a successful interaction.

Road to Personalized Medicine by Leala Thomas

Lawrence Berkeley National Labs Life Sciences Division Scientist, **Laura M. Heiser, PhD**, a bioinformatics specialist, presented her work at the chapter meeting on September 24, 2009. Her presentation was entitled "The Road to Personalized Medicine: Identifying Therapeutic Agents Effective against Subpopulations of Breast Cancers."

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among women and the second leading cause of death globally. In the USA, over 40,000 women will die from this disease in 2009.

Dr. Heiser explained that breast cancer is an extremely heterogeneous disease in which individuals show a

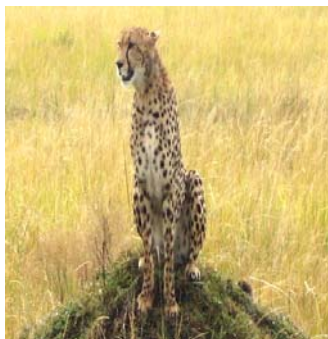
varied array of changes in the genetic makeup of their tumors. These genetic changes can be used to group breast cancers into different classes. Given this heterogeneity, a critical issue in treating patients is identifying the therapeutic interventions that will be most beneficial. In order to determine the types of breast cancers that may best respond to particular therapies, about 50 breast cancer cell lines were treated with about 70 drugs and measured for their drug sensitivities. Cell lines are used because they retain the characteristics of the tumor and are more stable. Using this approach, it is possible to identify several therapeutic agents that demonstrate a class-specific bias, indicating

how they would be effective for treatment of particular subpopulations of breast cancer patients.

The importance of personalized medicine and the key to successful treatment lies in the selection of the right drug for each individual patient.

Breast Cancer Risk Factors:
age
family history and genetics
high breast tissue density
Caucasian ethnicity
hormones
late age at first birth
obesity

American Women... in Wildlife? By Janice Hamer



“The Wildlife Society began in 1937 as discussions around the campfire.”

Last September, [The Wildlife Society \(TWS\)](http://www.wildlife.org), www.wildlife.org hosted its annual national meeting in Monterey with attendees from all over the world. According to registration staffer, Janine Payne, TWS began in 1937 as “discussions around the campfire.” Monterey’s program featured a venue rich in wildlife related biology with titles such as “Predator Management” and “Climate Change.” An accompanying trade show displayed animal traps, ecology books, and, telemetry monitoring systems.

Enhancing its conservation venue, TWS offers support to members in the form of mentoring and career development. Monterey’s meeting included sessions on copyright law, native peoples, a certification program, and a competitive Quiz Bowl for collegiate chapters.

Women may compose up to 55% of chapter membership. As a result, TWS sponsors workshops on gender diversity and a “leadership institute,” composed of 80-90% women, emphasizing project management and peer

collaboration. Challenges facing women in wildlife biology are primarily in the areas of funding and career development. TWS science writer, Katherine Unger, shared that many natural resource science positions are state funded and vulnerable to civic budget downturns. Chris Stevenson, a biologist from Modesto, explained, “A lot of people like field work—those jobs are limited—more are managerial.” Further, field science can be isolating and focused. TWS meetings are important because of the job boards and networking events available.

New Board Members Elected

East Bay AWIS elections occurred in November 2009 with the new term to begin in December 2009.

We are pleased to announce the new officers as follows:

President: Mara Jeffress

Vice-President: Veena Kumar

Secretary: Ginger Jamias

Treasurer: Karen Adkison

Member-at-Large: Leala Thomas

Please welcome our new board members.

Please also thank our outgoing board members for all their hard work and dedication: Blisseth Sy, Jamie Narberes, Tiffany Tsang!

For anyone interested in volunteering time to ebAWIS, there are multiple opportunities available:

Newsletter Contributors

Social Coordinator

Food Coordinator

Membership Committee



Suggested Reading by Janice Hamer

For winter reading:

Welcome To BioTech Nation, Moira Gunn –

NPR host, Gunn, is a journalist, not a scientist, so the book follows her path as she grapples with the quirks of bio research,

(specifically the terminology) while launching her BioTech Nation show. For those who recognize names such as Gurinder Shahi from journal publications, Gunn’s interview highlights add personality to these identities. And

both hardcore biotechies as well as marketing reps may find a diabetes test you haven’t heard about – pssst, ladies – discussion on collecting sperm from wild males!

My Field Research Sabbatical in a Chilean Fjord

By Blisseth Sy

Less than one year into my new job with GE Healthcare, I received news in January 2009 that I would be one of hundreds of employees to be laid off. After months of serious consideration, I decided to take a sabbatical to explore a few long-held career and personal interests outside of the biotechnology industry. I had discovered my love for nature as a Cal undergraduate student, when I first hiked in the redwoods of Yosemite National Park and kayaked with seals at Point Reyes. After my layoff, I also discovered through blogging that I enjoyed writing. This was the time to explore these interests.

The ad read, "Huinay Scientific Field Station... the only biological field station in a Chilean fjord... characterized by steep mountains and volcanoes... temperate rain forests... an opportunity to contribute to the first, multi-taxa marine invertebrate field guide describing marine invertebrates of Chilean fjords, to be used for resource management and conservation efforts... an opportunity to give classes and talks for the youth of Huinay about the scientific work being performed on the station."

You can imagine my excitement when a friend forwarded the advertisement above to me! The advertisement specified a preference for marine biologists and SCUBA divers. I was neither. A fantastic birthday present arrived in the form of an email on my 32nd birthday that I was accepted as a volunteer! I was headed to a remote research station in a beautiful fjord in Chile to assist in a worthy conservation project.

How did I prepare for a two-month internship in a remote isolated fjord to work on a scientific field guide? Before leaving for Huinay, I spent hours cramming into my memory as much invertebrate marine taxonomy as I could from a textbook weighing at least 1 kilogram. I feared I did not have enough taxonomy knowledge to be of help!

Fortunately, when I arrived, I discovered that non-taxonomy skills would be just as important to the field guide efforts as taxonomy expertise. My fellow interns, April Jasmine Burt, and Teschna Christie, and I called upon our abilities in teamwork, project management, and technical savvy, willingness to learn new tools, patience, and organization. In order to compare the many versions of each chapter in Spanish and English, we interns often sat together scrutinizing text from three computer screens to address editing details such as, "Does that line of text match in both the Spanish and English versions for this mussel species?"

My daily life at the station included working at the computer to edit 15 chapters of taxa; teaching the local students about the anemone and coral that reside in the fjords; using a plastic hose to vacuum clean and renovate aquariums; learning new Spanish words such as *ubicación* (location), *substrato blando* (sandy bottoms), *comestible* (edible), and, my favorite, *escaso* (rare); and gazing out from our office window to see pods of dolphins swimming in the glassy fjord water.



As I reflect on my two months in Chile, I know that the time spent was worthwhile. The rewards I gained while volunteering included more than just learning about marine biology and conservation. Yes, I learned about preservation techniques for different marine samples, how to use InDesign and Photoshop to painstakingly label figures, the names of various taxa of marine invertebrates, and how to collect plankton to feed aquarium samples. But even more personally valuable were the close friendships I made with my fellow interns and Huinay coworkers. I soon recognized radio stations and songs hailing from New Zealand, the UK, France, and of course Chile, and I learned to say, "Thank you" in Thai. I also learned more about myself and my habits. I learned to relax and be less constrained to plans -- a valuable lesson taught to me by my 23- and 25-year old fellow interns-- and to enjoy the unpredictable, such as a boat excursion originally intended to collect sand for the greenhouse transformed into an opportunity to rescue a sunken boat!

If you are considering taking time off to explore alternative endeavors, take it from me, it's not "time off". It is time ON. As for me, I'll be looking for the Huinay field guide in the marine biology section of the UC library next spring, and I'll be proud to know that I was a part of it.

Profiles of Women in Science

Meet Terry Calarco....

“A successful career is not always a straight path.”



“Early, in Biotech companies, people were passionate about recombinant technology and believed that cloned proteins would solve any disease.”

Name: Terry Calarco

Degrees and names of colleges: B.A., U.C. Berkeley

Current title and employer: Head of Research Operations at Novartis Institutes for Biomedical Research (NIBR), Emeryville.

What led you to a career in science? I was always interested in science. I got a degree in Molecular Biology early in the world of recombinant protein technology. We didn't have a textbook and having undergraduates clone was quite controversial. Early in Biotech companies, people were passionate about recombinant technology and believed that cloned proteins would solve any disease.

Any other careers considered? Finance. At one time I had a blended position of Research Operations and Finance support and I briefly considered doing Finance full time. I asked myself, “Did I want to do this for a career?” It is fascinating to model the projects and the business development. I miss it, but I find I enjoy the tangible projects more.

Tell me about your biggest success? I have had the opportunity to successfully participate in a wide range of challenging projects. I think the positive impact was to enable the business--- to make better decisions, to get the deal done, to secure the IP, to have a great work environment for science, to streamline processes.

Terry Calarco is a former board member of the East Bay Chapter of the Association for Women in Science and is employed as the Head of Research Operations at Novartis.

Your biggest missed opportunity or greatest obstacle and how you overcame it? We have to be an optimistic bunch. A lot of what we do doesn't work, so how do you know when to persevere?

What do you wish you would have known a long time ago? I think it would have been useful to have a mentor early on.

Best way to stay competitive? Stay open to change. Look at the direction your business or organization is going and what needs it has. Is that something you want to do or do you know someone who would fill that gap? Is there a skill set that would help you? Could you pursue a project that would enable you to learn? Or could you take some courses?

Toughest decision? Decisions around career directions whether to stay in the current area or move to a new one.

Biggest surprise in current position? Working in a large multi-national organization. The depth and breadth of resources and talent. I expected bureaucracy, silos, etc. but have seen more due to sheer size rather than political obstacles.

Favorite book? Science fiction and mysteries.

Favorite movie? Science fiction.

Favorite vacation spot? Beach or forest.

“We have to be an optimistic bunch. A lot of what we do doesn't work.”

East Bay AWIS

2010 Board Members

President: Mara Jeffress
president@ebawis.org

Vice President: Veena Kumar
vice-president@ebawis.org

Treasurer: Karen Adkison
treasurer@ebawis.org

Secretary: Ginger Jamias
secretary@ebawis.org

Webmaster:
webcurator@ebawis.org

Public Relations: Ginger Jamias
publicity@ebawis.org

Mentoring: Lysle Huang
mentorchair@ebawis.org

Sponsor Recruitment: Ginger Jamias
sponsor@ebawis.org

Newsletter: Leala Thomas
 Assisted by: Janice Hamer
news@ebawis.org

Contact your board!
ebawisboard@yahoogroups.com

UPCOMING EVENTS:

December 8, 2009:
 Networking Social at
 Jupiter in Berkeley,
 6:30PM

January 28, 2010:
 Chapter Meeting, An
 evening of Networking
 and Mentorship

February 9, 2010:
 Networking Social at
 Jupiter in Berkeley,
 6:30PM

March 25, 2010:
 Chapter Meeting, Careers
 in Legal Fields: A panel
 including a patent agent,
 Patent attorney and tech
 transfer professional.

April 13, 2010:

Networking Social at
 Jupiter in Berkeley,
 6:30PM

May 27, 2010:

Chapter Meeting,
 Professional Development
 with Cathy Akiyama

Directions to Novartis.....

***PLEASE NOTE THAT THE
 MEETING WILL OCCUR IN
 BUILDING X ON Hollis St.***

From I-80 West: Exit
 at Powell. Make a left
 on Powell at the
 stoplight. Continue on
 Powell until Hollis
 Street. Turn right.

Building X is a white
 and orange building
 on the left and the
 parking lot is open.
 Check in with the
 guard at the door.

From I-80 East: Exit at
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About Our Organization..

East Bay AWIS (ebAWIS)
 is a volunteer organization
 primarily established as a
 professional organization
 for women in science, yet
 also open to non-
 scientists and men.

Meetings are held on a bi-
 monthly basis, usually on
 the last Thursday of the
 odd months at Novartis,
 5300 Hollis, Emeryville.
 Security procedures at
 Novartis require that you

sign in at the front desk. A
 networking social is held
 on the second Tuesday of
 even months at Jupiter,
 2181 Shattuck Ave.,
 Berkeley. **Please join us
 and invite your**

EAST BAY AWIS

EAST BAY AWIS MEMBER