Dear WGS alumni, friends and supporters,

It has been another exciting year for Women in Graduate Science! We embarked on new outreach activities, strengthened our commitment to the professional development of women in science, and successfully expanded our yearly fundraising efforts and networking programs. This first annual newsletter will highlight some of our best events from this past year and get you up to date on all things WGS! We hope very much that you enjoy reading about what we have been up to, and we look forward to establishing better connections with our alumni in the future.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you to all the officers, students, and faculty that I have had the pleasure of working with over the past two years. I am extremely humbled and honored to have had the chance to serve as your WGS president. Being a part of this group has been an incredible experience, and one that I will certainly never forget. The relationships, skills, and networks I have built because of this great organization will stay with me for a lifetime. Thank you to everyone who supports this amazing group for your time, energy, and generosity. WGS wouldn’t be the success it is today without each and every one of you.

I look forward to seeing WGS grow even more in the future!

Cheers and Go Ducks,

Kate

Kate Karfilis
UOWGS President
First Annual Winter Benefit

On Saturday February 7th, 2015, WGS held its first ever winter benefit at Territorial Winery in Eugene. Each year, WGS members work to raise the funds needed to support our many programs and scholarships through small-scale fundraising events. This year, however, we changed our strategy and expanded our efforts to reach people outside of our university community, in hopes of broadening our network and increasing our impact.

With the hard work of the executive board, we put together an amazing evening full of great food, wine, and conversation. We listened to first hand accounts of the impact of WGS on the lives of our members and built some incredible relationships with our local community and faculty members.

Together we raised over $3,500, a more than 700% increase from our previous years fundraising efforts! This event would not have been possible without the generosity of our many Eugene businesses, Territorial Winery, the UO Grad School and others. To learn more about our event sponsors and see more pictures from the night, please visit our website uowgs.com. Thank you to everyone who supported us, near and far!

Special Thanks to Our Local Sponsors:

We would also like to thank: Dr. Andy Berglund, Brandy Teel, Matt Hutter, Nancy Karfilis, Bob Davis, and Adelaida Montoya.
Undergraduate Event: *Beyond your Degree*

This year, WGS held our second annual Undergraduate Event in the Gerlinger Lounge on May 4. This year’s theme was “Beyond your Degree” and focused on career and post-secondary schooling after the completion of a Bachelor’s degree. The afternoon consisted of a panel of scientists with a broad range of backgrounds and education levels. Following the panel was a break-out round table session focusing on the next steps of getting involved in a career, post-secondary education, or undergraduate research, which included a pamphlet compiled by WGS of labs currently looking for undergrad researchers.

**Congratulation to our 2015-2016 Scholarship Recipients**

- **Parenting Award:** Terra Hiebert
- **Travel Award:** Megan Brittell, Jennifer Mendoza
- **Sarah Staggs Undergraduate Transition Award:** Marina Gross
- **Undergraduate Summer Research Award:** Devan Compton, Kyla Martichuski

**Recent UOWGS News**

- UOWGS is now on Twitter at: @uowgs
- We have also started a group on LinkedIn for members and alumni to connect: LinkedIn Group: UOWGS
- Dues can now be paid online at uowgs.com, just click on the “Donate Now” button and specify payment is for dues.
- We are excited to announce a new officer position available for the 2015-2016 school year: Graduate School Advisory Board Chair
  - Responsibilities will include: representing UOWGS on the new Graduate School Advisory Board, and serving as our advocate with the ASUO and Graduate School.
  - Additionally the Public Relations Chair is now becoming the: Public and Alumni Relations Chair
  - to reflect our new focus on fostering alumni relations.

**Special Thanks to Our Panelists & Round Table Leaders:**

**Panelists:** Dr. Stacey Wagner, Ryn Wetherell, Nick Spicher, David Zakharov, Candice Porter, Jana Jenquin

**Round Table Leaders:** Dr. Peter O’Day, Kiran Varani, Dr. Stacey York, Diane Hernandez, and Kimberly Jones
UOWGS Seminar Series

Each year, WGS invites prominent scientists and professionals to give a seminar touching on three of our target issues—providing insights into a science career, providing tools to increase graduate student professionalism (networking, negotiating, public speaking, etc.), and discussing issues facing women in STEM or, more broadly, inequality in the STEM workforce. WGS often hosts one seminar on each topic each year. This year, we were thrilled to host three fabulous speakers.

Fall Seminar: Nov. 5, 2014

Dr. Sarah Schaack of Reed College spoke to us about teaching and research at small liberal-arts colleges. In addition to her time at Reed, she spoke about her research programs in East Africa, as well as tips and tricks to securing funding as an assistant professor.

Winter Workshop: Apr. 1, 2015

Winter term, Dr. Stacey York, Director of Strategic Partnerships for the UO’s Master’s Industrial Internship Program and UOWGS’s new Professional Development Advisor, led us in a workshop on resume building. Students brought drafts of their resume that the group improved during the workshop.

Spring Seminar: May 14, 2015

Spring term, Dr. Ben Barres of Stanford University held a roundtable discussion regarding inequalities facing women in STEM. Dr. Barres is a distinguished professor of glial biology and a strong public advocate of women in science. As a female-to-male transgendered person, Dr. Barres brings a unique and insightful perspective to the discussion. He continues to fight for equal treatment of women in their professional science careers, and provided insight during the roundtable into how we can work to level the playing field.

UOWGS donor support makes these seminars possible! Please contact us if you’d like to help fund our seminar series or if you have suggestions for future seminar speakers or topics.
7th Annual Generations Luncheon

This year’s Generations Luncheon provided a unique opportunity for females in STEM disciplines to meet and share their experiences with the future generation of women scientists. Women at every level of the science career ladder were in attendance, including professional and academic scientists, graduate students, undergraduate science majors, and high school students. Our keynote speaker this year was Kiki Prottsman, who is the Executive Director of Thinkersmith and a former computer science instructor at the University of Oregon. Kiki shared her experience in the development of groundbreaking work in the K-12 space, and in becoming one of the leading experts in elementary CS education.

7th Annual Generations Luncheon, April 25, 2015

Kiki Prottsman

2015 Members Celebration

WGS welcomed all members and their families to our 7th Annual Members Celebration. This year’s event was held for the third consecutive year at Sweet Cheeks Winery in beautiful south Eugene. It was a wonderful evening of great wine, excellent catering, and a coming together of faculty, graduate students, and their families for a celebration of the past year. We love hosting this event every summer to thank our members and supporters and to celebrate another successful year!

2015 Members Celebration, July 7, 2015

2014-2015
Social Events

Fall
Annual Membership Drive
WGS provided sweets, treats, and coffee to new and renewing members. A great way to bring in the new school year!

Soiree @ 16 Tons Café
WGS hosted a happy hour at 16 Tons Café full with food and drink specials for members and friends.

Winter
All Members Meeting
WGS held an open meeting with provided lunch for members to discuss new ideas and current issues.

Happy Hour @ Falling Sky
WGS hosted a happy hour at Falling Sky Deli. It was a time for great food, great beer, and great friends!

Spring
End of Year Members Meeting
WGS held an open meeting for all members to review all activities from the past year and to provide feedback and new ideas!

7th Annual Generations Luncheon

2015 Members Celebration

Summer
2015 Members Celebration
Outreach Events

UOWGS hosts a variety of outreach activities throughout the year. From middle school science adventure days to undergraduate informative panels and mentorship, our outreach activities provide a network of support to students interested in science careers.

Interested in Volunteering?
Contact us at: uowgs@uoregon.edu & visit uowgs.com for more pics

Future Direction: Alumni Networking

As UOWGS continues to expand as an organization, we grow our alumni network every year. Up until now, we have not been able to use that network. Our vision is to connect current members with alumni to broaden the network of both groups, providing valuable knowledge to current members seeking jobs and career advice, and providing enhanced connections to our alumni with successful women in all disciplines.

To this end, we have a few exciting changes/updates to let you know about. We have recently set up a LinkedIn group for members and alumni to stay connected with UOWGS and to allow a place for those important network connections to occur. We are expanding the Public Relations Chair’s responsibilities to now include maintaining alumni connections. And additionally, a new page focusing exclusively on alumni has been added on our website. With this, we hope to highlight alumni and see where they have gone in their careers: whether in academia, industry, or elsewhere.

We believe that with these tools, we will be able to help our current members to create those network connections that we all know are so important for finding and securing future employment and opportunities.

Check out the spotlight on the next page of our founder: Sara (Staggs) Wiser!

And be sure to check out our website: uowgs.com for spotlights of Liesl McCormick, Julia Widom, Spring Knapp, Sarah Brady, & others as we continue to grow in this new endeavor!

Interested in Connecting?
Contact us at: LinkedIn Group: UOWGS
Alumni Spotlight: Sara (Staggs) Wisser

Sara is a Senior Sales Professional at Thermo Fisher Scientific, based in the Austin, Texas region. She believes: *When we work together, your goals become mine. I am intentional with my thoughts and actions to communicate in a caring, strategic and intelligent manner with you. I have an ‘owner’s mentality’ and that’s your assurance that I won’t stop until you tell me ‘job well done.’*

Sara strives to fulfill her passion for people and driving science forward through her role within the Life Sciences Commercial Sales Team at Thermo Fisher Scientific. She is currently selling the Genetic Analysis portfolio of platforms including Next Generation Sequencing (Ion torrent), Really-Rime PCR, and Capillary Electrophoresis Sequencing Systems (Applied Biosystems), engaging with her customers to assist them to accomplish their goals, and working with her colleagues to always provide a team solution. During the past 9.5 years at this company, Sara started her career as a Molecular Probes Technical Scientist on the Technical Support Team, then grew into a Senior Sales Role, which included spending time selling the Cellular Analysis portfolio in the Mid-West, US, and Canada regions as a Technical Sales Specialist, while acting on the Sales Advisory Council. More recently, she achieved the 2013 Top Genetic Analysis System Sales Representative for Western North America and was invited to be part of the 2014 Chairman’s Club.

Sara has a passion to help develop women leadership. She has shown drive both in her personal & professional activities. Highlights: Founder of the Women In Graduate Science community at University of Oregon during her graduate tenure (uowgs.com); Sixteen years of service raising money for the knowledge about Breast Cancer Awareness through her National Sorority Alumnae National Offices (Zeta Tau Alpha); Service on the leadership team of Life Technologies’ International Women’s Influential Network (IWIN) Field Chapter as a Co-Leader and Recruitment and Retention Co-Chair for the past 5 years.

Sara (Staggs) Wisser  
University of Oregon Graduate 2005, MS, Organic Chemistry studied with PI- Professor Darren Johnson.  
Currently, Senior Genetic Analysis Sales Professional, Thermo Fisher Scientific

Connect with us online!

Website: uowgs.com  
Email: uowgs@uoregon.edu  
Facebook: facebook.com/uowgs  
Twitter: @uowgs  
LinkedIn Group: UOWGS

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