Women's Panel: “You Make a Career Change—How Does This Affect Your Significant Other?”

Article by: Leslie Romanowski

On April 20th, the South Central Michigan SWE hosted a Women’s Panel at Four Roses Café in Plainwell. The panel featured 4 speakers: Justine McKenzie, Leslie Romanowski, Ashley Stroup and Lynn Surdock, each with various backgrounds and tenure within the industry. Over 20 women from 3 different sections in Southwest Michigan attended the event, which opened with a meet and greet and appetizers before settling in for the panel discussion.

It was a very diverse group, and each of the women shared their own unique stories about a significant career change that they had made that also influenced their significant others’ career/lifestyle. Some of the women had families that were grown while others were in early stages of planning for a family. Each had faced difficult decisions on when and why to make a career change while also realizing the implications it had on their personal life.

The dialogue was very open, with many questions being raised, creating a very engaging and open environment. “How do you know when the time is right to make a change?” “How do you convince your significant other that this is a good move for everyone involved?” “When a change means a physical location change, how do you navigate buying/selling a home, changing schools/daycares with children, getting an idea of the landscape of the new location?” “What if I don’t like the change after it’s done and now we have to live with it?” These were all questions that came up during the Q&A session and there were many answers to each question, providing participants with multiple avenues on how to perhaps address these on a more personal level.

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Women's Panel, cont.

Due to the complexity of the topic, there was something that resonated with everyone... even the women on the panel found themselves taking notes from other women on the panel!

Overall, the evening was a great success. The event wrapped up with HUGE desserts, a few drinks and a bit of mingling and networking. A few old friends reconnected, while new friendships were made. Consider joining us for our next session, as it promises to be both rewarding and informative!

Letter from the President

Hi SWE!

I can’t believe how fast this year has gone!! We had some really great events organized by great teams! Glass blowing, book clubs, AirZoo, hockey! Thank you for all your hard work making our SWE Section successful!

One of my favorite things about being a part of SWE is the opportunity to get to know smart, talented people from all over the area with different backgrounds and goals. I loved partnering with other local sections to expand our network even farther this year. I appreciate you choosing to take time to attend our events, making them successful and sharing your interests and experiences. We saw many new faces at events this year and I can’t wait to develop those new relationships.

As we start to plan for the new year, please reach out! Share your ideas! Share your opinions! We’re always looking for new events to include in the schedule! We’re always trying to improve our events! We’re always looking for new people to help organize! YOU make SWE successful! YOU are what it’s all about!

- Maggie
Jennifer Goff, an engineer at Stryker, gave a fantastic presentation about the do’s and don’ts of fashion in the workplace. She was engaging and entertaining, and gave us a good understanding of what may or may not be acceptable when it comes to clothing choices in our places of work. Her presentation covered a broad range of fashion topics—from ideas about what colors will be “in” for the coming season, to decisions about shoe choices, to recommendations for finding clothes that look good on your body shape, to how to picking colors that represent you. It was a very enlightening and useful presentation, with concepts that we can definitely put to use!

May Social—Getting Creative at Make Studio!

Our SWE SCMI section got together on April 23rd at Make Studio in Kalamazoo to be social while getting creative! We sipped wine and chatted while we tried our hands at staining and painting our own wooden signs. With options from a fun Michigan bottle opener with etched Michigan glasses, to an adorable bike sign, to signs with family names, there was something for everyone!
Facility Tour: Consumers Energy Marshall Training Center

Article by: Julia Fox

On Tuesday, June 6, 2017, SCMI SWE toured the Consumers Energy Marshall Training Center. The tour was conducted by Richard Scott and Mark Baga, Electric Skills Training Lead and Instructor, respectively. They gave an overview of the facility and took the group on a walking tour of the training building and external training yard. This included tours of the classrooms and labs, indoor climbing arena, de-energized substation, and various outdoor training areas. The group was most impressed by the conditions that the lineworkers work in and the rigor of the training. The most impressive task that the trainees have to do is climb more than 20 feet up a pole with their climbing spikes and buck strap. The tour was fantastic, and the group had a great time!
Book Club on July 8th!

Our final event of FY17 is our book club on Saturday, July 8th! We will be meeting at 1 pm at Black Owl Café in Kalamazoo to discuss our book, “Nice Girls Still Don’t Get the Corner Office” by Lois Frankel. Please join us for some coffee and interesting discussion!

Don’t Forget to Vote for FY18 Officers!

The SWE South Central Michigan FY18 Officer nominees have been selected and voting is now open. If you are a paying member of SWE, please vote for our FY18 Officers by Friday, July 14th!

You should have received an email with the link to the voting ballot—if you are a member of SWE SCMI and did not receive this email, please email scmi.swe@gmail.com to request the link. Please remember to only vote for 1 person in each position. Write in candidates are accepted but need to be a paying member of SWE.

Thank you for a fantastic FY17!
See you in FY18!!