

Women Faculty updated on ACES grant

Program seeks to increase number and success of women faculty in science and engineering

Cathleen Carlin, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics, which was one of the test departments during the first phase of the Academic Careers in Engineering and Sciences (ACES) program, recently told a group of women faculty about the value she found through the career coaching offered by the program. She said one colleague had asked her why she, as a tenured full professor, needed coaching. Carlin said coaching helped her define research and professional goals. "I'm no longer working to please the system, but to meet my goals," she said.

Carlin spoke at a meeting convened in late March by the Women Faculty of the School of Medicine for an update on the ACES program. A group of about 30 women faculty members gathered to hear the progress report, including a review of statistics about the School of Medicine, and to learn about the resources available through the university's Center for Women.

Hue-Lee Kaung, Ph.D., president of the Women Faculty and associate professor of anatomy, began the meeting with an introduction of the ACES program which is funded by the National Science Foundation to promote women in leadership and participation of women at all levels of the faculty. She hoped the meeting would "heighten awareness of issues related to women."

Lynn Singer, Ph.D., deputy provost

and ACES' principal investigator, described the program as an initiative involving 19 schools nation-wide. She said the program's three major goals are to increase participation of women in science and engineering by increasing science and engineering women faculty; to improve the climate of women in academic institutions, and to facilitate women's advancement to the highest ranks of academic leadership. Case Western Reserve University was the first private institution to receive the grant and was recently joined by Columbia University.

Singer dispelled a long-cited myth, one that she's heard for 25 years, she said, about "a pipeline problem" causing the shortage of women on science and engineering faculties. The theory states that there is an insufficient number of women and minorities in leadership positions because there is an insufficient number on the pathway from graduate student to faculty member. Singer said, "The data indicate that this is true for minorities in science and engineering, but false for women."

The School of Medicine's Department of Physiology and Biophysics, chaired by Antonio Scarpa, M.D., Ph.D., was one of four test departments at the university in ACES' first phase. Entering its second phase, ACES also will include the biochemistry and molecular biology and microbiology departments at the medical school, in addition to seven other departments at the university (the program is limited

to departments funded by the National Science Foundation).

During phase two, ACES will offer executive coaching to the chairs of the departments, coaching and mentoring to 31 women faculty, networking events, educational workshops, undergraduate and graduate student training, and search committee support guidelines.

Singer presented a series of slides showing the trends of promotions for medical school female and male faculty members. The slides covered each of the five years from academic year 1999 to 2000 until academic year 2003 to 2004.

Although the number of women who are full professors has risen each year, the number of men who are full professors has increased at a greater rate. For associate professors, both the number of women and the number of men increased for the first three years, then plateaued during the past two years. The number of female tenured professors increased slightly for the first three academic years and leveled off at 40 for the last two years, whereas their male counterparts saw an increase in number every year, rising from slightly more than 160 to almost 200 during the five-year period. Currently, almost a third of the full-time faculty members at the School of Medicine are women.

Following Singer, Dorothy C. Miller, D.S.W., director of the university's Center for Women, spoke about the center's mission and services. The center seeks

to improve the educational, professional and social climate and to increase opportunities for women within the university and community through education, advocacy and research. She described center programs on multicultural initiatives; women's scholarship; men and gender issues, and health education and advocacy.

The speakers were joined by Ralph Horwitz, M.D., dean, School of Medicine, and vice president for medical affairs; Daniel Anker, J.D., Ph.D., associate dean for faculty affairs and human resources; John Anderson, Ph.D., university provost, and Beth McGee, faculty diversity officer and associate professor of theatre arts, to field questions from the group.

Anker commented that he had no doubt the ACES program "would change the face of Case Western

Reserve University." Anderson said that in the future, the promotion of women would become part of the review process for all the deans at Case.

Several women faculty said they are not given enough information on the steps they personally need to take to achieve promotion and tenure. Considerable discussion focused on the difference between men and women's negotiating styles. McGee said research indicates that women do not negotiate as well as men, which may lead to women faculty accepting more committee assignments and/or working more with students, tasks that take their time and attention away from gaining promotions and tenure. Their male colleagues, by contrast, keep their eyes on their career trajectories.

Singer said, "You have to educate yourself. You need to be able to say no." She also said that women do not promote themselves as well as men.

Horwitz advised the faculty to gain membership on national societies and to present their work at national forums.

More information about the ACES program is available on the Web at <http://www.case.edu/admin/aces/> and information about the Center for Women is available at <http://www.case.edu/provost/centerforwomen/index.html>. The Web site for the Women Faculty of the School of Medicine is http://mediswww.cwru.edu/women_faculty/index.asp.

2005 Lepow Medical Student Research Day Awardees

Front row, left to right, Claire M. Doerschuk, M.D., associate dean for medical student research, Helen H. Hobbs, M.D., 1979 alumna and the day's guest speaker with the 2005 Lepow Day awardees, Kanu Goyal; Virginia Miraldi; Christa Swisher; second row, left to right, Sima Shah; Christy Gray; Connie Liu; Lindsay Burrage; Michael Davis; Gregory Martin; third row, left to right, Christopher Utz; James Bayrer, and Lucas Burton. (Not pictured: Bruk Endale and Sonali Mehandru.) Hobbs is a Hughes investigator at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas.

