



Advocacy, Networking & Support for Alberta STEM
Programs that Promote Diversity & Inclusion

Annual Report

2019-2020





AS AWSN WRAPS UP
25 YEARS OF STEM
ADVOCACY
WE ARE EXCITED TO
PARTNER WITH

HILLBERG & BERK

DONATE \$100 TO
AWSN AND RECEIVE
THESE EARRINGS -
THE SUPERNOVA



WINSTEM WEEK
INITIATIVE

awsn.org/25th-anniversary-donation-drive

Operation Minerva inspires more girls to pursue science, technology, engineering, and math careers

(January 21, 2019 – Calgary, Alberta) – In 2019, a survey conducted by Girls Who Code suggested more than 50% of Canadians couldn't name a female scientist or engineer. Without a doubt, there is still a need for more women in science, technology, engineering and math organizations.

Spark is proud to announce it will be the new organizers of **Operation Minerva**, a program connecting grade 8 girls to leading female professionals in STEM careers by offering workshops, job shadowing and one-on-one mentorship.

Operation Minerva has been welcoming girls for 31 years, stewarded for the past 25 years by the **Alberta Women's Science Network (AWSN)**. Spark is thrilled to be continuing its legacy to raise more awareness on the underrepresentation of women in science, technology, engineering, and math disciplines and providing the resources to inspire more women in STEM.

Join the movement! Student and mentor registrations are now open!

Operation Minerva is generously sponsored by the **Alberta Women's Science Network and Wood PLC**.

SparkScience.ca/OperationMinerva | #SparkScience



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EPISODE #10

**AN INTERVIEW WITH
DR. LESLEY RIGG,
DEAN OF SCIENCE,
UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY**

NOW RELEASED...

A candid interview on Dr. Rigg's unique career journey, her experience advancing women in science and academia and how we can all support women in the workplace.

Find us on iTunes, Google Play, Spotify & Buzzsprout
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This version of the AWSN Annual Report reflects programming from September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020 and the Financial Year of March 1, 2019 to February 29, 2020.

What is AWSN?

AWSN is a not-for-profit that supports advocacy towards a more diverse and inclusive STEM future in Alberta. We began in 1993 as The Alberta Women's Science Network and have since re-branded to AWSN as we expand our focus to all under-represented communities without starting a new legal entity. AWSN's primary focus is to connect, unite, support and promote STEM programs throughout the province. Along with our long-term volunteers, we have been fortunate this past year to gain many new creative minds, who are lending their time and expertise across the board and our various committees.

In the past 26 years, AWSN has contributed close to \$2 million to the Alberta STEM ecosystem! AWSN activities concentrate on supporting grassroots efforts. This includes funding, in-kind support and volunteer resource connections for both hosted and community programs. We categorized these activities under three core 'pillars':

Recruitment, **Retention** and **Recognition**.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As a network, AWSN creates a collaborative environment where member groups and volunteers support each other, learning from each other's experiences, successes, and challenges. Though 2020 was not the year we all thought it would be, there is strength in community. AWSN would like to thank the greater Alberta STEM network for all of their efforts to continue to amplify, magnify, or accelerate systemic and social change within STEM.

Despite the challenges presented in 2020, AWSN still has many accomplishments to highlight in the 2019/2020 activity year, including:

- AWSN donated over \$17,000 to STEM grassroots organizations in Alberta
- AWSN forged a new partnership with Telus Spark to expand the 30+ year Operation Minerva Program (Gr. 8 girls job shadowing with Female STEM professionals)
- Despite a quick format change in the spring of 2020 to online delivery, AWSN successfully completed year 2 of an NSERC grant to expand the OM program to more underserved students
- AWSN executed the 4th annual WinSTEM week, including wrapping up our 25th year
- AWSN supported our greater network as we all navigate COVID-19 by writing letters to various levels of government - amplifying STEM advocacy and the need for GBA+ and intersectional lenses towards economic recovery

AWSN had much to celebrate in the 2019/2020 year! Highlights include the successful implementation of our first collaboration fundraiser with sponsor/partner Hillberg & Berk - selling STEM-inspired Supernova purple earrings. AWSN also introduced a new Outstanding Volunteer Award in honour of Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour (an AWSN founding member) called *The Athena*.

On a personal note, I would like to thank the greater STEM network for the support they have provided me over the years. As the now AWSN Past -President, I can reflect on so many positive moments and great friendships that I have made in Alberta and across Canada. As I pass the torch over to the new AWSN President – Alexandra Edie PGeo. MBA, I know that the team will have a strong leader to lead us all forward.



Alicia Bjarnason



STEM:

SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY,
ENGINEERING &
MATHEMATICS

OUR VISION & MISSION

VISION

A transformed future with equal opportunity for all in STEM.

With strong STEM literacy at a public level, and where all can contribute to and have access to STEM.

MISSION

Enabling a culture of diversity and inclusivity through STEM Programs.

AWSN is acting as the platform that initiates or supports programs, partners and stakeholders who amplify, magnify, or accelerate systemic and social change within the greater community, allowing all to participate to their full capacity in STEM.

WE have passion for STEM and the STEM community.

WE aim to transform the STEM landscape.

WE are champions through Leadership and Advocacy.

WE use guiding principles of integrity, collaboration, and empowerment.

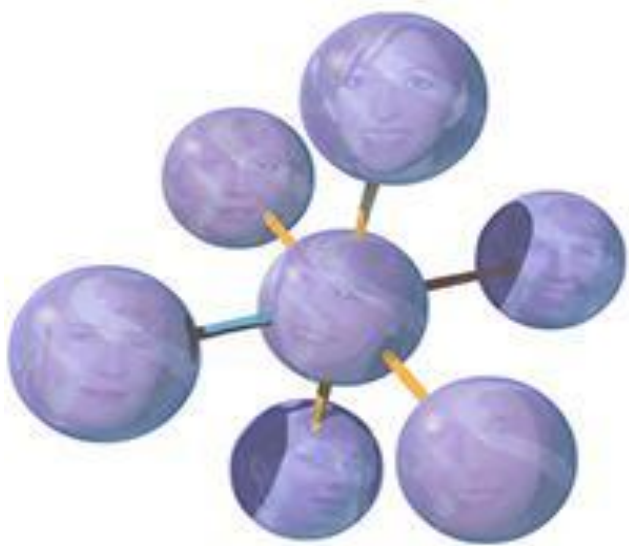
AWSN assists both hosted and member programs through grants, mentorship, non-profit status for new initiatives, advertising of events, volunteer recruitment and opportunities to communicate and learn from like-minded organizations and people.

THREE 'R' PILLARS

AWSN's initial focus was supporting programs for girls and young women. Soon after, it grew to include scholarships and the Minerva Mentoring Award, recognizing significant contributions in mentorship. With the continued growth of the organization over the past 26 years, AWSN found itself connecting an increasing number of diverse groups and programs.

AWSN has evolved, focusing its strategic direction under the guise of three pillars - **Recruitment**, **Retention** and **Recognition**. Each pillar focuses on specific programs, services and activities, ensuring direct support for these populations and programs under that pillar. Interconnectivity between the pillars further serves to facilitate collaboration and aid the programs in supporting one another.

The **Inner Core – AWSN**, supports programs by providing services to these STEM based programs, including mentoring, grants, program promotion and IT support. For hosted programs, this also includes: not-for-profit status, insurance coverage and financial reporting.



RECRUITMENT

It's about giving young people the opportunity to **EXPLORE** STEM subjects and careers.

RETENTION

It's about assisting the talent that exists in the STEM fields and reducing the struggle and **CHALLENGE** to advance their careers.

RECOGNITION

It's about the recognition of excellence in STEM - the people who **INSPIRE** us.

AWSN provides support through event funding, services, and information sharing to recruit young women and other underrepresented youth into STEM careers. We help new ideas and fledgling projects evolve into long-term, sustainable endeavours. Below are the groups we supported this year, many of which are long time members.



Cybermentor: Cybermentor is an online mentoring program for girls in grades 6 to 12 across Alberta.

Operation Minerva Calgary: For the past 30 years, OM has been providing grade eight girls the opportunity to experience STEM career choices through job shadowing activities with female role models in STEM workplaces.

Intimitrons from Area 51: Inspiring and encouraging young women in engineering, science, and technical vocations through building robots and competing in the FIRST Robotics Competitions.

Praxis: An organization offering a one-day mentorship experience for grade nine girls in southern Alberta.

Team Jasmine: A high school robotics team in NE Calgary.

WISEST: A University of Alberta network, empowering women in the fields of science, engineering and technology with conferences, lecture series and summer research programs.



RETENTION

AWSN supports individuals at all stages of their STEM careers, including undergraduate students who are learning about careers options, advanced degree holders trying to break into industry, individuals trying to come back to work after an extended leave, those seeking mentoring to advance their careers or those looking for a supportive community of like-minded individuals. Below are the groups we supported this year, many of which are long time members.



AVE (Adding Value in Energy) Network: Provides opportunities for multi-disciplinary & cross-generational connections and education in Engineering, Geoscience & Technology.

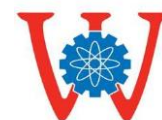
Chic Geek: Chic Geek is a Calgary-based non-profit building a welcoming, supportive community for women at the intersection of technology and entrepreneurship.

GeoWomen: An AWSN hosted program providing speaker series events and other networking resources to advance the careers of women working in the geoscience professions in Calgary.

IWS Calgary: IWS Network was born when several women saw the need to provide support and mentorship to fellow Immigrant and International Women in Science (IWS).

MentorUP Edmonton: Supporting under-represented young STEM professional populations with early career networks.

SAIT-WISE: Student led, this group is focused on supporting and encouraging females interested in STEM fields.



WiSER: A WISEST Network, designed to help early career professionals connect with each other and with resources, support, and professional development opportunities.

UA-WISE: University of Alberta WISEST Network, designed to help support undergraduate students in the science and engineering fields.

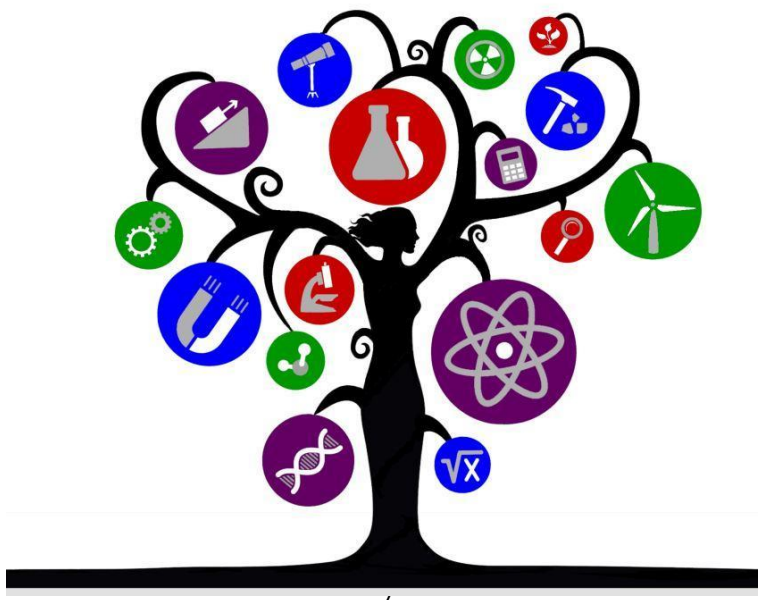
UC-WISE: University of Calgary network, engaging female undergraduate students in activities with faculty and peers to promote their success in the science and engineering professions.



NEW!

AWSN recognizes a single individual each year, who has made an outstanding contribution as a volunteer to the greater STEM community.

WinSTEM Week: Celebrating the careers of women in STEM, AWSN supports this week-long celebration by communicating the many events held in the province. WinSTEM week always begins the second Tuesday in October, coinciding with Ada Lovelace Day.



LEADERSHIP

EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT Alicia Bjarnason <i>(Geology & Human Geography)</i>	CO-PRESIDENT Alexandra Edie <i>(Geophysics)</i>	PAST PRESIDENT Shoma Sinha <i>(Nanotechnology)</i>
VICE PRESIDENT Tina Kakkar <i>(Computer Science)</i>	CO-VICE PRESIDENT Shaina Mahajan <i>(Engineering)</i>	TREASURER Kenneth Fong <i>(Accounting)</i>
CO-TREASURER Jenni Richardson <i>(Accounting)</i>	SECRETARY Sihan Guo <i>(Biomedical Sciences)</i>	CO-SECRETARY Carolina Albuquerque <i>(Law)</i>
COMMUNICATIONS Claire Cao <i>(Engineering)</i>	PROGRAMS MANAGER Renee Kirby <i>(Engineering)</i>	

LEADERSHIP

BOARD

RECRUITMENT

Amber Bohaychuk

(Education)

Patty Rooks

(Psychology)

RETENTION

Madeleine Jenson-Fontaine

(Chemistry)

Kristen Kavich

(Engineering)

RECOGNITION

Fervone Goings

(Microbiology)

Geetha Nicodemus

(Computer Science)

MEMBER AT LARGE

Suzanne Checkryn

(Engineering)

MEMBER AT LARGE

Chantal Robitaille

(Microbiology)

We can only serve our community when we work cohesively as a well-rounded team of Executive and Board Members.

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

WinSTEM Week



In recognition of Ada Lovelace Day, AWSN for the fourth year hosted WinSTEM Week in October 2019, celebrating the achievements of women who study, research or contribute to



STEM subjects. Throughout the week, groups across Alberta organized and celebrated Women in STEM! There were 12 events and initiatives including the lighting of the Calgary Tower and Edmonton High Level bridge purple! We encourage all groups to participate in this annual event by planning their own WinSTEM week activity, big or small. See all the great events on AWSN's social media channels at #WinSTEMWeek.

Operation Minerva at Telus Spark



Operation Minerva inspires more girls to pursue science, technology, engineering, and math careers

AWSN forged a new partnership with Telus Spark in Calgary to expand the 30+ year Operation Minerva Program for Grade 8 girls, which involves job shadowing female STEM professionals.



Operation Minerva NSERC Grant

AWSN is stewarding a 3-year NSERC grant which the Operation Minerva program received with the aim of broadening this long-standing program. The funds are being used to pair grade 8 girls from underprivileged schools with female STEM mentors from 3 STEM work environments. Year Two is now complete.

Balance Sheet FY20 vs. FY19 Income	2020	2019
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	79,840	49,030
Grant Receivable	-	9,234
Accounts Receivable		-
	79,840	58,264
Property and Equipment, Net of Accumulated Amortization	450	450
	80,290	58,714
Liabilities and Fund Balances		
Current		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	7,511	5,000
Deferred Income	50,354	9,234
	57,865	14,234
Deferred Income		-
	57,865	14,234
Net Assets	22,425	44,480
	80,290	58,714

AWSN financial year is from February 28, 2019 – February 29, 2020.

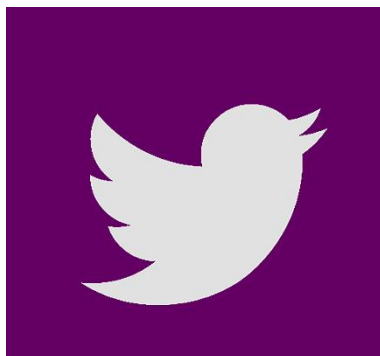


SPONSORS



AWSN is grateful to our sponsors and partners for their support of our programming.

CONTACT



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