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## **AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CHEMICAL ENGINEERS' SALARY SURVEY FINDS IMPROVED EQUALITY BETWEEN GENDERS**

*Biennial survey finds family leave impacts both men and women;  
median pay rises by nine percent.*

**NEW YORK** – As the nation marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Equal Pay Act, a new salary survey from the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) has found that apparent gender disparities are accounted for by time taken off for family reasons—and that time off impacts all engineers – regardless of the gender of the engineer taking such leave.

This is the first year that AIChE accounted for time taken off for family reasons. In previous years, the biennial surveys had shown a gender gap in salary that varied with age and years of experience. In some recent surveys, early-career women actually earned slightly more than their male counterparts. However, among respondents with more than ten years of experience, women's median salaries had almost always lagged behind men's.

But, when accounting for the time-off factor, the results of the 2013 survey surprised AIChE staff. Each increment of time taken off for family reasons was associated with a reduction in salary, on average, of about \$4,500, regardless of gender. When that time gets factored in, it explains most of the difference between the sexes seen in reported salaries.

“The family leave factor is an issue we will continue to explore in future salary surveys,” said June Wispelwey, AIChE's executive director. “We read this as good news, though, for women pursuing a career in chemical engineering.”

Differentials did persist in that most male respondents who took time off were out for three months or less, while female respondents were more likely to take four to six months. This longer family leave time taken by women is seen as a factor in salary gender differences. However, the survey also seems to indicate that once an engineer falls behind due to the family leave factor, he or she does not tend to catch up.

“It's been five decades since the passage of the Equal Pay Act, and some industries still demonstrate pay inequity between men and women. This salary survey shows that chemical engineering is a fantastic career that compensates both women and men fairly,” said Wispelwey.

“Chemical engineering is a profession with a wide range of career opportunities, which makes a chemical engineering degree increasingly attractive to women. I have seen the opportunities for women grow throughout the course of my career, and would encourage any woman to consider a chemical engineering career.”

The survey, published in the June issue of *CEP (Chemical Engineering Progress)*, the Institute’s flagship magazine, was based on results from 3,145 AIChE members. The survey also shows compensation for the profession is rebounding. It reports a median salary of \$120,000 — 9 percent higher than the \$110,000 median of two years ago, when salaries stagnated and raises were at their lowest point in 20 years. Unemployment among chemical engineers has also decreased in the two years since the last survey, to 2.1 percent, down from 3.8 percent in 2011.

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*About AIChE:*

*AIChE is a professional society of nearly 45,000 chemical engineers in 92 countries. Its members work in corporations, universities and government using their knowledge of chemical processes to develop safe and useful products for the benefit of society. Through its varied programs, AIChE continues to be a focal point for information exchange on the frontiers of chemical engineering research in such areas as energy, sustainability, biological engineering, nanotechnology, and chemical plant safety and security. More information about AIChE is available at [www.aiche.org](http://www.aiche.org).*