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AUGUST MEETING: THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE DEBATE

[WEBEX MEETING NUMBER 276 141 101](#) (further directions on page 4)

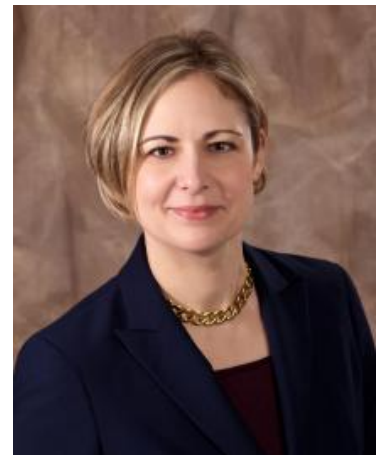
TUESDAY, 25 AUGUST 2015

9:00 pm EDT, 8:00 pm CDT, 7:00 pm MDT, 6:00 pm PDT;

UTC/GMT 0200 25 August 2015



The VLS continues its popular tradition of hosting an Institute-wide forum for the candidates for AIChE President-Elect. Please join us on **Tuesday**, August 25th, as candidates [T. Bond Calloway](#) and [Wendy Young Reed](#) discuss their visions for AIChE and the profession.



More information can be found on the [VLS Events Website](#)

IN THIS ISSUE

Please note that our meeting this coming week is on **Tuesday not Thursday** for the convenience of the candidates.

I am pleased with **Chair Amanda Scalza's** column this month for two reasons: first, because she expresses herself so well on diversity, a subject close to her heart, and second, because she and I are two women with different opinions on some aspects this subject. Regarding the first reason, she is setting a great example of freely expressing viewpoints and ideas so that everyone can benefit by exploring our similarities and differences. (Her openness is just one of the reasons she is such a joy to work with.) Regarding the second reason, she and I demonstrate the often-overlooked inhomogeneity of viewpoints that can exist within groups which are frequently assumed to be homogeneous.

Despite our differences, Amanda and I agree entirely on several key points she makes. We agree that bringing different perspectives and experiences to the table, contributing new ideas due to different viewpoints, and having those contributions appreciated as valuable are crucial to good problem solving and good engineering. We also agree that being noticeably different has gotten easier over the years and we do appreciate the efforts of those who helped make this happen.

We all learn from open discussions and the opinions of others on issues they feel are important. This editor encourages all readers to contribute letters, articles, or

guest columns for publication, especially if they share experiences that not all of us have had or thoughtful viewpoints we might not have considered. Send contributions in an email to the editor at jbrand@unl.edu using "VLS Newsletter" in the subject line.

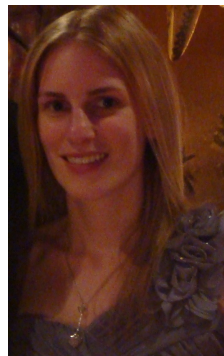
Past Chair Noah Meeks describes the pleasures of being Past Chair, including an update on his special project, **The Co-op and Summer Intern Presentation Competition** which we will all get to see at the September VLS meeting. So far, the response from the students has been great (over 30 abstracts submitted) and VLS members are enthusiastic about reviewing the abstracts.

Noah makes being Past Chair sound so enjoyable and rewarding that it seems everyone will want to do it. The only hitch is that you have to be Chair-Elect and then Chair first. However, as **VLS elections** are just around the corner, this can be arranged. As Noah, explains in his column, he is the man to talk to about this.

-- Jennifer I. Brand, Editor

FROM THE CHAIR: DIVERSITY !

Amanda Scalza



*#Ilooklikeanengineer.
My body may be small,
but my voice is big. I like
to wear high heels and
pearls and took a detour
on my vacation when I*

saw a sign for one of Thomas Edison's childhood homes. I am a millennial but don't mistake me for lazy, entitled or selfish. I am determined, creative, and inclusive.

The hashtag above, created by a young female platform engineer, has sparked a worldwide conversation about the diversity troubles that continue to plague the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields.

Though only "small wins", I am enthusiastic at the progress we have made over the years, and troubled at how far we have left to go. The number of females and minorities in management positions is growing, but the numbers in executive positions continues to be relatively small.

The last AIChE Salary survey has also proves we have made great progress. It shows an overall nearly 19% female representation of female engineers. The female young professionals are now reporting salaries equal to their male counterparts. Unfortunately, this did not extend to those experienced professionals further along in their career. Experience engineers who are females continue to report lower earnings than their male counterparts. (CEP-June 2015).

This year is the 25th anniversary of the AIChE Minority Affairs Committee. This branch of the AIChE works as an advocate for education and training for disadvantaged minorities, and promoting the discussion on how to break down barriers to improve diversity in the workforce. Why is this so vital? 2011 US Census data shows blacks make up only

about 6% of scientists and engineers, and Hispanics about an additional 6%.

Numbers alone do not tell the whole story. Diversity is vital in a workplace as it can strengthen a company's sustainability. On a basic level, it means contrast and variation with the generation of new and creative ideas. Diversity can engender solutions to problems that might not have emerged from a group with a homogenous background. Ultimately that is the benefit seen by companies with a diverse workforce.

I am proud to be an engineer, and thankful for all those who have come before me to break down barriers. It is due the support of the advocates such as those in the Minority Affairs Committee (MAC), Women's Initiative Committee (WIC) and other volunteers who have worked diligently to pave these roads for us and make our progress possible. As someone once informed me, "every small difference can make a big impact."

BEING A PAST CHAIR

Noah Meeks



Being a past chair of an AIChE organization is a great job—working on only the interesting projects, handing out sage advice, and seeing an organization

improve. All of this is happening to me in the Virtual Local Section (except the sage advice part!).

Since I moved into the VLW Past Chair role and Amanda became Chair, meetings are planned farther in advance with consistently great speakers; membership has increased; and communication has been improved! I can't take credit for any of this, but it is so good to see the VLS continue to grow and improve and fill a critical need in the AIChE community.

The most interesting project I have been pursuing as Past Chair is the Co-op and Summer Intern Presentation Competition. Because many undergraduate paper competitions focus primarily on academic and research-based projects, the VLS selected this method to support the many co-op and intern students who are working primarily in industry, but who may not have a research-based project. Of course, any undergraduate co-op or intern was invited to participate—we just wanted to specifically encourage industrial co-ops to participate. After a brief call for abstracts, thirty-four were submitted and are being reviewed by the VLS leadership. The highest reviewed submitters will be invited to speak at the VLS meeting on September 24, competing for \$500 in cash prizes. The final awards will be made based on the presentations. Any VLS member in good standing is invited to help judge these presentations—if you are interested, please email me: NoahChemE@icloud.com. I hope that this will become an annual event for the VLS

and that in the future even more students will participate!

One final task of the VLS Past Chair is leading the nominating committee and specifically selecting nominees for vice-chair/chair-elect. If you are a VLS member in good standing and have interest in serving as a director, treasurer, or vice-chair/chair-elect, please let me know: NoahChemE@icloud.com. We also have a number of appointed positions available on an on-going basis, such as YP Committee, Programming Committee, and Membership Committee.

VIDEOS, CAREER FAIRS, AND ALL

Virtual activities in the AIChE are growing apace. The Virtual Local Section (VLS) seems to be leading the activity in both quantity and variety. We sponsor the annual Institute-wide Presidential Candidate Forum, and are inaugurating the September Student Showcase (the presentation competition). We also share video archives of our virtual monthly meetings.

On that front, the **archival videos** of the March, April, May, June, and July VLS meetings are now posted on [our website](#), in case you missed them the first time or just want to enjoy them again. Editing and posting these videos is a lot of work, but an important benefit, especially to members in places where the meetings occur in the wee hours of the morning. Contact Amanda

Scalza at virtualaiche@gmail.com if you would like to help out with this effort.

But the VLS is not alone in virtual adventures. Is your company thinking about hiring new employees? Or are you considering new career options yourself? Both employers and employees should check out the upcoming [AIChE Virtual Career Fair 2015](#) (12:00 to 4:00 pm EDT). This event features a special Student Hour, from 3:00 to 4:00 pm EDT.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

VLS Meetings are USUALLY the fourth Thursday of the month:

--- **Tuesday, August 25th** ---

AIChE Presidential Candidates

--- **Thursday, September 24th** ---

Student Showcase (Paper Competition)

--- **Thursday, October 22nd** ---

[Vice Admiral Joseph Dyer, USN \(ret\)](#)

--- **Thursday September 10th** ---

[AIChE Virtual Career Fair 2015](#)

12:00 PM to 4:00 PM (EDT)

2015 is European Industrial and Technical Heritage Year

ATTENDING A VLS MEETING

- **Join by internet:**
 - <https://aiche.webex.com/aiche/j.php?MTID=m8a0766c5d03559acce05542a78513954>
 - Meeting number 276 141 101
- **Join by phone:** Access code: 276 141 101
 - 1-866-469-3239 Call-in toll-free number (US/Canada)
 - 1-650-429-3300 Call-in toll number (US/Canada)
 - [Global Call-in numbers](#)
 - [Toll-free calling restrictions](#)

Attendance at a Virtual Section Meeting is open to AIChE Virtual Local Section Members, AIChE members and other interested people.

PDH CREDIT FOR VLS MEETINGS

LAURA J. GIMPELSON, P. E.

Attendees of the Virtual Local Section Meetings can receive up to 1 hour of professional development credit that meets the continuing education requirements of most state professional engineering registrations. To receive the certificate documenting your attendance, send an email to the VLS secretary, Laura Gimpelson, at virtualaiche@gmail.com.

Include the following information in your email:

1. Name of the Presentation and Speaker
2. Attendee's name as listed on the registration certificate
2. Attendee's registration number and state/providence of issuance

The certificate, in pdf format, will be issued within 30 days of the receipt of the request.