DECEMBER MEETING

The Political Exploitation of the Scientific Illiteracy of the American Public

WEBEX MEETING NUMBER 276 141 101 (further directions on page 8)

THURSDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2015

9:00 pm EST, 8:00 pm CST, 7:00 pm MST, 6:00 pm PST;

UTC/GMT 0100 10 November 2015

When the long-scheduled industrial speaker became unavailable at the last minute, so **Neil Yeoman** graciously agreed to pinch-hit. Neil is a retired award winning chemical engineer who has served his community, Merrick, NY, and his profession for decades, each in a variety of volunteer positions.

Neil's 44-year career as a practicing chemical engineer included 11 years as a process manager in charge of the design of chemical process plants, 14 years as the R&D director of a chemical process equipment supplier, and eight years as a vice president (and Chief Chemical Engineer) of an engineering and construction company. Although retired since 2001, Neil still does technical work as a volunteer consultant to Fractionation Research, Inc. (FRI), a US based, international, industry-sponsored, not-for-profit, shared research consortium

More information can be found on the VLS Events Website and the AIChE Community Directory.

IN THIS ISSUE AND OTHER NEWS

Once again, an early meeting, so an early newsletter, with an early press deadline.

VLS Chair Amanda Scalza discusses the successes of the past year and encourages members to join in for the VLS to continue its upward trajectory of serving chemical engineers without a local section.

The **Leadership Meeting** last Thursday included **finalizing the election dates and slates**, appointing the VLS editor to serve the remainder of the term of an unexpected vacancy in the Board of Directors, and a presentation of plans for 2016 from **Chair-Elect Daniel Sujo**, which he will discuss in the January issue.

Laura Gimpelson gives us a long-range view on the effectiveness of diversity initiatives in a Letter to the Editor.

*Do not forget to use **your 2015 allotment of six free AIChE member credits** at the AIChE Academy before the end of the year.*

-- Jennifer I. Brand, Editor

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

After reading Neil Yeoman's letter and various responses to his letter, I am adding my two cents to the discussion on diversity. As a woman of mature years, I have been part of the vanguard of diversity to open engineering and other STEM fields to women and minorities. I have seen how good intentions have failed unless there is an underlying core belief that white men aren't the only ones that can be engineers.

Part of this failure is rooted in the attitudes and experiences you have at home and in junior and senior high school. In my family, the daughters were expected to excel in all school subjects just like the sons, even math and science. This expectation started in the 1920s and continues to this day. The only changes were in the level of schooling expected of each generation.

My grandmothers and great aunts were expected to complete high school before getting married. Often family blessings and support were not given until after she received her high school diploma. The women of my mother's generations were expected to attend college until they got married. Their parents believed men who completed college could better provide for the family.

My generation was expected to graduate from college preferably in a field that paid well and favored your skills and interests. If you were good in science and math, pre-med was the preferred bachelors' program. If you could not stomach biology labs, engineering or physical science degree was acceptable. If you really disliked labs, accounting was the expected major. Liberal arts were only considered if you couldn't complete a STEM bachelor's program or wanted to be a lawyer.

With these expectations, I didn't mind taking math and science in high school. I enjoyed the classes and used the requirements of a college prep track to drop home economics from my schedule. This made me different since I was the only

girl in high school not to take home economics. Even my younger sister took home economics in high school so she would fit in with her classmates.

Since I had the support of my parents, especially of my father, I was willing to be different. Also their support made it harder for school officials to force me to take non-college prep courses. Since I was successful in getting accepted into an engineering college, I made it easier for future students to follow my path. This was especially true for girls whose parents were not as supportive as mine were.

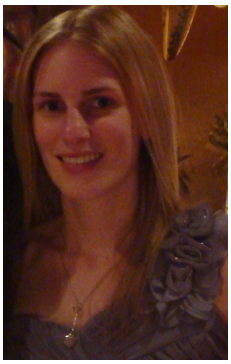
I did have the opportunity to work at the same plant as my father before I graduated from college. I noticed the support and encouragement he gave me as I moved through my education was the same support and encouragement he gave his female and minority co-workers. Often he was the only managing engineer that assigned projects based on skill sets, not sex or race. This unforced attitude of acceptance and fairness made him very respected as a supervisor and gave me a halo effect during my summer internship at his plant.

I wish my father's attitude could be duplicated throughout the engineering workplace and educational system as easily as it was applied in my childhood home and within my extended family. Until then, I am not sure the goal of removing the barriers to diversity will happen quickly and fairly.

-- ***Laura Gimpelson, P.E.***

COME, JOIN IN FOR VLS SUCCESS

Chair Amanda Scalza



To each one of you who reads our newsletter, watches our webinars, provides feedback, or otherwise supports the Virtual Local Section, thank you. The VLS has continued to be a place of boundary-testing ideas and growth in our efforts to connect chemical engineers without boundaries.

Each year, our chapter sets goals aimed to further your experience with our organization and ensure we are meeting our chapter's mission, to provide programming and a sense of community for AIChE members who otherwise are unable to be active in a traditional local section. Goals of 2015 included obtaining and advertizing speakers further in advance, creating a greater sense of inclusion within the organization, and increasing active involvement.

In 2015, you will have seen a full year of varied programming, aimed at celebrating a highly diverse membership, in both geography and career. The VLS has over 500 members in 30 countries. We are proud of this progress, and are continuing to look for ways to better grow and serve our international community. Our chapter is also extremely diverse in the way they use

their chemical engineering degrees. We have worked to bring you high-quality programs on subjects from technical topics to the history of the chemical industry, from improving our soft skills to AIChE-wide issues.

Speaking specifically towards our progress in timelier program notifications, I feel we have made considerable progress. Most programs were scheduled more than 2 months in advance, allowing our members to get a glimpse at programs they might be especially interested in. In addition, we have been successful in posting notifications and newsletters our website. Though live viewership has not increased as much as desired, we have also improved in posting our webinars online in a timelier manner. Viewership of archived videos is currently higher than live viewership.

Creating a virtual community has been a challenge, but one we are determined to overcome. The VLS has, and continues to be a place for dynamic ideas, and this year has produced surprising and exciting results. In September, we hosted a student industrial internship contest. Over 30 entries from around the world came in, and 6 finalists competed live, with the top three receiving awards. The success of this contest was extremely motivating, and I expect this will become an annual event. In addition, the VLS formally met in-person for the first time at the AIChE Annual meeting in Salt Lake City. The meeting was held both in-person at an art museum, and virtually. While overall attendance was low, I will consider this first trial a success, and hope to try again at the spring meeting in 2016.

I believe one of the biggest struggles as an organization has been to create active involvement within the organization. Our local section would not be possible without many volunteers that support it. Though I cannot consider this goal successful, I am hopeful that as we continue to produce consistent, engaging programming, interest in active participation will follow.

I hope you continue to enjoy your experience with the Virtual Local Section, and that you continue membership in 2016. As always, you can help make the experience better simply by sending some feedback to virtualaiche@gmail.com, visiting our website on aiche.org, contributing to the newsletter, or sending a note on our LinkedIn page. Thanks for tuning in!

VLS ELECTIONS: MEET THE CANDIDATES

Dues-paying members will receive electronic ballots for our annual VLS elections which will be held between 1 January and 21 January 2016. Results will be announced at the meeting following.

The nominating committee proposed the candidates, below, for three offices, the vice-chair, and two open Board positions. (Votes for write-ins are also an option.) The vice chair is chair-elect and will serve as past chair after being chair, so this is a three year position; and the two Board positions are three years each.

Experience Nduagu – Vice Chair (Chair-elect)

Dr. Experience Nduagu is a Postdoctoral Scholar at the University of Calgary. His current research interests center on innovative technologies for reducing energy intensities, and carbon dioxide emissions and environmental footprints energy and power generation. Before his current role at the University of Calgary, Dr. Nduagu was as a researcher for over five years on permanent sequestration of CO_2 in solid minerals, an area known as carbon dioxide mineralization. He has an extensive background in experimentation, process engineering, energy analysis and optimization, and life cycle analysis. He has written over 30 peer-reviewed and conference papers. Dr. Nduagu holds a B.Eng. from the Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria, and an M.Sc.(Eng) and a Ph.D. from Åbo Akademi University, Finland, all in chemical engineering. He was a recipient of the University of Calgary Eyes High Postdoctoral Fellowship and a nominee for the prestigious Canadian Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship.

Dr. Nduagu's nomination as the 2006 Chair-Elect will avail him the opportunity to contribute to taking the AIChE VLS Chapter to the next level using his diverse backgrounds and leadership experience. He has been at the forefront of promoting diversity and multiculturalism and hopes to continue the same in VLS Chapter. His previous and ongoing leadership experience in diversity-centered programing in many university associations will be of benefit. Dr. Nduagu served as the President of International Students of Turku Universities (ISTU), Finland for two years (2008 and 2009). ISTU is an organization of international MSc and PhD students from 3 universities in Turku, Finland (ÅAU, Turku University and Turku School of Economics). Dr. Nduagu also served as the Director External, Postdoctoral Association of the University of Calgary (PDAC) from 2013 to 2014. He has been the Membership Chair of AIChE VLS Chapter since May 2014.

Walter Goldstein - Board of Directors

Dr. Walter E. Goldstein is the President of Goldstein Consulting Company. He is an executive with 40-plus years of experience developing technology, products, and business.

He holds an M.S. and a Ph.D. in chemical engineering from the University of Notre Dame, an M.B.A. from Michigan State University and a B.S. in chemical

engineering from Illinois Institute of Technology. He is an active participant in VLS meetings.

-- source : http://www.goldconsul.com

Ahmed Khogeer - Board of Directors

Ahmed Khogeer, has 24 years of chemical engineering experience with Aramco, including refining, projects, and R&D, during which he spent nine years in the U.S. He is a founding member of King Abdullah Univ. of Science and Technology (KAUST; Thuwal, Saudia Arabia). He earned his MS in chemical engineering at the Univ. of Tulsa, and a PhD in chemical engineering and an MBA from Colorado State Univ. He joined AIChE in 1998, and has been actively involved as a meeting presenter, a session chair, a director of the Fuels and Petrochemicals Div., a member of the International Committee, SOIC, and an AIChE regional liaison. His efforts have assisted in increasing membership and conference participation, enhancing programming, and generating interest in establishing AIChE local sections. With the International Committee, he helped universities in Saudi Arabia to establish chemical engineering departments and prepare world-class programs for talented students.

-- source, AIChE Community Directory

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 Local 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.