Cover photo was taken at the Society of Women Engineers National Conference in Philadelphia.
On Saturday, August 13, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo SWE officers attended the one day Student Leadership Workshop (SLW) held on the UCR campus. Students from different schools and organizations, such as SHPE, NSBE, Tau Beta Pi, ACHE, and Theta Tau came together to learn from one another and network with industry representatives.

Upon arrival, we were each given name tags with a different color sticker on the tag. We then proceeded to gather around tables with people who had the same sticker color. Each table had a company representative, allowing us to not only network with and learn from each other but also have someone from the industry’s perspective. Following breakfast and introductions, we shared with each other some of our “best practices” at our chapter’s organization. We met many other SWE chapters and absorbed some excellent ideas!

Afterwards, company and career center representatives held panels and mini workshops about improving your organization and professional development skills. Overall, we had fun throughout the day, met members from other chapters and organizations, and learned a lot! We look forward to the next SLW!

Why did you join SWE?
SWE appealed to me because of the genuine enthusiasm the members and officers radiated – the energy was contagious and I felt so welcomed even though I didn’t know anyone when I first arrived at Cal Poly. It just clicked! I saw how amazing the SLW officers were doing for the community and how involved they were, and I jumped at the opportunity to be an officer my freshman year. My 2nd and 3rd years I served as VP of Outreach and VP of Corporate Relations respectively, and this coming year I am the Cal Poly Section President! I am beyond excited to meet the new students, greet the returning members, and share my enthusiasm for SWE, which has been a very important part of my college experience.

What is your favorite SWE event and why?
This is an extremely tough question! I know this might sound cliché, but I love all of them. There is an event for any interest you have, whether it’s spreading the word about engineering to K-12 students, networking with companies, working on a year-long collaborative project with an industry sponsor, attending general meetings on Wednesdays, relaxing and meeting new students during our socials, or conversing with SWE members in the national arena. Keep your eye out for new events this year, leadership opportunities for new students, SWE posters around campus, and posts on Facebook/Instagram!

How has SWE prepared you for a career in engineering?
By attending the networking events SWE holds (Evening with Industry, Networking Showcase, General Meetings, Conference Career Fairs), I gained more familiarity with talking to companies and reaching out to them. My freshman year I joined SWE’s Team Tech which is an inter-disciplinary project experience. As part of the team, you work with engineering students of all years and majors to complete a task presented by the sponsoring company. Team Tech is a unique experience because it gives students an opportunity to gain hands-on engineering skills employers crave. It’s important to start networking and attending events early, even as a freshman, because you can gain so many useful skills for later down the road.

What have you gained from being in SWE?
I have gained so much from being a part of SWE! First, I have gained valuable leadership skills that I can apply to my future engineering career. Second, by participating in outreach events and membership activities, I have reinforced my enthusiasm for engineering. Third, I have gained amazing friends, a support network, and SWE family. I have worked with so many inspirational leaders and friends these four years in SWE, and I am so grateful for my experiences. Last but not least, SWE has helped me gain confidence in my engineering abilities. I have learned to be confident and own whatever you are doing! Pour your passion and enthusiasm into what you love, and your hard work and dedication will be recognized, both at college and in the workplace. Also don’t be afraid to ask questions and take the initiative to go above and beyond initial expectations.

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Rebecca Kandell
SWE President

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Rebecca Kandell
SWE President
First General Meeting

On September 28, 2016, the Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Chapter of Society of Women Engineers welcomed over 200 students back to school with our first general meeting of the year.

Directors presented to students about how to get involved in the various aspects of SWE. Directors presented to students about how to get involved in the various aspects of SWE.

At the end of the meeting, all the students listened closely hoping to hear the numbers printed on their raffle ticket, but only six lucky students walked away with brand new SWE swag of their choice.

During the meeting, Rebecca Kandell, our Cal Poly SLO SWE President, Angela Marian as VP of Corporate Relations, Delaney Weidlein as VP of Member Relations, Anna Vojvoda as Community Outreach Assistant, and Cecilia Yuan and Sarah De Rosier as the Team Tech.

SWE officers set up tables and helped 76 new members sign up for a SWE membership with Cal Poly SLO!
Apple General Meeting

During debatably one of the busiest weeks of the quarter because of the career fair, the Cal Poly SLO chapter of Society of Women Engineers hosted a general meeting sponsored by Apple. Andrew from Apple spoke to a packed room of students about the Core Operating System (OS) team and gave us an amazing presentation about the OS we use everyday in our iPhones, Macbooks, and iPads. Jordan, a leader in Apple's HR/University recruiting, as well as multiple other Apple employees, both Engineers and HR representatives, sat in and supported Andrew and mingled with students.

SWE-EETY

Society of Women Engineers

Expressing Engineering to Youngsters

During the week of September 5th through the 9th eight Society of Women Engineers members and another six Lockheed Martin company representatives outreached to 450+ high school students across California.

Each SWE-EETY volunteer and company representative presented to students about the role engineers play in society, the engineering majors at Cal Poly, and women in engineering. After the presentation, students engaged in one of the three engineering activities offered to the SWE-EETY volunteers—"An Engineering Feat," "Seismic Shake!," and "Make Things Wilder." We saw a 35% increase in students’ interest after the presentation and the engineering challenge and great enthusiasm from high school teachers.

"The entire school was very excited that this was taking place and seeing that in the staff and students was very rewarding. Also, we kept track of how many people were interested in engineering before and after the presentation and activity and seeing that number go up each time was extremely satisfying." - Alexandra Zaragoza, Cal Poly Engineering Student and SWE-EETY Volunteer
Softec Robotics Expo

On September 26, 2016, Cal Poly SLO SWE participated in Softec’s 8th Annual Student Robotics Expo.

The Student Robotics Expo featured local high school, middle school, and elementary school robotics teams as well as local robotics companies. Teams participating with F.I.R.S.T, First Lego League, VEX, Arduino, M.A.T.E (Submersibles), and Drones were all in attendance. There was even a drone obstacle course and a pool exhibiting underwater robots!

Several Cal Poly SLO SWE members volunteered to run an interactive engineering activity and to help promote females in engineering. The activity was geared towards attendees of all ages, and had a steady stream of students and parents eager to participate in the making of gondolas. Students were particularly receptive to the activity – many even came back wanting to improve on their designs as per the engineering process!

With so many robotics enthusiasts in one place, Cal Poly SLO SWE was able to make valuable connections for potential future outreach events. Cal Poly SLO SWE is excited to continue outreach in the local community and hoping to develop more robotics outreach!

Why did you join SWE?

I joined SWE because I wanted a way to get more involved at Cal Poly. I first learned about it from attending SWE welcome as a senior in high school. The event was so amazing and not only inspired me to go to Cal Poly but inspired me to join SWE once I got to school.

What is your favorite SWE event and why?

My favorite SWE event from last year was definitely going to regional conference in Seattle. It was a great opportunity for networking and such a fun way to get closer with fellow swe members. I also love swe welcome. It’s the event that first showed me swe. I was able to host a little last spring and it was so fun taking her to classes and showing her around the school I love.

How has SWE prepared you for a career in engineering?

One way SWE has prepared me for a career in engineering is through all the different companies that come and talk at meetings. They always give great advice for applying to jobs and working in general. Also, at the conference last year they had a lot of very helpful break off sessions. I went to one where they actually helped edit our resumes.

What have you gained from being in SWE?

I have gained so much from being a member of SWE. For one thing, I was introduced to other girls in my major. I actually met my roommates at SWE welcome and we requested to live together in the dorms and now we live off campus together. I have met so many other of my friends from SWE. I have also really improved my skills of interacting with companies. SWE has a lot of networking opportunities such as conferences and evening with industry that have helped me become more comfortable talking to people at career fairs.

Anna Vojvoda
Spotlight

Outreach Assistant
Beginning of fall quarter, the Society of Women Engineers student chapter at Cal Poly SLO kicked off the SWEnext program at local San Luis Obispo High School (SLOHS).

A group of 10 high school girls and 2 boys, ranging in year from freshman to senior, came together to share their interest in STEM fields. At the first meeting, the club established their budget, fundraising opportunities and constitution. Officer board positions and roles were determined. By democratic vote, five attendees were elected to a position: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and SWEnext liaison. Initial minutes and an application were submitted to the high school officials, certifying the legitimacy of the club. After completing the official business to begin the program, several SWE Cal Poly officers led an Agilent kit activity. Students collaborated in groups of 3-6 to build a circuit for a game similar to Operation.

Due to the lack of engineering courses offered at SLOHS, these ambitious girls decided to start an engineering club to explore their future opportunities in STEM. Possible activities include guest speakers from the professional and collegiate sector, field trips to Cal Poly, engineering labs, and mixers with Cal Poly SWE members. SWEnext members are encouraged to brainstorm what events they would like to plan over the course of the year and present ideas at the following weeks meeting. The SWEnext Chair will assist them in making these plans a reality. The meeting was a promising start to SWEnext and its goal of cultivating high school girls’ interest in STEM fields.
Outreach Training

On October 12, 2016, Cal Poly SLO SWE hosted Outreach Committee Training. Outreach is a very important part of SWE, so it is crucial that we have a committee of well-trained, eager to get involved members. 25 members attended the training. Some of the main purposes of this training were to explain to members of the outreach committee how they can get involved in planning events, how to address the common misconceptions of engineering, and how to encourage young people to get involved in engineering. The training also aimed to improve communication and leadership skills.

Three officers from Cal Poly SWE Outreach Core gave the presentation along with Emily Liptow from CSU STEM AmeriCorps. The presentation covered topics such as the landscape of STEM fields today, why diversity in stem is important, and how to avoid stereotypes by spreading engineering truths. The presentation included a lot of time for discussion. After going over a topic, we would let people talk to the others at their table group then we would come back together and discuss it as a larger group. One activity we did was we broke into pairs and practiced introducing ourselves as engineers to young children because it is important to know how to talk about engineering and stem on a kid’s level. Overall the event was very successful.

Girl Scout Day

This year on Saturday, October 8th Cal Poly SLO SWE had about 30 Brownie Girl Scouts attend our annual Fall Brownie Scout Day event.

We split our Brownies in groups of 4 to participate in two of our experiments called Oobleck and Oil Spill. In our Oobleck experiment, each brownie created their own simulation of an oil spill and then we tested different methods in cleaning up the oil. We had a lot of great discussion on the impact of oil spills in the real world and these disasters hurt the environment. We then brainstormed ideas on different everyday actions we can make in our lives to reduce our usage of oil.

This event would not have been possible without all of our wonderful volunteers! We had over 40 volunteers to us with setup, group lab leaders, and clean up. We ended the day with a graduation badge ceremony and we can’t wait for our Spring Quarter Junior Girl Scout Day!
Building an Engineer Day

Over 300 middle school kids poured onto Cal Poly SLO’s campus on October 22nd for the Society of Women Engineers’ biannual Building an Engineer Day.

The main goals of the event are to help students better understand what engineering is and encourage them to consider it for their education and career paths. Over 100 Cal Poly volunteers helped ensure the success of this event!

Each of the activities was hosted by a different engineering club and featured a hands-on activity. The students’ favorite labs included “Spaghetti and Marshmallow Tower,” “Bridge Building with K’Nex,” and “Ping Pong Catapult.”

After the event, students talked about what engineers do, if they enjoyed the activities, and what they learned during the day. Students’ responses showed that the activities peaked their interest in engineering and all the opportunities it offers. We look forward to another exciting Building an Engineering Day in the spring!
Big Little Pumpkin Patch

Cal Poly SLO SWE took a fun day-trip to Avila Valley Barn from 10:30 AM-1 PM on Saturday, November 5th! This was an awesome way to de-stress during midterms with Big & Little Siblings! Members met others involved in the program, pet & fed farm animals, shared pie, and so much more! This place was awesome and made for some fall-inspired selfies!

Why did you join SWE?
I was introduced to SWE my senior year of high school when I attended the SWE Welcome event. I really enjoyed how Cal Poly SWE students took the time to get to know me and explain what engineering was and what it meant to them. So, coming into college, I knew that SWE was an organization I definitely wanted to be involved with. I started by volunteering at outreach events. As I met more people, I started attending the member events and networking sessions too!

What is your favorite SWE event and why?
Oh man, this is a tough one! I have so many favorites! But, if I had to choose one, it’d be Evening With Industry. The EWI directors work so hard to coordinate the company representatives, scholarships, and all of the accommodations for the attendees. Their hard work results in a great night filled with fun, food, and good company. I definitely recommend that you attend!

How has SWE prepared you for a career in engineering?
Confidence! Communicating and networking in a professional environment took a lot of practice before I actually felt comfortable. SWE’s taught me, not only to be confident, but also how to lead effectively, speak publicly, and be a good role model to both younger students and my peers. These skills helped me to communicate and maintain professionalism at my internship!

What have you gained from being in SWE?
This surprised me, but I’ve gained so many friendships from being in SWE. I’ve been able to connect with people from all different backgrounds because of our common interest in engineering. I’m constantly empowered and inspired by the students surrounding me! SWE has really enriched my college experience, so thank you for being a part of it!

Outreach
Vice President

Mindy Ong
Spotlight
SWE Networking Showcase

This year on October 11th, the Cal Poly Society of Women Engineers (CPSWE) held its second annual Networking Showcase.

This event gives Cal Poly students the opportunity to talk with company representatives during the week of the university Fall Career Fair. Some of the 22 companies that attended this year’s showcase included Boeing, NASA’s Jet Propulsion Lab, Amazon, Orbital ATK, Raytheon, Southern California Edison, Maxim Integrated, Aerojet Rocketdync, NetApp, PepsiCo, Edwards Lifesciences, Applied Materials, Texas Instruments, Imerys, Schneider Electric, Workday, Phillips 66, and Santa Barbara County Public Works Department.

During the evening, 258 Cal Poly students seeking employment and internships were able to meet and converse with industry representatives. CPSWE provided refreshments and appetizers for all attendees in order to create a fun and relaxed setting. Companies in attendance received flashdrives with approximately 250 resumes supplied by interested students. Overall, the Networking Showcase was hugely successful in connecting students with prospective employers. The event has received special recognition as an Outstanding Collegiate Program for Region B.

Winter Quarter Events

We had a really busy and fun quarter, and we are looking forward to another this upcoming winter quarter. Some exciting events in the near future are listed below.

January 25: LinkedIn Photoshoot Session
January 25: General Meeting with ViaSat
January 26: Evening With Industry
February 21: 4th Grade Days
February 8: Midterm Study Session
February 21-24: Fourth Grade Days
March 2: Kaiser Permanente Information Session
March 9: Transfer Lunch
Build a Bot and Open House
Every Sunday: Intramural Soccer