

## The Application and Nomination Deadline for 2017

We completed the first Systems Engineering Dissertation Recognition Cycle during calendar year 2016. Applications, nominations, and declarations of intent to participate are being encouraged. Guidance is available from the OAA web site.

The SEDDS during and beyond 2017 will seek two exemplary dissertations, from two different countries in the interest of global distribution. The OAA Board authorized a \$5,000 cash award for each exemplary dissertation, together with a certificate of Exemplary Recognition and an Omega Alpha Medallion.

Upon recommendation of the evaluation committee, and at the discretion of the OAA Board, dissertations chosen for final evaluation may receive Honorary Recognition. Cash awards are not yet available for these dissertations, but they receive certificates and medallions. OAA is seeking cash awards for these honorary recognitions.

## Omega Alpha Interface with INCOSE and Recognitions

Omega Alpha is not like any other academic honor society. It is not undergraduate and chapter based. OAA concentrates worldwide at the doctoral level. Although it has an academic bias, OAA chooses to focus on excellence at, and beyond the doctorate.

For practicing professionals, Omega Alpha seeks to make known those demonstrated quintessential accomplishments that inspire. This desideratum is in a manner consistent with the SEDDS initiative. The OAA, within INCOSE, pursues both for the benefit of humankind internationally.

## The Power of Convergence through Diversity of Resources - Recap from CSER 2017

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**E**mpowering Women as Leaders in Systems Engineering (EWLSE) organized a panel discussion at the Conference for Systems Engineering Research (CSER) 2017 held from the 23rd - 25th of March in Los Angeles, US-CA. The panel topic was "The Power of Convergence through Diversity of Resources." The central idea of convergence is that bringing together a diversity of concepts, thinking, and approaches is helpful for solving complex problems.

Marilee Wheaton from the University of Southern California (USC) introduced and arranged the panel, and Ms. Rosalind Lewis from The Aerospace Corporation moderated. The panelists included Dr. Cecilia Haskins from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU); Ms. Stephanie Chiesi from the Raytheon Company; Dr. Thomas McKendree from the Raytheon Company and Dr. Shamsnaz Virani from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI).

Marilee Wheaton opened the panel with an introduction to EWLSE. The EWLSE vision is for men and women to work together as advocates for women as leaders in systems engineering by: creating a systems engineering environment welcoming to all; promoting the demonstrated value of women as systems engineers and leaders; and enabling increased participation and retention of women in systems engineering.

Next, Rosa introduced the diverse set of panelists, highlighting the breath, depth, and domains of the panelists and their perspectives. Stephanie represented the younger generation of women engineers in Raytheon with an emphasis on technical leadership and employed a sense of humor about work life balance. Cecilia and Thomas represented the 30+ years of engineering experience and changes in engineering workforce and workplace. Shamsnaz represented EWLSE leadership on celebrating women and reported on

past EWLSE sessions around the world and future opportunities for engagement.

Thomas reviewed Raytheon's process of investing in hiring women and discussed the resulting long-term benefits. Stephanie emphasized the fact that nerd pride and being comfortable with who you are results in job satisfaction and self-confidence for women engineers. Cecilia reflected how 38% of women leave jobs due to lack of job satisfaction and unfriendly work environment and credited her upbringing and volunteering experience to her career longevity and job satisfaction, encouraging everyone to be welcoming of diverse individuals to systems engineering. Shamsnaz reported on the EWLSE panel in India about "Unconscious Bias" and ways to tackle it.

The audience comprised of conference attendees and invited guests. The audience interaction revolved around power of role models, better training to understand unconscious bias, increased opportunity for diverse individuals, and developing mentoring employee research groups. The audience interaction continued with panelists long after the session ended.

Overall, it was a great opportunity to discuss diversity at a systems engineering research conference. Please contact EWLSE at [ewlse@incose.org](mailto:ewlse@incose.org) with interest and opportunities to continue these conversations at future conferences.

