

Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Entrepreneurship (WiSTEE) Connect

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**Annual Diversity Conference
Eisenberg Rotunda, Schlegel, University of Rochester**

12 April 2013



Approximately 40 women from 22 academic units across the UR campus came together to discuss WiSTEE vision at the opening event on March 1

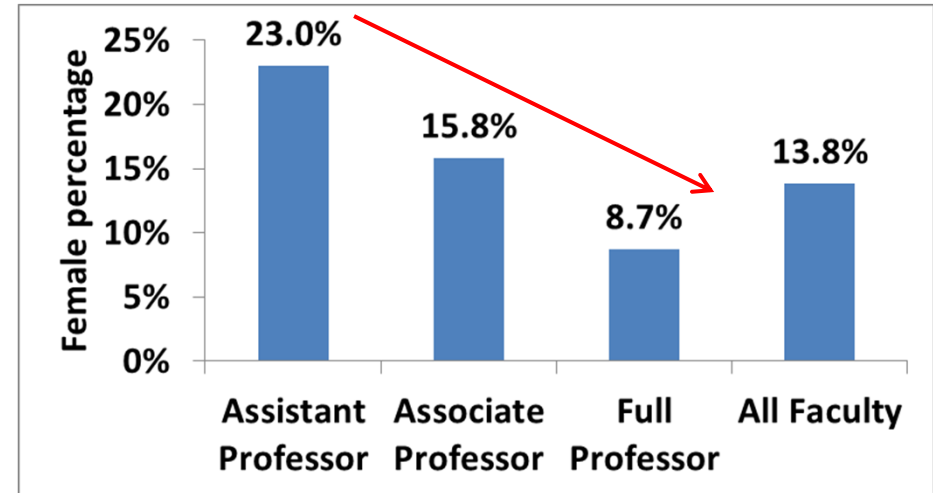
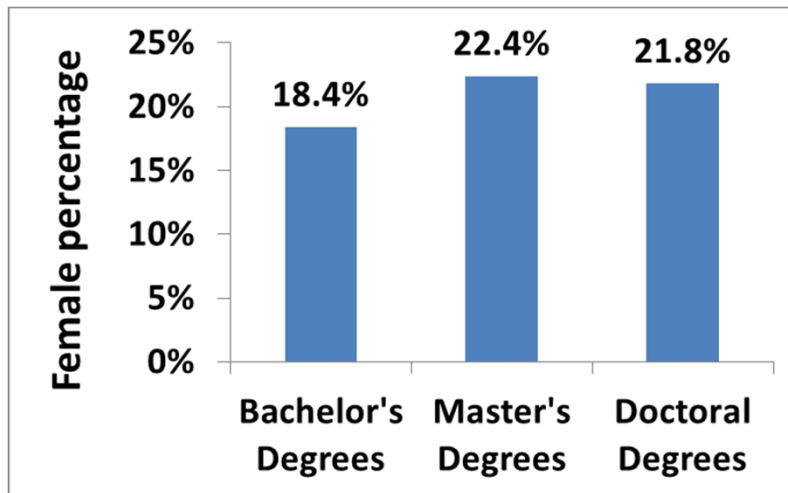


What does it mean to be a woman in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Entrepreneurship?

- **Having an analytical and active mind**
- **Wanting to make things happen**
- **Wanting to make the world a better place**
- **Wanting to have a happy and supportive family**
- **Wanting to be successful and working very hard toward our goals**
- **Putting off starting a family to focus on school/career**
- **Positive energy and attitude to be resourceful and handle multiple tasks**
- **Passionate interest in connecting with like-minded people**
- ...



Women leadership and role models are strongly needed in STEM: Few of us are at the entry point and fewer of us get to the top

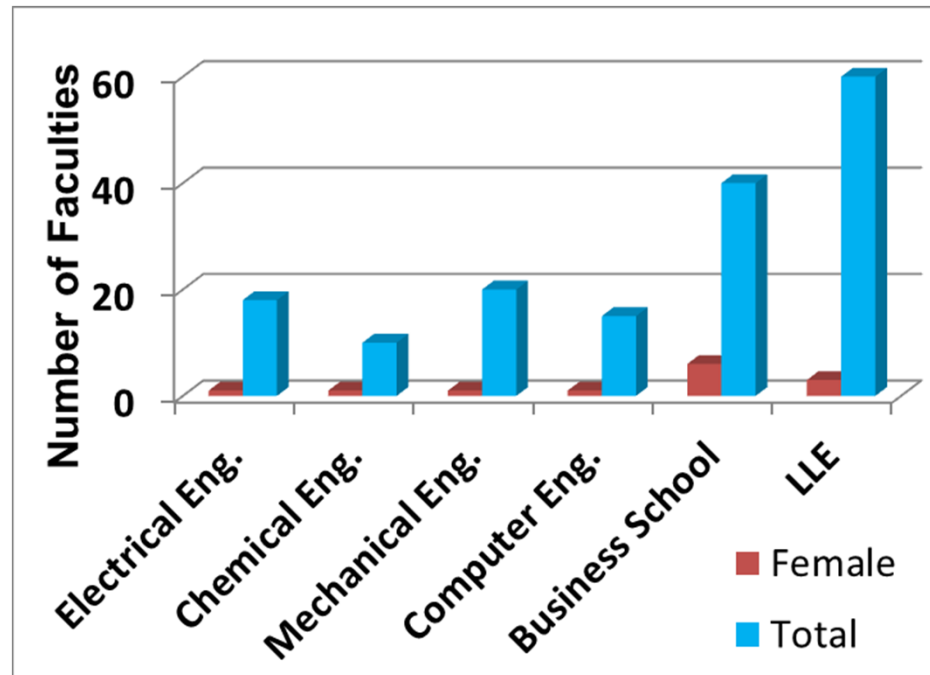


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- **Midcareer women leave the STEM field**
 - *“Many women appear to encounter a series of challenges at midcareer” **
- **Very few midcareer women role models exist for female junior faculties, graduate, and undergrads**
 - **Women scientists and engineers are made in colleges and universities**
 - **Students’ achievements and interest in STEM are shaped by the environment around them**

*Why so few women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), Catherine Hill, et al

Increasing connectivity can help to prevent isolation and forge informal mentoring among women within STEE



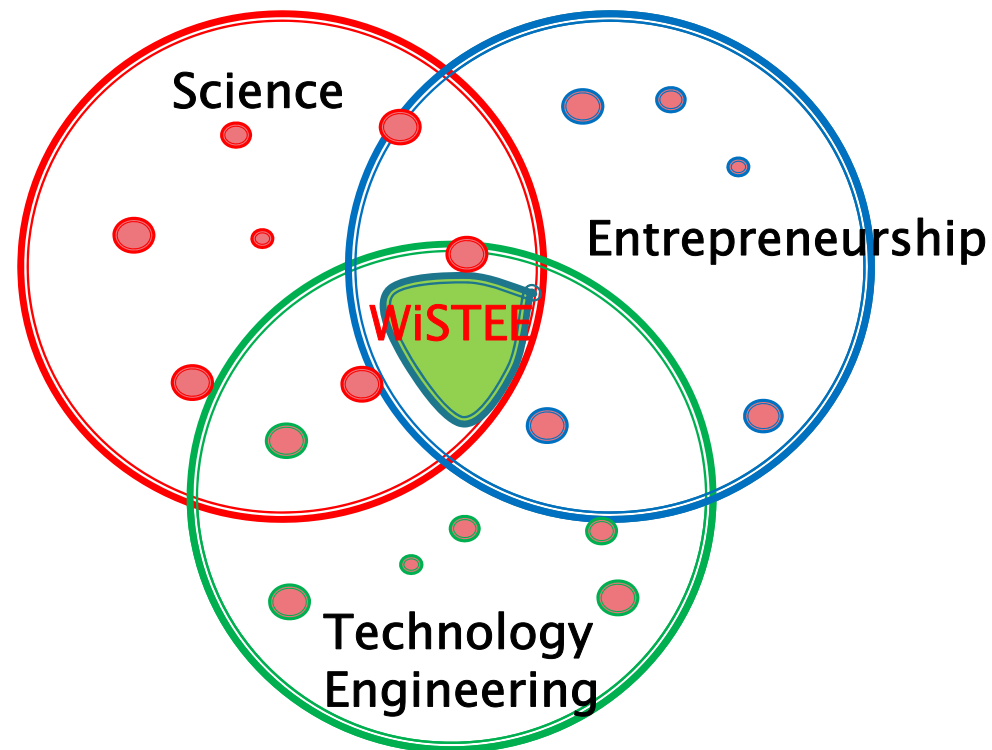
Intersecting science, technology, engineering, and entrepreneurship will be empowering and rewarding

“I just wanted to confirm my interest in WiSTEE’s effort to put together a gathering for us to reach out into the scope of entrepreneurship and also to connect with colleagues beyond the boundary of our departments. I’ve always had interest in entrepreneurship, since business has a strong role in how our society works. I think the knowledge would also be beneficial as a leader of a research group, and as a member of the university “business”.”

- Every faculty is an entrepreneur
- Business knowledge helps STE scholars and students to be stronger in decision-making and leadership
- Universities: ever increasing role in filling the gap between invention and innovation
- Multidisciplinary intersections: forge collaborative mentoring and research



WiSTEE vision: Promote women leadership in STEE, bridge the gap between Science and Business, and provide a forum to learn, connect and lead



Together, we can create a sense of belonging and an oasis to connect, mentor, and collaborate with each other!

The proposed WiSTEE vision resonated among every respondent of the survey conducted after the opening event

- “Yes, I do share the WiSTEE vision. I believe women can be an important resource for one another - as colleagues, mentors, or advocates. I agree that young girls in school would aspire to careers in the STEM fields if they had role models they could relate to and see themselves in.”
- “There is enormous opportunity to develop new paradigms of optimal female networking and cooperative advancement.”
- “It may provide an opportunity to observe subtle ways that I may have inadvertently limited my sense of what is possible in mid-career, and may be an opportunity to explore new collaborations and develop very high quality friendships and co-mentoring opportunity”
- “I think it will be very successful, and will grow rapidly”
- “Expand my knowledge beyond my expertise (entrepreneurship is one, but also open to other opportunities”
- Many more...

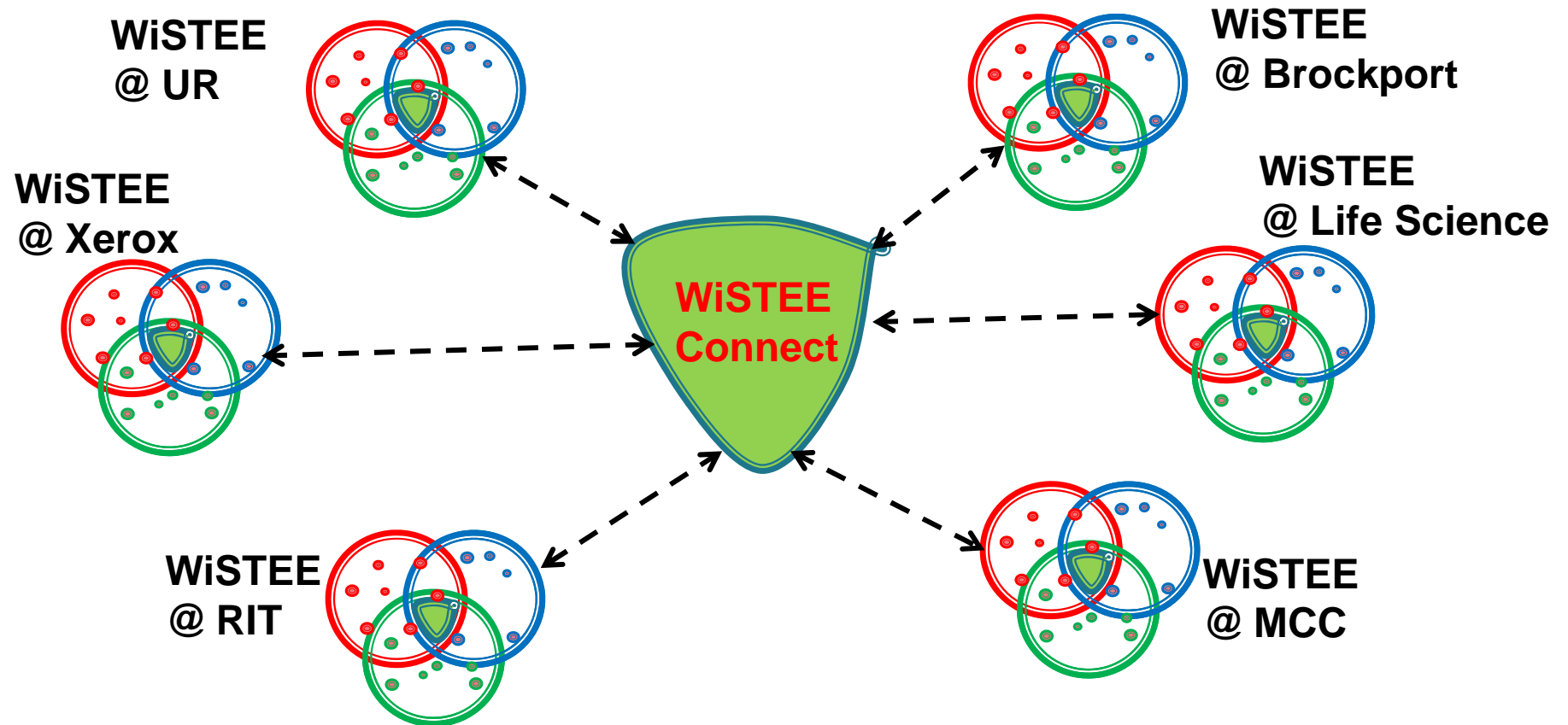


WiSTEE Chair Dr. Jie Qiao shared the vision for establishing WiSTEE Connect to gain regional connections and global vision and impact



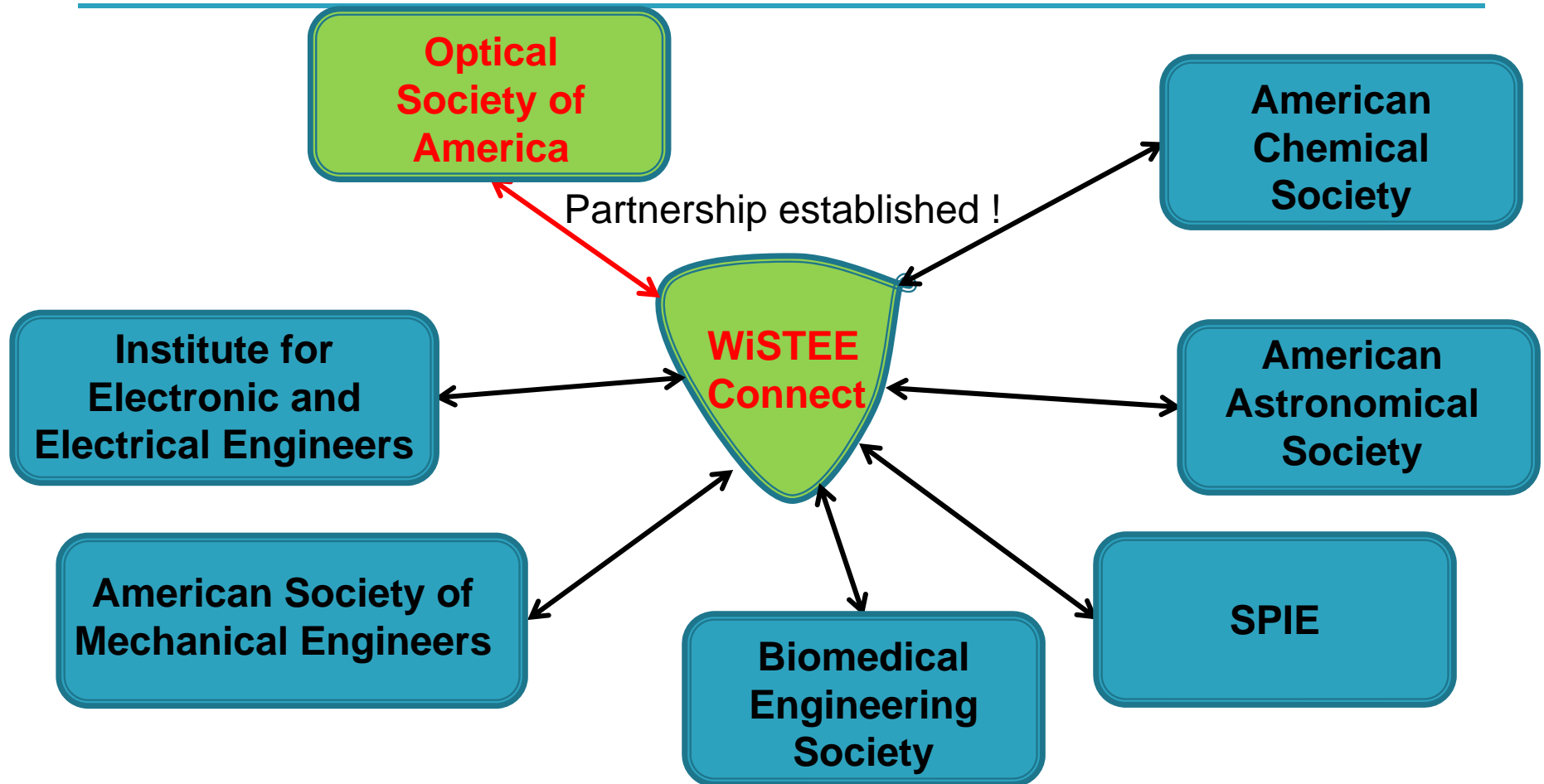
- WiSTEE Members came together on April 5th to discuss WiSTEE growth strategy and share their career shaping moments

WiSTEE Connect horizontally / locally connects regional WiSTEE groups across universities and industries



Common knowledge and resources on leadership, entrepreneurship, and professional development can be generated, integrated, disseminated through WiSTEE Connect

WiSTEE Connect vertically / globally connects with different professional societies to identify and provide opportunities for WiSTEE members



WiSTEE Connect will obtain global connection, view and visibility by collaborating with these societies and in return will provide local anchoring points for them

WiSTEE Connect aims to provide concrete support to its members

- **Connect locally and globally**
- **Informal mentorship**
- **Leadership opportunity**
- **Entrepreneurship knowledge and advice**
- **Professional development**
- **Connect high school girls with women in STEE**



Thanks to **Mr & Mrs Robert and Diane Boni** WiSTEE- Boni Travel Grant established to bring international exposure and perspectives to its members' academic and research world. First recipient: Xiang Liu, Junior in Optics & Mechanical Engineering

WiSTEE members came together to share the shaping moments of their career



WiSTEE members came together to share their aspirations and expectations for this group



WiSTEE members enjoyed connecting with each other and sharing the moments of their professional lives



WiSTEE monthly and special events are being planned

- **Proposed topics for monthly events**
 - **Experience, insights and perspectives on being a female faculty or researcher**
 - **Advance in academic world by balancing teaching, research, networking, and professional service: before and after getting a tenure position**
 - **Develop Leadership through mentoring and being mentored**
 - **Intersect science and entrepreneurship**
 - **Family picnic outing**
- **Joint event with the entrepreneurship center or similar groups**
- **A half-day women leadership workshop**
- **Joint event with the student-focused groups to connect women faculties with students in STEE**



Acknowledgement

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