

Athena Swan Newsletter

<http://www.dentistry.qmul.ac.uk/>

Welcome to the Institute of Dentistry Athena Swan Newsletter

One only needs to look at photographs of the IoD to see that women are well represented in our staff and study body and this is borne out by analysis of our databases. . The challenges that **Athena Swan** was designed to address are those of gender equality in the STEM subjects. To that end, new policies and practices have been implemented that aim to support staff in terms of their career progression and the challenges they meet as they move through the student experience into the world of academic dentistry, research and teaching. As an Institute, we are fortunate in having some very good role models of successful career progression and the action plan that helped gain our Bronze award will see the implementation of practices that will not only benefit the female members of the staff and students but the Institute as a whole.



Bronze award and lift-off for the Silver application.

The Athena Swan Committee (SAT) which worked so hard to achieve the Bronze award has been stood down and a refreshed committee is working hard to implement the Bronze action plan that will move IoD into position to make an application for the Silver award.

[http://www.dentistry.qmul.ac.uk/Athena Swan/index.html](http://www.dentistry.qmul.ac.uk/Athena%20Swan/index.html)



Dr Mangala Patel (Athena Swan Champion- second right) is seen here with Prof. Ken Parkinson and Dr Lesley Bergmeier receiving the Bronze award from Dame Julia Higgins (Imperial College London- second left) at a ceremony in Durham In July 2014

Our new UG & PG Students and post doc members of SAT, Ankur Patel, Emma James and Kaveh Memarzadeh have been very proactive and have set up a Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/808156999238387/> while the PGR Staff, Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) representatives organised a coffee and cake afternoon for students from the three campuses (Mile End, Charterhouse Square and Whitechapel). This will hopefully become a regular calendar event for the PhD students.



The enthusiasm of the AS student and post doc members, we believe, has helped to encourage better attendance for the last WISE meeting.

More info: <http://wiseqml.wordpress.com/>; Twitter: @WISEQMUL

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WISEatQMUL>



Official opening of IoD by HRH the Princess Royal.

These are exciting times for the IoD. The new hospital is fully operational and has been officially opened by HRH The Princess Royal. A tour of the new hospital seemed to be very much enjoyed by all.

A booklet celebrating the event included female members of IoD who have recently won prizes and recognition for their work. These included Sarah Elliston who won best Therapist at The 2015 FMC Dental Hygiene & Therapy Awards. It was also noted that Dr Janice Fearne is the current president of the British Society for Paediatric Dentistry and that professor Cynthia Pine CBE was awarded Fellowship of the City and Guilds Institute of London.

Our success in the **REF** was a great relief but we have much more to achieve to reach our full potential as a School.

One of the most important sections of the REF was the evaluation of environment. We scored a fantastic 100% and our Athena Swan Bronze award was noted as a significant contribution. It should be noted that two of the four impact case studies

submitted were headed by senior women; namely Helen Liversidge for the Atlas of Tooth Development and Eruption and Valeria Marinho for systematic reviews on evidence-based effectiveness of fluorides.



Dr Helen Liversidge

Dr Valeria Marinho

Prestigious grant award

Dr Cecelia Gonzales-Marin was recently (November 2014) awarded a large Barts Charity research grant in collaboration with Professor Khalid Khan of the Women's Health Research Unit at Queen Mary to explore the factors linking gum disease and pregnancy in a multi-centre study based in a number of East London hospitals. Her research has the potential to impact on pregnancy outcomes and in the future may lead to a greater emphasis being placed on preventative oral healthcare during pregnancy

PhD Day 2015 was a great success. Since last year the Post Graduate Studies Committee has been extended to include two female members and this year's poster and Oral presentation judging panel and chairs reflected the improved gender balance of the committee.



It had been noted last year that the panel and chairs were all male, so another of our AS action plan commitments, to ensure fair representation on committees, was achieved.

Dr Bergmeier chairs the afternoon session.

The winners of this year's prizes were Hanan Mofta (best Poster) and Kasia Niemiec (best Oral presentation). Emma James was highly

commended for her oral presentation and several posters were also highly commended.



Kasia Niemiec (Best Oral Presentation)



Hanan Mofta (Best Poster)

Congratulations to all the participants. It was, once again, a very enjoyable day and all the students presented to a very high standard.

Meanwhile-

There have been many changes in both working practices and in attitudes which facilitate a more inclusive and equality and diversity driven agenda. These include:

Government changes to paternity leave. <https://www.gov.uk/paternity-pay-leave/overview>. Several workshops have held by QMUL to disseminate the information on this important aspect of equality legislation.

Gender equality was an election issue for all parties and the result of the election has increased the number of female MPs up to 29 (from 23).

Natural turnover at senior level has seen us lose some of our female colleagues which may have an impact on the makeup of the gender balance at the very senior levels. However, there are new appointments and Professor Cynthia Pine gave her inaugural address on Monday 11th May 2015.

Tokenism- not on our watch!

The importance of gaining a Silver award for the future strategy of the school and QMUL cannot be over-emphasised. However, the benefits to the ethos of the school of full gender equality far outweighs the obvious benefits of eligibility to apply to NIHR and other funding agencies which in future may ride on the clear application of gender equality.

There is a clear and transparent promotion policy in place at QMUL. We can be rightly proud of the high quality women who have been recruited in the past and who continue to progress up the career ladder with the full support of their colleagues and mentors.

<http://www.hr.qmul.ac.uk/procedures/promotion/acadpromotion/index.html>

<http://www.qmul.ac.uk/media/news/items/smd/152560.html>

National and International profile of IoD women

Presentation of research at both National and International level is a very powerful marker of esteem and external reflection that many of our female researchers have a high profile exemplified by their presentation at many meetings over the last year.

Emma James (PhD student) presented a poster at the Blizard Senescence Symposium in October 2014

IADR: Dr Lesley Bergmeier chaired a symposium entitled "Oral Mucosa gatekeeper or Housekeeper" which she had proposed and organised.

Professor Kim Piper (Editor of the Education Research group of the IADR) also presented and was a member of the Education award judging panel as she has been for the last 6 years.

Professor Piper has also have presented at the UCAS teachers meetings in 2014 will be presenting at the International UCAS advisors meeting 2015.



Other international recognition awards included that of Dr. Swati Nehete who received the award "Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Samman" by Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department of Energy & Climate Change, Honourable Baroness Sandip Verma, at the House of Lords. Swati is one of 30 global Indians to receive the medal at the event.

In future editions of the newsletter we would like to highlight the National and International meetings where IoD women have participated either as speakers or chairs of symposia. So if you would like to tell us about your presentations this is the ideal forum in addition to the *News and Events* pages on the main IoD website.

And Finally-----

School of Medicine achieves Silver Award

The announcement of the successful award of Silver for the School of Medicine is heartening and we offer the team our heartiest congratulations.

Newsletter prepared by Dr L A Bergmeier