

letters to the editor

2021 American Physics Society – Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics (CUWiP) January 22-24, 2021

Inspired by the article about the International Conference for Women in Physics (ICWiP) (*Phys. Teach.* **58**, 349 [May 2020]), we wanted to share with *TPT* readers some exciting changes in the APS Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics (CUWiP). These annual conferences are a collaborative effort of the physics community to increase the participation of women and gender minorities in physics, which is critical in addressing U.S. STEM workforce needs. Since 2002, the percentage of undergraduate physics degrees earned by women has been stagnant or declining in most years, reaching an alarming level of 21% in 2017. The conference has expanded from a single site with 29 participants in 2006 to almost 2000 participants in 2020 in 13 locations, spanning the U.S. and Canada. The conference provides an opportunity for

women to hear inspirational talks by female physicists, participate in workshops and panel discussions, learn about issues facing underrepresented minorities and first-generation college students, and develop networks and long-lasting informal mentoring relationships. Thanks to support from the National Science



Foundation, the Department of Energy, the Heising Simons Foundation, and students' home institutions and multiple donors, we are able to offer these regional conferences at almost no charge to the students.

Due to the current global health emergency, and the extreme uncertainty related to the allowable size and structure of future face-to-face meetings, CUWiP 2021 is converted to a one-time, single site, entirely virtual conference. This is a major, single year change, but we hope this will make the conference even more accessible to people who would not be able to attend when it is offered in an in-person format.

The 2021 Virtual CUWiP conference will present students with ample opportunities for interacting with fellow physicists and includes: presentations by professional physicists on their cutting-edge research and personal career paths; panels featuring career opportunities in academia and industry; workshops or panels offering guidance on how to get involved in summer research, the graduate school application process, applying to transfer to a four-year college from a community

college, preparing for and applying for jobs in industry, and many others; panels on topics like science communication and issues faced by LGBTQ+ students; and many networking opportunities. We strive to make CUWiP as inclusive as possible, and welcome applications from community college students, and students from historically marginalized groups.

We are very excited to announce our 2021 keynote speaker, Dr. Mary James, Professor of Physics at Reed College, Portland, OR, and the Dean for Institutional Diversity who specializes in particle physics and accelerators.

The student application opens September 8, 2020. Please encourage all undergraduate women and gender minorities interested in physics to apply. Please visit <https://www.aps.org/programs/women/cuwip/> for more information.

2021 CUWiP National Organizing Committee:

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