



CRYSTAL GROWTH & DESIGN

ADVERTISEMENT

ORIGINPRO[®]
Graphing & Analysis

Download a Free Trial

OriginL

COMMENT

Breaking the glass ceiling from home

by Kimberly Woznick, chair, Women Chemists Committee

MAY 15, 2020 | APPEARED IN **VOLUME 98, ISSUE 19**

In the past 2 months, every American Chemical Society member has been affected in some way by the COVID-19 pandemic. For some ACS members, the impact has been directly on their personal health or the health of a family member. Others may have lost their employment or are struggling to redefine what daily work looks like when working remotely.

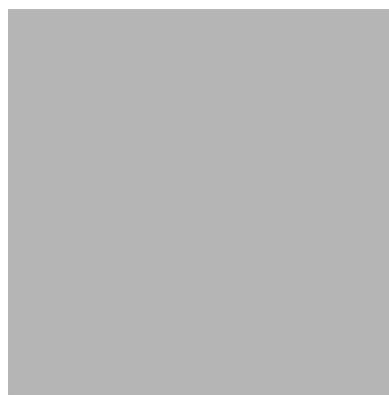
Our members have missed face-to-face celebrations of birthdays, retirements, weddings, graduations, Mother's Day, and even the celebrations of loved ones who have died. We have all been affected by this pandemic in some way, and the long-term effects have yet to become evident.

For those members who are fortunate to have retained their employment and have been tasked with working remotely, the challenges are numerous. They have had to reestablish how their work will function without an office and support staff. They have had to determine which work can be accomplished remotely and via what mechanisms.

Publications describe the risks of burnout from working from home and the possible repercussions for employee mental health. Those quarantined alone without a physical or emotional support system face even greater challenges. The mental and physical toll can also be substantial for those who are working and are caretakers for children or adult dependents, especially when supports such as daytime care facilities are no longer available.

While there are many positive examples of relationships in which the household load is evenly divided, research shows that most women in married and partnered relationships still carry a disproportionately higher quantity of "invisible labor" at home. This is the time and effort invested in keeping a household running effectively, such as maintaining family schedules, completing household tasks, and communicating with educators and health-care providers. It is not yet known how long people will continue to work remotely without schools and childcare open.

“Women chemists will need to advocate for themselves and for one another during this



Credit: California University of Pennsylvania
Kimberly Woznick

MOST POPULAR IN ACS NEWS

ACS Exams Institute offers 'nonsecure' versions of its general and organic chemistry exams

How ACS can help chemists grow in their careers

Music and chemistry—what's the connection?

ACS announces its 2020 fall election slate

ACS Spring 2020 National Meeting

ACS names its 2020 Heroes of Chemistry

unprecedented time in history.

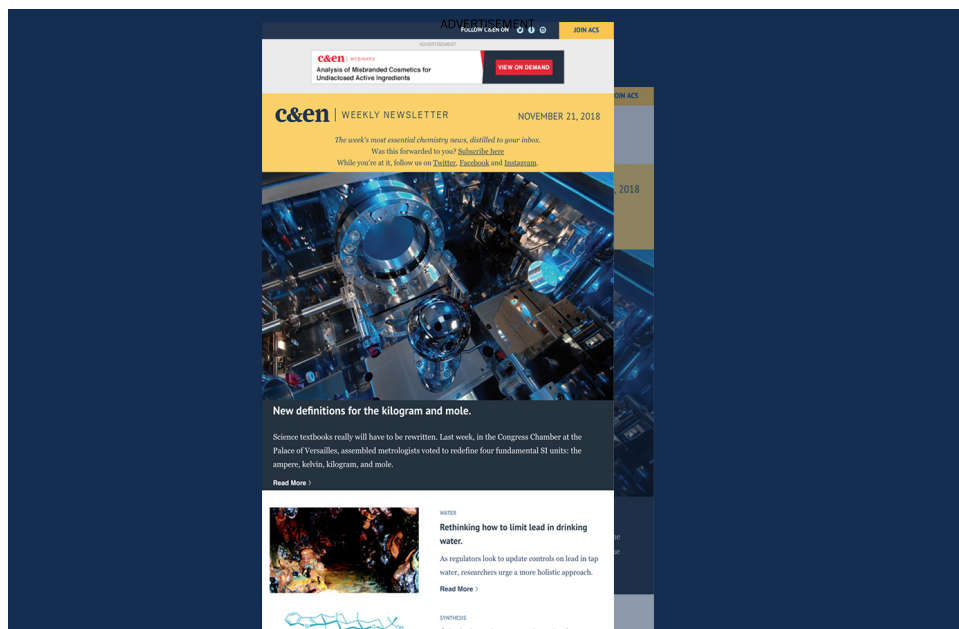
How will teleworking during the pandemic affect the careers of women chemists? Evidence is emerging that journal article submissions from female authors in the **past few months have declined**. If article submissions by women have decreased, then it is likely that submissions of grant proposals and patent applications may also be down. Any important long-term task that is easily interrupted by the care requirements of others is likely affected.

i

C&EN has made this story and all of its coverage of the coronavirus epidemic freely available during the outbreak to keep the public informed. To support our journalism, become a member of ACS or sign up for C&EN's weekly newsletter.

Career mobility or progress for those on the tenure track is in part measured by the number of peer-reviewed publications. How will these women chemists be fairly evaluated in future career stages when it comes to tenure and promotion? This career impact applies to women chemists in all employment sectors.

Women chemists will need to advocate for themselves and for one another during this unprecedented time in history, and I encourage them to communicate their work needs to those around them. Don't be afraid to ask for extensions or resources. It is vital that fair evaluation and performance assessment be developed for all employees who are working remotely. Allies are also encouraged to speak up within their institutions, ask about what is being done, and point out the systemic barriers to success.



This year marks the 93rd anniversary of the Women Chemists Committee. While much progress has been made for women chemists since 1927, our work to advocate and empower women chemists continues. It is important to celebrate some big successes in the area of public recognition of the outstanding work of women chemists.

Of the 76 recipients of **ACS National Awards given in 2020**, 26 were women. This is the most female recipients we've ever had in a single year. Most exciting of all was that 5 national awards went to a woman for the first time. These include the following:

- ▶ ACS Award in Inorganic Chemistry to Catherine J. Murphy
- ▶ Alfred Burger Award in Medicinal Chemistry to Gunda I. Georg
- ▶ Irving Langmuir Award in Chemical Physics to Veronica Vaida
- ▶ Peter Debye Award in Physical Chemistry to Laura Gagliardi
- ▶ ACS Award for Affordable Green Chemistry to a team that includes Jane E. Godlewski

Some ACS National Awards have not yet recognized the accomplishments of a woman chemist. We encourage ACS allies and ACS division leadership to look at the awards in their fields and consider nominating outstanding women chemists for those awards.



SPONSORED CONTENT

Multi-method characterization of responsive microgels

by Wyatt Technology Corp.

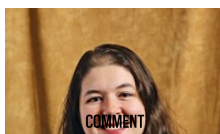
The Women Chemists Committee has many programs, events, and task forces, in addition to workplace and awards advocacy, and we encourage you to learn more about the committee at our website, acswwc.org. You can also find us on social media and reach us at wcc@acs.org. Let's advocate for one another to help ensure that the work of women does not go unrecognized.

Views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of C&EN or ACS.

Chemical & Engineering News
ISSN 0009-2347

Copyright © 2020 American Chemical Society

YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE...



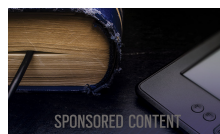
Embracing the glorious diversity of ACS

WOMEN IN SCIENCE

Time to celebrate women in science



How the Women Chemists Committee stays relevant after 90 years



ACS eBooks evidence-based acquisition
by ACS Publications

ADVERTISEMENT

COVID-19 REMOTE ACCESS SUPPORT
LEARN MORE ABOUT EXPANDED ACCESS TO ACS PUBLICATIONS RESEARCH

 ACS Publications

LEAVE A COMMENT

