



**Quarterly Report
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Highlights from Q1 2006

- The School of Engineering Makes Significant Gains in the Number of Women Hired
- New Initiative on the Science of Diversity
- ADVANCE Marie Tharp Visiting Fellow Wins MacArthur “Genius” Award

Progress Toward Project Goals

Goals

The mission of the Earth Institute NSF ADVANCE Program at Columbia is to increase the number of women scientists and engineers recruited, retained, and promoted at the University. The goals of the Program are to:

- 1) Change the demographics of the science and engineering community at Columbia through innovative hiring practices and by targeting emerging and established women leaders.
- 2) Cultivate an environment that fosters and attracts women and minority women leaders in science and engineering.
- 3) Stimulate institutional cultural change based on social science research about gender and race.

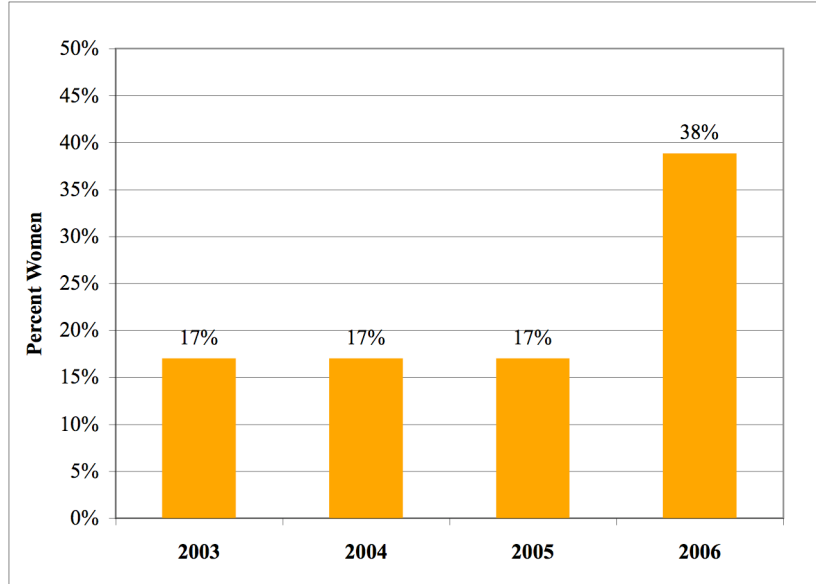
Progress in the School of Engineering and Applied Science

The demographics of the science and engineering community at Columbia are changing. In 2005 ADVANCE launched a partnership with the School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS). This partnership has resulted in the development of innovative hiring practices and a concerted effort to target emerging and established women leaders. The Dean of SEAS offered new faculty lines for candidates that enhanced the diversity of the School. ADVANCE provided funding for the Applied Physics and Applied Math Department (APAM) to increase the scope of invited speakers in the Applied Math Colloquium.

In one year, SEAS increased the representation of women among new faculty hires from 17% to 38% (see figure 1). A total of 42% of faculty offers in SEAS went to women in FY2006. The increase is due to recruiting efforts in three departments: Industrial Engineering and Operations Research (IEOR), Electrical Engineering (EE), Biomedical Engineering (BME), and APAM.

Figure 1

**Progress in the School of Engineering:
Faculty Hires 2003-2006**



We expect other departments to show progress in the coming year. On September 27, the Dean of SEAS will be hosting a faculty dinner meeting (sponsored by ADVANCE and the Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity Initiatives) to discuss best practices and available resources for diversifying applicant pools. We are also in the process of hiring an Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Diversity at SEAS. This position will focus in part on fulfilling our second goal of cultivating an environment that fosters and attracts women. By organizing a formal faculty development initiative within SEAS, we hope to develop mentoring and social networking opportunities for the junior faculty.

New Initiative on the Science of Diversity

We are expanding our effort to stimulate institutional change through social science research. In the spring of 2005 the Director of Columbia's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory launched a lecture series on "The Science of Diversity." The first speaker in the series was Valerie Purdie-Vaughns, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Yale University. Prof. Purdie-Vaughns presented research on identity stereotype threat to a packed room of research scientists, faculty, and students. This series will continue in the fall with a lecture on gender differences in research strategies by Harriet Zuckerman, Senior Vice President at the Mellon Foundation, and a lecture on decision-making, judgment, and bias by Elke Weber, Professor of Psychology and Management at Columbia.

On November 17, 2006, ADVANCE is sponsored a "Symposium on the Science of Diversity." Prof. Geraldine Downey, Chair of the Psychology Department at Columbia, is chairing the event. The full-day symposium will include sessions on cognitive bias, judgment and decision-making; the effects of subtle environmental changes on individuals; structuring inclusive environments, and translating research into action. The symposium will target faculty from all departments. Department chairs have been asked to moderate the sessions, and they will have an opportunity to meet the speakers at a dinner following the symposium.

ADVANCE Marie Tharp Visiting Fellow Wins MacArthur “Genius” Award

ADVANCE funds three visiting fellows each year. The visiting fellowships serve two purposes: 1) they expand the pool of women that might apply for faculty positions, and 2) they provide opportunities for interaction between Columbia faculty and prominent women scientists. ADVANCE funds three visiting fellows each year.

Lisa Curran, Professor at Yale's School of Forestry and a 2006 Marie Tharp Fellow, was recently awarded a MacArthur Fellowship. Prof. Curran is a tropical forester who combines her expertise in ecology with research into the consequences of deforestation on vulnerable communities. She plans use the funds from her award to support Indonesian women scientists from Borneo. Following the completion of her fellowship at Columbia in June 2006, Prof. Curran joined the advisory group for a socioeconomic data center at Columbia's Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN).