Report on a Canadian Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics

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On behalf of the CCUWiP 2014 organizing committee:
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17th June, 2014
CAP Congress
Laurentian University
CCUWiP 2014

- **Canadian Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics**
  - 10-12 January 2014, McGill University
CCUWiP Goal

- Modelled after the US CUWiP conference series held annually
  http://www.aps.org/programs/women/workshops/cuwip.cfm

- **Goal**: Encourage undergraduate women to pursue a physics education.

- **Strategy**: Provide the opportunity for undergraduate women in physics to
  - experience a professional conference (*without the need to secure external funding*)
  - meet other women in physics
  - learn about work opportunities (academic and others), undergraduate research, graduate studies, etc.
  ... in a supportive environment
CCUWiP “philosophy”

- “Regional” conference (people can drive to the venue for the weekend)
- Event kept “small” providing optimal networking opportunities and sense of community
- Entirely organized for and by undergraduate students
CCUWiP “philosophy”

- All conference fees* covered for all participants
  - Why?
    - Ensures that all students have the same opportunity regardless of their personal financial situation or whether or not they may have access to some external funding.
  - How?
    - Event kept “small”
    - Seek out sponsorship from large number of sources
  - Consequence: Application process

* Include accommodation, catering, etc. except transportation costs to the conference venue.
CCUWiP 2014 sponsors

Total budget: $17k

We are extremely grateful to all our sponsors

McGill Department of Physics
McGill Faculty of Science
McGill Astrophysics Group
McGill Centre for the Physics of Materials
CCUWiP 2014: Statistics

- 51 student participants (38 out-of-town participants)
- 6 invited presentations
  - Dr Preeti Chalsani (technical advisor in patent law)
  - Dr Jennifer MacLeod (NanoFemto Lab, INRS-SEMT)
  - Dr Lia Merminga (TRIUMF accelerator division head)
  - Dr Janelle Morrier (clinical Medical physicist)
  - Annick Routhier-Labadie (consultant with McKinsey & Company)
  - Dr Tracy Webb (astronomer, McGill)
- 3 panel discussions (13 panelists)
  - Career paths and life challenges
  - Grad school and graduate student life
  - Undergraduate research opportunities
- Poster session
- Tour of McGill physics labs
- NSERC/CAP presentations, and small graduate fair
CCUWiP 2014: Statistics

Undergraduate participants current year of study

- Year 4: 18%
- Year 1: 14%
- Year 2: 31%
- Year 3: 37%

Institutional distribution of participants

- McGill: 20%
- Toronto: 10%
- Queen's: 16%
- McMaster: 14%
- Carleton: 4%
- UOIT: 4%
- Waterloo: 4%
- Trent: 8%
- Sherbrooke: 4%
- Montreal: 4%

B. Vachon et al., McGill
CCUWiP report, CAP Congress 2014
CCUWiP: Feedback

- Pre/post-conference surveys conducted
- Overwhelming positive feedback!
- Useful suggestions for future improvements
CCUWiP 2015

- 9-11 January 2015
- Université Laval, Québec city
- E-mail: CCPEP-CCUWiP@phy.ulaval.ca

Organizing committee, CCUWiP 2015
Summary

- Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics organized at McGill University in January 2014.
  - An overwhelming success!

- Follow-up event to be held at Université Laval in 2015.

- There is a clear demand for these kind of events
  - We encourage different regions of Canada to organize their own “regional” conference

- Ongoing discussions within Canada to coordinate undergraduate/graduate women in physics conferences and regional events.
Discussions

- Time line of future events?
  - WiPC (national, grads/postdocs/...) every two years
  - CUWiP (regional, undergrads) every year

- Canadian coordination for all events?
  - Unified voice for advocating for these types of events, seeking funding, leveraging resources, etc.