



Words to the WISE

Women In Science and Engineering Residence Program

220 Cooley, East Quadrangle
701 E. University
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1245

Phone: 734-936-6536
E-mail: wise-rp@umich.edu

A WISE RP Student Snapshot:

- 16% of WISE RP students are from a state other than Michigan.
- 65% of the incoming WISE RP students intend to major in Engineering and 35% intend to pursue an LSA major or kinesiology.
- The most frequently cited program benefits that motivated students to apply to the WISE RP are friendship, study groups, and exposure to research or internship opportunities.

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A Message from the WISE RP Director: Chris Bass

Welcome to the community! We are especially excited to welcome our eighty-nine first-year students who represent several countries and ten states. In addition, we have twenty-nine returning students who are leading the WISE RP as resident advisors, program board members, and peer mentors. We're glad all of you are here, and we're looking forward to working with you to build an active and dynamic community. Together, I know we'll accomplish great things in 2007-2008.

There are two important events taking place in September that I want to bring to your attention.

Each year, we ask all first-year students to participate in our three-wave survey/assessment tool. During the week of September 17 we will be launching the first wave of this survey. Survey and assessment are vital components to our success because they help us evaluate the effectiveness of our programming. The feedback we receive from you via these surveys is integral to the success of the WISE RP!

Also, as you heard this past summer, the WISE RP is participating in the first Summer Reads Program sponsored by the LSA Dean's office. The book chosen by the Summer Reads committee is, *China Shakes the World* by James Kynge. The book and many exciting upcoming events are linked to the LSA

2007-2008 theme year, ChinaNow: A Contemporary Exploration (see <https://www.lsa.umich.edu/chinanow/>). We ask that all students read this book in order to actively engage in the many intellectual and cultural events planned in the coming weeks and months, which include: a dragon boat race and festival on the Huron River in Gallup Park on September 30; the University Musical Society's "Asia Festival 2007-08"; and a winter 2008 Chinese documentary film series, to name just a few. James Kynge will be on campus to deliver a keynote address on Tuesday, September 18, at 4:30pm in the Power Center. All WISE RP students are required to attend unless they have a class conflict. Your RAs will be organizing your hall's attendance at the lecture. We strongly encourage all of you to participate in this important introduction into the intellectual community at the U of M, regardless of your major. You'll be seeing more information throughout your hall.

In closing, this year marks the 16th year of the Women in Science and Engineering Residence Program. With our outstanding incoming class and our strong group of returning community leaders, let's work together to make this our best year yet!

Christine Bass, Ph.D.

Director, WISE RP and MRC

A Welcome from WISE RP Associate Director: Beth Gibney

I'd also like to wish you all a warm welcome to the WISE RP community! The staff of the WISE RP are looking forward to another great year in East Quad. We have a wonderful group of students returning to the program to serve in leadership roles, and I'm confident that our new WISE RP students will contribute their own talents, enthusiasm, and intellectual engagement to the community.

In my role as the Associate Director, I manage most of the day-to-day operations of the program. I directly supervise the four WISE RP Resident Advisors, the Peer Mentors, and the Program Board Members. I will also be coordinating the majority of our academic WISE Nights throughout the year. My primary role, however, is to serve as a resource and support for all of the WISE RP students. I hope that you will all feel comfortable approaching me with

whatever questions or concerns you may have. I can serve as a resource for a variety of issues you may experience throughout the year, such as academic difficulties in classes, homesickness, struggling to balance your time, and roommate conflicts. The University of Michigan has a plethora of resources available to its students, and I am here to help you to connect with them. So while I may not personally have the answer to all of your questions, I will do my best to help you find it! My door is always open—please feel free to stop by my office at any time.

Again, welcome to the community. I'm looking forward to a great 2007-2008 year for the WISE RP!

Beth Gibney

Associate Director, WISE RP

WISE RP Peer Mentors:

Nicki Dolan

Freshman year at a university as large as Michigan can be overwhelming for all new students. However, the WISE RP can be a simple way to make a large university feel small. As peer mentors in the WISE RP, our role is to serve as a direct resource for the first-year students. A first-year student can come to her peer mentor for anything from academic advice to information about extracurricular activities to get involved in. A peer mentor can even give advice on the best coffee places, best food hot spots, and the best places to study. One of the main responsibilities of a peer mentor is to connect with her first years at least once a month to see how they are doing and to answer questions. It is also the responsibility of a peer mentor to decorate the door of their first years on their birthday or half birthday, which is something we can all look forward to through the rigors of University of Michigan.

Becoming a mentor has really forced me to reflect upon my own experiences in my first year. One of the big things that helped me through my weeks was to make a study list for the week of what needs to get done, and when that task is accomplished, to cross it off. If you don't understand something, do not be afraid to go to office hours. Just remember, your professors were once in your shoes as undergraduates. The biggest piece of advice I can give you, though, is to *get involved in your own community*. Sign up for event planning on the bulletin board outside the WISE offices. Meet other members of WISE who may be taking a similar class as you are while you plan an event with them. Get involved and pick your peer mentor's brain. There is a wealth of wisdom waiting for you.

Nicki is a second-year student studying Electrical Engineering.

WISE RP Program Board:

Cathy Cline

I'm a sophomore and a Program Board member. Being a Program Board member is a great opportunity to help shape the friendly and inviting WISE RP atmosphere by planning exciting programs for WISE RP members to participate in. Previously, Program Board has done different events like hosting a Catchphrase Tournament, Pizza Study Break, and Mango Night. If you are interested in being involved with any of the programming, feel free to come to any of the meetings that are held once per week. You can also speak directly with any of the board members, and we will take your ideas to our meetings. I would suggest that if you think you may want to be a board member next year, come to a few of the meetings and see if our role in the community interests you—there will be sign-ups this winter! However, there is much more to

being a Program Board member than just organizing events. We are not assigned to serve as mentors to a specific group of new students; nevertheless, we will always make ourselves available to be resources for those who have questions or concerns. Finally, here's a word to the wise. As you will figure out very shortly, if you haven't already, this university is a dynamic community of people each with distinctive viewpoints and cultural identities. Take advantage of this—learn from everyone. Being a student here not only gives you opportunities to learn from top-notch professors, but also from your peers! Everyone has a story, an insight, or some advice, so strike up a thoughtful conversation with someone and you may learn something that you wouldn't have learned in the classroom.

Cathy is a second-year student studying Political Science.



WISE RP students getting to know one another during our first WISE Night.

WISE RP Resident Advisors:

Cassie Pogoda

I have been part of the WISE RP since I came to Michigan, and I have met some really remarkable women who have become some of my closest friends. I want to encourage you all to get to know one another and learn from your hallmates – they will be some of the people who you learn most from in your years here at U of M.

I also want to tell you about your WISE RP RAs in the hall. All four of us are here because we want to help build a strong community of women here at the University of Michigan. As your RAs, we truly want to get to know each and every one of you. Aside from learning about all of you, we also have some responsibilities, both in East Quad and in the WISE RP. We have several duty nights throughout the semester, we work at the EQ front desk, we implement activities in the residence hall community, and we also plan two of the WISE Nights each semester.

Another important aspect of our position is that we are here as a resource for you. We have

been through training to help us prepare to answer your questions and concerns. If we don't know the answer to something, we know someone who does, and we can point you in the right direction. We also want you all to feel free to approach us about anything – and we mean anything. It can be a serious issue regarding school or your family, or you can just come and tell us how your day went. These are the things we are here for and we genuinely care about all of you.

It is part of our responsibility to put on events for our hall, but that doesn't mean we're the only ones with good ideas. If anyone throughout the year has fun activities or community building ideas, we as RAs are more than happy to have your input. And ideally we would love for WISE RP residents to take charge and put on activities themselves that they feel would benefit the community.

Again, I want to welcome you all and I know I speak for all of the WISE RP RAs when I say I can't wait to meet each one of you!

Cassie is a third-year student studying Chemical Engineering.

Cisco Internship Experience: Stephanie Wightman

Many people believe that first-year students do not get internships because they do not look as hard or they sell themselves short because of their lack of experience. Last year, I ignored these ideas and went to the career fair anyway. The company representatives I met with were impressed by my initiative in coming to a career fair that mostly juniors and seniors attend, not only because most first years are trying to get adjusted to college and are not thinking about internships, but also because the companies themselves had not started thinking about hiring interns yet. When it came time for

interviews and choosing a company to intern with, I chose Cisco Systems. I had received a scholarship from this company and had gotten to know my boss through this scholarship.

I spent thirteen weeks this past summer in Boulder, Colorado, working with Cisco's Oasis team. There were five other interns in the Boulder branch, three of whom were working on the same project as me. Our project was to migrate the code for Cisco's Adaptive Security Appliances to meet the new Safer C Standards recently approved by the C Standards committee. I would find functions from the old string

library and convert the code to accept the new functions from the Safer C library, and then send it to the code owner for review after testing the new code. One of the problems my team ran into while submitting our code for review was that not everyone was as familiar with the Safer C library as our team was. To fix this, the other interns and I gave a presentation through a conference call-style meeting to departments in other locations. The most fun part of the internship was when we were able to write new functions for the Safer C library.

My experience working for Cisco taught me a lot about myself.

When I left school after winter semester, I was terrified that I did not know enough for my job, and was anxiously reading books about programming in C. Now, I have gained confidence in my own abilities that I had refused to acknowledge before. I gained a view of the working world that confirms my decision to be a computer engineer. I would strongly advise all freshmen to attend the career fair and search for an internship. It is an experience that you will never forget, and the knowledge you gain will help you not only in your classes, but will also enrich your life.

Stephanie is a second-year student studying Computer Engineering.

The SWE/TPB Career Fair will be held Monday, Sept. 24th & Tuesday, Sept. 25th from 10am-4pm. See their website for more details:

www.umich.edu/~engincf/stu.html



The WISE RP Program Board members performing an introductory skit about campus resources during the first WISE Night on September 4th.

Proctor & Gamble Internship Experience: Jessica Ho

This past summer, I interned at Procter & Gamble's (P&G) Pringles Manufacturing Plant in Jackson, Tennessee. I worked on three main projects that required me to get to know every piece of equipment in the manufacturing process and collaborate with experienced technicians to eliminate a possible source of contamination. I gave two presentations, one halfway through and one at the end. Having taken zero chemical engineering classes, I was nervous about the difficulty of the projects I was going to be given. However, P&G was very

good about assigning projects that were appropriate for my educational level.

Reflecting back on the whole internship experience, I want to emphasize that there is so much more to an internship than just finishing the projects. I learned a lot about things technical and nontechnical, related and unrelated to work. At work, I did learn about the manufacturing process from raw materials to shipping, but I also learned how to work and have fun with my colleagues, many of whom were around the age of my parents. They taught me so much, from how to talk with my

boss, to what duck blinds and slug burgers are, to Southern sayings like "did you just fall off the turnip truck?" Outside of work, I challenged myself to participate in activities that various colleagues were organizing. For example, I went to "float the Buffalo" with a couple of technicians and their kids. I also joined a Fantasy Football League that some guys were putting together. It's when you put everything together that the experience becomes truly great.

The only reason I got this internship was because I went to the Fall 2006 SWE/TBP Career

Fair. Yes, it took place three weeks into my first year of college and I had no declared major or GPA, but I put myself out there to get some experience talking to recruiters. I didn't expect to get an offer, but I did. That's why I strongly encourage freshmen to go to the career fair. Don't go in expecting an offer, but know that you may have just set yourself up for a pleasant surprise.

Jessica is a second-year student studying Chemical Engineering.

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We are on the web!

www.wiserp.umich.edu

Fall WISE Nights:

WISE Nights are interactive presentations and discussions with expert U of M faculty members. They will be held on the following Tuesday evenings from 6:30—7:45pm.

October 9
October 23
November 6
November 27
December 4

Also, don't forget to attend James Kyng's China Shakes the World public lecture on Tuesday, September 11th at 4:30pm in the U of M Power Center.



Mission statement: The Women in Science and Engineering Residence Program is a supportive living learning community for women who are interested in academic majors and careers in science, mathematics, engineering, and/or technology. The mission of the WISE RP is to recruit, support, and retain a diverse population of women in the science, mathematics, engineering, and technology fields; to link students with resources and opportunities that will support their academic and personal pursuits; to develop relationships among students with similar interests while building a community based on mutual respect and affirmation of diversity; and to enhance students' undergraduate experiences by providing engaging cultural and educational opportunities.



The 2007-2008 WISE RP students pictured at the STEPS Kick-off on August 31st at Burns Park.

WISE RP Women Abroad: Michelle Appelbaum

Since my start at the University of Michigan, I have been interested in study abroad. As an engineering student, I did not want to take a full semester during the year for fear that it would require me to become a fifth-year. I also do not take a foreign language here at the university, so I was worried about being somewhere where I couldn't understand the language.

With all of these concerns in mind, I went to look at what the Office of International Programs (OIP) had to offer. The location of the OIP is 1712 in the Chemistry Building, and its office hours are Monday through Friday, 10am to 5pm. I found a program called Summer London that met all of my criteria and offered interesting classes. The program I went on had thirty students and three mandatory classes, all through LSA for a total of eight credits. The classes were about British Theatre, British (London-specific), literature and British Culture from the 1940s until now. My personal favorite was the theatre class, which had us see seven shows in six weeks and write a short review of each.

Classes took place from Monday through Thursday, leaving the weekends free. Most of us traveled around two or three times, leaving time to see all the amazing sights in London as well as some time to devote to the actual work. Along with some other people in the program, I spent a weekend in Edinburgh, Scotland and a weekend traveling around Wales. Many people took the time to travel to other popular places such as France, Ireland, and Amsterdam. Spending time in London itself was a treat, even after six weeks there I felt like there was so much more for me to see.

During our orientation, the program leader told us his goal was to make us all want to return to London after the summer session, and it worked. Everyone on the trip agreed they would love to come back and become a real Londoner. I would highly recommend study abroad if the chance arises. Living in another country and being part of another culture is a fantastic experience that I would love to have the opportunity to do again.

Michelle is second-year student studying Civil Engineering.