Welcome from the Chair

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WIN Committee


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If you are interested in becoming a member of WIN or getting involved, please email youny@mail.amc.edu
First Annual WIN Meeting at the 2014 NANS Conference

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To the Editor:

It is with great interest and enthusiasm that I read your editorial “Women in Neuromodulation” (1). As a young (female) academic pain physician, I have been surprised at the minority of women at meetings, both local and national, who are involved beyond attendance. It has been particularly disconcerting to me given the current social environment of the “Lean In” phenomenon among business professionals (2) (and lack thereof within the medical and other science-related fields) (3). I find myself perusing committee lists, speaker panels, and advisory boards and being repeatedly dismayed and disappointed at the lack of female representation, much less leadership.

I do not believe that this is intentional; rather, from my own conversations with many supportive male colleagues, it is simply an unnoticed occurrence. Once the issue has been identified, as has been done in your heartfelt and much appreciated editorial commentary, it can be discussed and corrected. As you so humbly stated, “at least with respect to gender issues, I am a dinosaur with a learning disorder.” Admittedly, despite your close proximity to pioneers of the feminist movement, you were unaware of the reality of the situation.

A big part of success in academic medicine, particularly in the early years of training, is establishing a mentor (4). Sambunkak et al. noted that women often have a more difficult time than their male counterparts in identifying a mentor. These are the same people who guide career decisions, collaborate and lead research projects, and champion academic opportunities and leadership roles. I hope that we recognize this as a call for an increase in mentorship to junior female faculty—by both women and men.

I am optimistic that the women who are newly appointed board members will become national mentors to the many academic women within the diverse field of neuromodulation as well as taking more visible roles as society presidents and journal leaders. I move forward with new energy and determination to “lean in” and support young women moving up the ranks of the medical world. I want to thank you for being an advocate to women, to acknowledging the gender gap, and to giving us more female role models and mentors with whom to build

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If you would like to become more involved in WIN: Women in Neuromodulation, please contact staff@win.org