UW STEM SPEED-MENTORING EVENT

OCTOBER 25TH, 2018
UW Conference Center
Laramie, WY
Amy Allen graduated from the Wyoming College of Engineering with a Civil Engineering degree in 1986 and an MBA in 1989. In 1991, Amy returned to Wyoming to work for her family’s civil engineering firm as a project engineer. During her 27 year with JFC she performed extensive engineering design and project management for road, drainage, subdivision, water and sewer projects, and technical report writing. After retirement, Amy returned to engineering as Director of Public Services for the City of Rock Springs and is presently Director of Engineering for the City of Cheyenne. She is currently the Wyoming Engineering Society President and sits on the University of Wyoming College of Engineering and Applied Science Deans Advisory Council. She and her husband Tom have established the Amy and Tom Allen Engineering Dean’s Excellence fund to foster excellence and provide financial support to the University’s College of Engineering and Applied Science.

Christina Barrineau is an Aquatic Habitat Biologist with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. She leads river restoration and riparian enhancement projects throughout SE Wyoming. She received her M.S. from the University of Wyoming and her B.S. from Warren Wilson College. Christina enjoys skiing, hiking, hunting, camping, and spending time with her husband and young son.

Aviva Braun is a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Cheyenne. After having served for four years in the Boise office, she has made the move to join the Wyoming community. She specializes in fire weather and is currently training to become an Incident Meteorologist, deploy-able to any major wildfire across the country.

Greg Brown is associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and professor of botany at the University of Wyoming. He oversees the Science Initiative and is the former head of the Department of Botany and the Berry Biodiversity Center at UW. Dr. Brown has
authored numerous papers and is an expert on the ecology and systematics of tropical plants in the bromeliad family. He holds a PhD from Arizona State University.

Katie Cheesbrough is a wildlife biologist for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department in Encampment, WY. She is a terrestrial habitat biologist working on the Platte Valley Habitat Partnership Mule Deer Initiative. Prior to her position with WGFD, she was a wildlife biologist for the US Forest Service in Douglas. She holds a MS degree in Zoology and Physiology from the University of Wyoming.

Kristin Di Bona received her B.S. in Chemistry and Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Developmental Biology from the University of Alabama in 2014. Following Postdoctoral positions at the University of Texas at Austin and University of Wyoming, Dr. Di Bona co-founded Wyonics LLC in October of 2017 to develop sustainable technologies via ionic liquids, biopolymers, nanomaterials, and electrochemical technologies. Dr. Di Bona is currently working on a DOE Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant awarded to Wyonics to generate a sustainable supply of critical elements via natural resources and waste streams.

Bob Grieve received his BS and MS from the University of Wyoming in Microbiology and PhD from the University of Florida in Parasitology/Immunology. He was a Postdoctoral Fellow at Cornell University. Dr. Grieve has held various academic positions where he earned tenure twice, retiring from academia as Professor. He Co-founded a biotech company where he eventually assumed the roles of Chair and CEO. He led a corporate turnaround of this public company and retired with a legacy of sound operations, great brand equity and a steep growth trajectory. Dr. Grieve is a member of the Science Initiative Task Force, which oversaw the development of UW programs such as the Wyoming Research Scholars Program.
Michelle Hilaire is a clinical professor in the UW School of Pharmacy. Her Administrative titles are Chair of the Pharmacy Practice Department in the School of Pharmacy and Associate Dean of Students in the College of Health Sciences. Dr. Hilaire received her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Duquesne University. She then completed a community pharmacy residency at the University of Toledo and a primary care specialty residency at the University of Tennessee. Dr. Hilaire’s practice site is the Fort Collins Family Medicine Residency Program in Fort Collins, Colorado. She serves as a preceptor for the PGY1 Pharmacy Residency at Poudre Valley Hospital in Fort Collins, CO.

Paul Johnson graduated from Davidson College with a B.S. in physics in 1973 followed by a PhD in Astronomy from the University of Washington in 1979. Graduation was followed by two post-doctoral positions at the Jet Propulsion Lab and Royal Observatory Edinburgh. From 1981-2016, Dr. Johnson was on the faculty of the Department of Physics and Astronomy at UW, pursuing research in both astronomy and biotechnology. He started a small biodetection company, SoftRay, Inc., in Fort Collins Colorado, which is still active.

Lyman McDonald is, co-founder and senior biometrician with Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc. (WEST, Inc.). He is a biometrician/statistician with over 40 years of experience in the application of statistical methods to design, conduct, and analyze environmental, wildlife, and fisheries studies. He is currently responsible for range-wide aerial survey and estimation of the lesser prairie-chicken population sizes in five states: Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado. He holds a PhD in Statistics from Colorado State University.

Ivy McLeod is originally from Basin, Wyoming and graduated from UW in 1998 with a B.Sc. in Physics. She attended the University of Oklahoma, earning an M.Sc. in Physics/Meteorology based on research performed at the National Severe Storms Laboratory.
Since then she has worked at NASA Johnson Space Center as a Flight Controller for the International Space Station.

**Cheryl Eddy Miller** began working as an undergraduate intern with the U. S. Geological Survey in Cheyenne, and after graduation became a staff hydrologist where she has served in that capacity for 25 years. She has a B.S. in Environmental Engineering and M.S. in Agricultural and Chemical Engineering from Colorado State University. Cheryl has worked on a variety of projects in Wyoming including county-wide groundwater and surface-water assessments and State-wide sampling of groundwater and surface water for pesticides. Cheryl serves as the USGS Wyoming-Montana Water Science Center’s Communications Specialist and Outreach Coordinator, helping to educate Wyoming’s youth and general public about water resources.

**Kara Nazminia** is a 3rd year pharmacy student at the University of Wyoming. She currently is the President of her pharmacy class and holds membership in Phi Lambda Sigma, an honorary pharmacy fraternity whose focus is leadership, and Rho Chi, an honorary pharmacy fraternity whose focus is scholarship. Kara currently works as a pharmacy intern at the Cheyenne VA Medical Center and has completed the VALOR program at the VA, a highly sought-after internship for pharmacy students. Kara also has been involved in research at the University of Wyoming, serving as a research assistant on a WY-NASA funded project and on various projects pertaining to drug discovery in the School of Pharmacy. Upon graduation, she hopes to complete at least one residency in a pharmacy practice.

**Gregory Nickerson** is a writer and filmmaker for the Wyoming Migration Initiative at the University of Wyoming, where he uses the humanities, social media, and storytelling to educate the public about big game migration research. He is a contributor to Wild Migrations atlas just released this month from Oregon State University Press, and co-author of the self-published photography
and history book Deep Migrations. Previously, he worked as a documentary filmmaker on topics ranging from yellow fever to the exploration of Yellowstone in 1871, and as a state government reporter for the news website WyoFile.com.

**Andy Ommen** is currently the Quality Control Manager for the MilliporeSigma site in Laramie - a global center of excellence for the manufacturing of reference standards. He graduated from the University of Wyoming in 2003 with a bachelor’s degree in Chemistry and went on to get a master’s degree in synthetic organic chemistry from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Prior to his current position with MilliporeSigma he worked in research and development at three different biotech companies in North Carolina focusing on the synthesis of new cancer drugs.

**Kennan Oyen** is a physiological ecologist who studied how temperature influences bumble bee muscle function and behavior. To collect physiological measurements in remote field sites, she and her advisor Michael Dillon, designed a portable temperature controller. She used this design to collect physiological data on over 3,000 bumble bees and after completing her Ph.D. started a small business. Her company, IoTherm, is designing portable temperature controllers for researchers who need laboratory precision in remote field sites.

**Lorna Pehl** is director of systems engineering at Metrohm Raman (previously Snowy Range Instruments) in Laramie. Metrohm Raman designs handheld Raman spectrometers that are used for chemical identification in defense, security, and pharmaceutical applications around the world. Dr. Pehl oversees qualifying operating systems and software for the spectrometers as well desktop software applications. She has a team of interns that are students at the University of Wyoming. Prior to this position, Dr. Pehl was a faculty member at Eastern Wyoming College in Torrington, WY where she taught General Chemistry, Introductory
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Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, and Biochemistry. She holds a PhD in Chemistry from the University of Wyoming.

Erin Radosevich is a structural engineer and project manager for Malone Belton Abel in Laramie. She specializes in structural engineering of educational, commercial, and high-end residential structures and contract administration. Her structural projects include the Bradford Brinton Museum in Big Horn, Wyoming, and the Berry Biodiversity Conservation Center, and she is currently working on the Engineering Education Research Building. She holds a B.S. in Architectural Engineering from the University of Wyoming.

Tammy Reed received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Civil Engineering at the University of Wyoming. She serves as Trihydro Corporation’s Business Unit Manager for Infrastructure and Water/Wastewater department based in Laramie. Within Trihydro’s infrastructure and Water/Wastewater department there are two teams; one located in Wyoming and the other in southwest Texas. During her 27 year tenure as an engineering consultant, Tammy has worked on various infrastructure projects including water master planning, water transmission, storage and distribution, sanitary sewer collection, site development, and roadway design. She served as Trihydro’s project director for the recently opened Harney Street Viaduct project that Trihydro contracted to the Wyoming Department of Transportation to perform professional engineering design. Tammy has been in Laramie since 1987 is married and has three sons.

Rhiannan Rubino is a physical therapist at Spine and Injury Clinic of Laramie. Dr. Rubino provides physical therapy care to patients with varied diagnoses including orthopedic, post-operative, sports related, neurological and auto or work injuries. Prior to beginning her current position in Laramie, she completed multiple clinical rotations at inpatient and outpatient facilities where she treated patients with a wide variety of diagnoses. She holds a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from the University of Montana.
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Steve Russell is the Assistant Dean of the University of Wyoming College of Business. His bachelor’s degree is in marketing and master’s degree is in consumer behavior. He was part of a start-up company right after college and specializes in all things entrepreneurship, sales, and marketing. If you’re doing research, Steve wants to know how it is going to solve a problem in the world today!

Edmund Synakowski is the vice president for research and economic development at the University of Wyoming. He was associate director of science with the Department of Energy from 2009 until 2017 when he took on his role at UW. Prior to his time at DOE, Dr. Synakowski headed up the Fusion Energy Program at the Lawrence National Laboratory in California and worked at Plasma Physics Laboratory at Princeton University. He holds a PhD in Physics from the University of Texas-Austin.

Mikey Tabak received his PhD in Ecology from the University of Wyoming and went to work for the United States Department of Agriculture as a Quantitative Ecologist. He works as part of a team of ecologists and statisticians to quantify risk associated with the expansion of feral swine (invasive wild pigs) in North America. Their goal is to predict the future distribution of feral swine and estimate how this species will affect wildlife and livestock health. Dr. Tabak’s work involves collaboration with other scientists, statistics and modeling, computer programming, and writing of reports and publications. Outside of work, he enjoys running, hiking, skiing, and hunting in the mountains and spending time with family.

Kurt Tuggle is a University of Wyoming graduate in Civil Engineering and currently serves as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer at Trihydro Corporation, an environmental consulting and engineering firm based in Laramie. During Kurt’s 25 year tenure at Trihydro, he has served as an
environmental technician, remediation engineer, project manager and senior manager. Kurt spent the majority of his childhood years in a small logging town in the Canadian Rockies prior to coming to Wyoming to obtain his engineering degree and is a dual citizen of the U.S. and Canada.

**Eileen Vandergrift** grew up in upstate New York and attended Marist College there. Majoring in Psychology and Philosophy as an undergraduate, she eventually sought graduate studies with a Human Science orientation. Having received an MA and then PhD in Psychology from Duquesne University and subsequently teaching full time at Duquesne and then Point Park College, she joined the Counseling Center at Carnegie Mellon University accruing the necessary clinical hours for licensure as a Psychologist in Pennsylvania. Dr. Vandergrift has maintained a Private Practice in Individual Psychotherapy for several decades and, most recently, developed a grief program in Colorado called ‘Memories In Motion’.

**Mark Wefel** is a board certified Family Medicine Physician practicing at Family Physicians of Laramie. He graduated from the University of Washington School of Medicine (WWAMI Program) and completed his residency at the University of Wyoming Family Medicine Residency in Cheyenne. Dr. Wefel enjoys skiing, climbing, hiking, hunting, camping, and spending time with his wife and young son.
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