

Women's Professional Development Network

UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES DURING 1999

The **Women's Professional Development Network (WPDN)** continued strongly during 1999. The Steering Group surveyed Network members at the start of the year and, in response to feedback on key priorities, concentrated its efforts on several key initiatives.

The program of **Lunchtime Networking Forums (LNF's)** and workshops continued to attract an interested audience. Key speakers included:

- **Judith Brine**, Executive Dean of the Faculty of PALACE, discussed her experiences in academia and her recent election to the Adelaide City Council.
- Speakers from the **Ashford Cancer Centre**, explored issues surrounding cancer and spoke about support and services available to people with cancer and their families.
- **Joan Russell**, Human Resources Manager, SA Police Department, took us from her pony-tail swinging, lab technician days of the 60s, through to adventures in the South Pole, to her current role with the South Australia Police.
- **Julie Rodato**, Principal in Management Consulting at Ernst & Young and project manager for **Project Endeavour** spoke to us at our August Lunchtime Networking Forum.
- **Maggie Farrell**, Project Manager, Department of Industry and Trade, spoke about her varied career and shared with us the challenges (and importance) of thinking "outside the box".
- **Jack McLean**, Director of the Road Accident Research Unit, presented at our final session for the year.

A couple of **informal workshops** were also scheduled this year. **Women and Career Advancement**, gave attendees practical strategies they could use to project confidence and clarity in a variety of situations. **Developing a Lifestyle that Reduces Stress and Worry**, focussed on ways of maintaining a level of stress that would enable participants to work most productively.

The **WPDN Mentoring Program** concluded successfully in July when the Executive Director, Student and Staff Services, presented certificates to the individuals who had participated in the Program. The Steering Group is interested in developing a pilot peer-mentoring scheme next year.

Breakfasts were a popular social activity this year. We started these off in winter and saw a core of hardy, early-risers attending. Given their success, breakfasts will be a continuing activity of the Network. They provide a chance to catch up with colleagues over breakfast or meet new friend. With the warmer weather, we expect to see them grow in popularity.

Technical difficulties associated with the roll out of the new University email system saw Steering Group members meeting over several lunchtime sessions to prepare hard copy mail-outs to the Network membership. Needless to say, we were pleased to have our **electronic listserver** fully functional again. The **website** has continued to be a good source of information on WPDN initiatives. In addition, this year we developed a **brochure and several posters**, that are being used to good effect to bring the Network to the attention of staff.

The Steering Committee is holding a planning day at the end of November, in order to review our activities this year and plan for the new millenium!

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