

OVERVIEW

The seventh semi-annual Women in Technology (WiT) Leadership Round Table was held December 7, 2018, at the UCSC Silicon Valley Campus. The meeting gathered leaders from industry, academia, and the non-profit sector to discuss work to date and progress made toward “Facing the Data,” an ongoing initiative to persuade organizations to collect and share metrics regarding diversity of their workforce. For this Round Table new voices joined the conversation with graduate student participants and perspectives from social science research. This made for lively discussions during the second session of the day, “Encouraging Women to Be Bold.”

The day began with WITI@UC co-founder and Dean of the College of Engineering at UC Berkeley, Tsu-Jae King Liu, summarizing the vision of these Round Table events and reminding us of the mission of WITI@UC: *To increase the persistence and success of women in technical fields in industry, academia, and the public sector.* The purpose of the Round Tables is to gather leaders in industry and academia to better understand the experience of women working in the technology industry and for leaders to develop action items to improve conditions for women in their own organizations.

Following the priorities identified during the 2017 and Spring 2018 Round Tables, the agenda focused on the current state of the industry. Presentations included overviews of quantitative and qualitative data across sectors and new metrics to help differentiate progress, especially for women of color. Previous reports summarized recommendations for metrics to monitor and track progress: [2016 Reports and 2017 Reports](#).

Session I: Facing the Data

During the first session, organizations shared research and initiatives on diversity metrics across industries and more specifically focused on the technology industry.

Irina Starikova, partner at McKinsey and Company, presented results from the [Women in the Workplace 2018 report](#), the result of a multi-year pro bono research project, conducted in partnership with LeanIn.Org. The goal of the study was to examine the state of women in corporate America, to identify the “missing” data and review progress across different locations and timelines. For the study, 279 companies representing 13 million employee participants and 64,000 completed surveys on employee experiences. This is the fourth year of the research and the focus for this year was the #MeToo movement, sexual harassment issues, and microaggressions in the workplace.

There is a high correlation with improved performance and profit for companies with a demographically diverse workforce and leadership team. Gender-diverse companies are 21% more likely to outperform their peers and ethnically diverse companies are 33% more likely to outperform (Delivering through Diversity, 2018).

The presentation reviewed the corporate pipeline, taking a closer look at the quantitative data showing lack of advancement opportunities for women, in addition to their lived experiences of being a woman in the workplace.

The study found that while women are hired in nearly equal percentages to men, their representation drops off dramatically at the first promotion to manager level. Women fall behind early in their careers and the first promotions are the most inequitable. Women are 21% less likely than their male counterparts to be promoted to manager and for black women that percentage almost doubles, as they are 40% less likely to be promoted (see Figure 1). Across industries white women only hold 19% of C-suite positions and women of color only hold 4% of such positions.

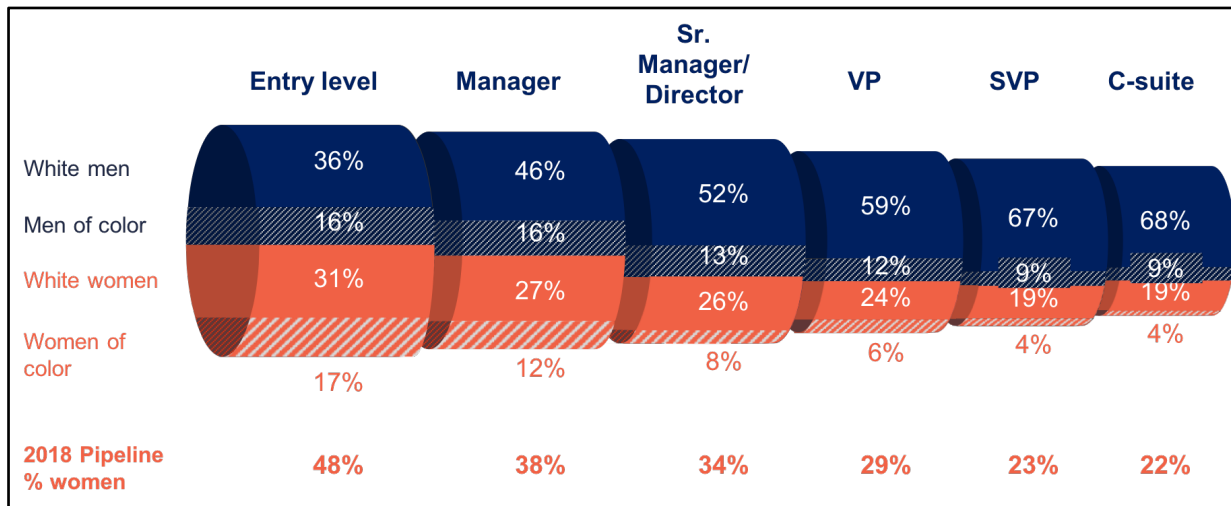


Figure 1: Percentage of employees by level in 2018 in Corporate America (McKinsey 2018)

Women fare worse at software companies. Figure 2 presents the data for the percentage of employees by level for software companies in 2018 and includes a comparison to the overall percentages in corporate America.

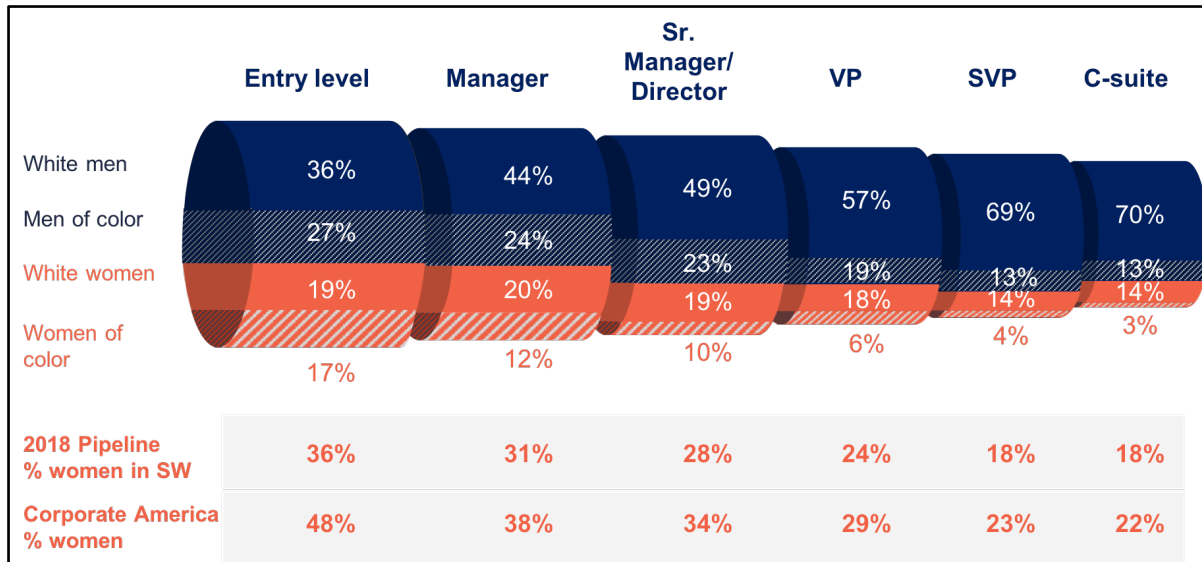


Figure 2: Percentage of employees by level in 2018 for Software Companies (McKinsey 2018)

While a similar proportion of men and women want to be promoted (Women in the Workplace Report, pp 24-25), women face more challenges to their authority and leadership at work. These include feeling the need to provide evidence of competence, receiving less support from their managers, and experiencing microaggressions. Reflected in the quantitative data above, black women face even greater challenges of not receiving equal growth opportunities or promotions.

The research culminated in five concrete actions that companies can take to move toward achieving equality in the workplace.

1. **Get the basics right – targets, reporting, and accountability:** Leadership must prioritize diversity, quantify impact of diversity, track diversity metrics
2. **Ensure that hiring, performance reviews, and promotions are fair:** Create diverse interview panels, provide consistent evaluation criteria when hiring, recruit diverse candidates
3. **Make senior leaders and managers champions of diversity:** Train leaders, choose diversity champions, institute formal diversity practices
4. **Foster an inclusive and respectful culture:** Implement policies, empower managers, encourage candid dialogue, ensure diversity of voices and inclusion in decisions
5. **Make the “only” experience rare:** Hire and promote women in cohorts, cluster women in teams, create opportunities for women to work together

Next, Amy Cross, founder of [Gender Fair](#), presented on *Leveraging Data to Accelerate Equality*, taking a look at what metrics are currently being tracked, those that should be

tracked, and an overview of the Gender Fair database. Gender Fair rates companies on their fairness practices across four pillars: leadership, employee policies, advertising and philanthropy.

Currently reporting on gender and diversity is not required by law in the U.S. Filings published by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) include the name and age of board members and named executive officers. In 2017, the UK required companies with more than 250 employees to report the following metrics: median gender pay gap, mean gender pay gap, median bonus pay gap, and proportion of males and females in each pay quartile. By 2020, the Pay Transparency Act in Canada will require public reporting of gender wage gaps from employers, requiring them to disclose information about compensation of employees.

The metrics developed by Gender Fair are based on the Women’s Empowerment Principles ([WEPIs](#)) to ensure companies meet benchmark investments in gender equality over time—internally and in the larger community they serve. Gender Fair selected about 15 of the largest organizations within each industry sector and use proprietary methodology to rate these companies. To do this, they leverage the most up-to-date publicly available information from a variety of sources. Currently the Gender Fair database includes 300 consumer-facing companies. Of these, only 46% report on maternity leave, 50% on paternity leave, 51% on percentage of women managers, 35% on supplier diversity, and 54% on employee diversity.

Amy suggested additional metrics to report by ethnicity and gender: intake, retention, use of parental leave, retention rates after leave, use of flexibility policies, participation in management training, promotion rates, goals for promotions, salary levels at each grade, and spending on women-owned business. Beyond reporting, to retain women companies need to implement policies, programs to promote culture change, targets, and investments that support diversity within their organizations. Amy shared examples of companies that are “getting it right.”

- Patagonia’s 30-year-old childcare center results in 100% post maternity retention.
- Eli Lilly increased women’s management by 3% in less than 2 years—above the goal—and has also met targets for minorities in management positions.
- Johnson and Johnson’s 4-5 month Talent Acceleration Process provides leaders with a variety of experiences, has a retention rate of 80%, and promotion rate 30% higher than peers.
- Intel’s Warmline, an anonymous hotline to report issues with managers, resulted in 90% of employees who used it staying at the company.

- GlaxoSmithKline’s coaching to women during a move across business units or national markets resulted in 100% retention over 12 months.
- L’Oréal’s employee-driven Think Tanks addressed gaps in female representation in executive, operations, IT and digital functions; and the recruitment, engagement and retention of women. Women executives increased from 10% to 26%.

Closing out the first session, Kristin Haffert from UN Women and Co-Founder of Mine the Gap, presented updates from UN Women and the Empower Women initiative. Empowerwomen.org is an online platform for sharing evidence, experiences and good practices on women’s economic empowerment. Creation of the [Women’s Empowerment Principles](#) (WEPs) is a collaboration between the UN Global Compact and UN Women, and were adapted from the Calvert Women’s Principles. The WEPs framework is the most wide-ranging set of criteria about women’s empowerment that moves beyond just the *workplace* to include *marketplace* and *community*, offering seven principles to guide business on how to empower women in these three sectors.

- **Principle 1:** Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality
- **Principle 2:** Treat all women and men fairly at work—respect and support human rights and nondiscrimination
- **Principle 3:** Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all workers, women and men
- **Principle 4:** Promote education, training and professional development for women
- **Principle 5:** Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women
- **Principle 6:** Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy
- **Principle 7:** Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality

While many companies have signed on to the Principles, significant improvements have not yet emerged. To address this gap, the organization is highlighting companies that are doing well and improving over time. Next steps include the development of guidelines that include actions and strategies companies can implement related to each principle.

Lunch Session

During lunch, Caroline Winnett, Executive Director at Berkeley [Skydeck](#), provided an update on the accelerator’s Inclusive Entrepreneurship initiative. Formed as a partnership between the Haas School of Business, the College of Engineering, and the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, SkyDeck is UC Berkeley’s largest accelerator. It recently launched a \$25M fund and will share 50% of profits with the UC Berkeley campus. One recent program is providing inclusive leadership workshops to their startup teams. The discussion noted the importance to include not only entrepreneurs and founders but also investors and venture capital firms

in diversity and inclusion work. Kara Sammet, Founder and Principal of Gender Lenz, who led the workshop at Skydeck, shared information about the programming for the inclusive leadership workshop.

Camille Crittenden, Deputy Director at CITRIS and the Banatao Institute, shared updates on [WITI@UC](#). The Fall symposium “Women in Tech: The Future of AI,” originally scheduled for November 16, 2018, was postponed following a campus closure due to dangerous air quality caused by the wildfires. The event is rescheduled for March 8, 2019, and registration is now open and available on the event’s [Eventbrite website](#). The event will feature presentations of the WITI@UC Athena Awards, recognizing those who have championed the advancement of women in technology. Jill Finlayson was hired as the Program Director and started January 2019. Additionally, CITRIS invites Principal Investigators from any of the four CITRIS campuses (UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UC Santa Cruz, and UC Merced) to apply for [seed funding](#) for collaborative research in its strategic initiatives, including Women in Technology for the first time in 2019.

Session II: Encouraging Women to Be Bold

The afternoon session started with a talk from graduate students Laura Brink, Regina Eckert, Hani Gomez, and Emily Naviasky, from the Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) department at UC Berkeley. They are members of the student organization Bias Busters and their presentation focused on *Advocating for a Change in STEM Culture and Why “Encouraging Women to Be Bold” Doesn’t Cut It*. Bias Busters is run by graduate students, faculty, and staff to address implicit bias and other diversity issues in the EECS department. Their goal is to make the department welcoming and inclusive to all. They organize several events to raise awareness regarding implicit biases, including workshops, reading groups, and a speaker series.

Laura Brink shared the gender ratio from 2004 to 2017 in EECS at UC Berkeley (Figure 3).

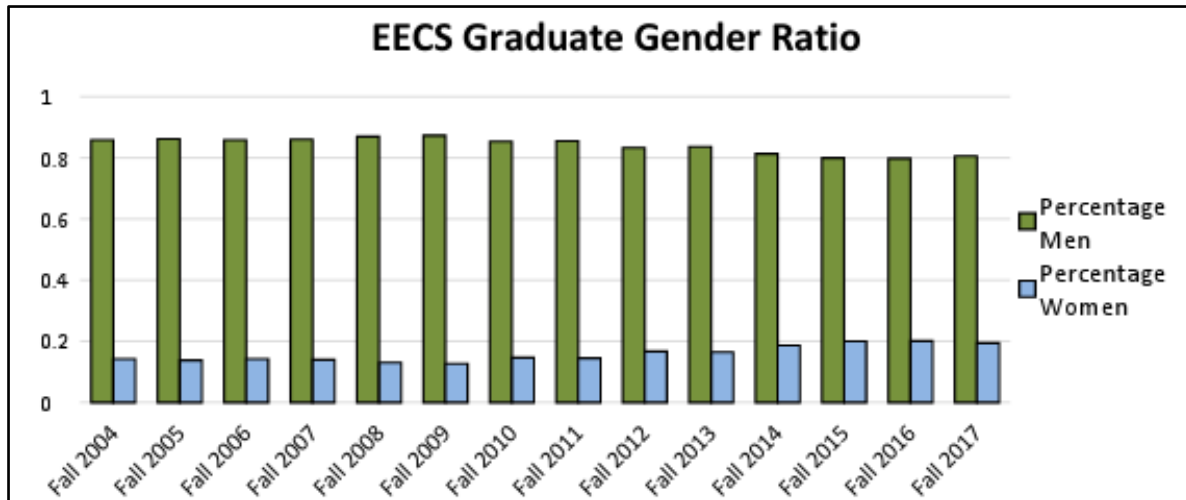


Figure 3: EECS graduate student gender ratio from 2004 to 2017 at UC Berkeley (UC Berkeley 2018)

In a recent effort, Bias Busters surveyed faculty, staff, and graduate students to assess the current climate and better understand bias perceived by people in the department. They aggregated the data to categorize the experiences into common occurrences, which included: assumptions that women and minorities are unable to do science, gender profiling, technical contributions ignored, and stereotyping related to race, gender, and sexual orientation.

Hani shared observations and recommendations to help improve the current culture on campus and beyond.

1. This is not just a woman problem, it is an everybody problem
2. Diverse environments foster out-of-the-box thinking and creativity
3. Form allies, reach out to leaders
4. Practice taking action

Group discussion touched on the importance of recognizing intersectionality when discussing diversity and to realize that diversity is multi-dimensional and spans across race, ethnicity, class, sex, gender, sexual orientation, and more. While we can understand our own experiences, we are less able to appreciate experiences outside of our social group. Because of this limitation, we are encouraged to participate in conversations to better understand our own experiences and allow others to share first hand. The presentation ended with an activity developed by Colleen Lewis, McGregor-Girand Associate Professor of CS at Harvey Mudd College, and her team as part of a National Science Foundation grant. The activity includes a [set of cards](#) that prompt conversation and develop techniques to respond to microaggressions and implicit bias when they occur.

The final presentation of the day was by Sharla Alegria, Assistant Professor of Sociology, UC Merced, titled *Is It a Glass Escalator or a Step Stool?: Career Paths for Women in High-Tech*

Management. The presentation featured her research on professional tech workers and insights from interviews of 45 tech workers, conducted as part of her dissertation.

While women’s representation in science and engineering at the undergraduate level has generally increased (see Figure 4) the same cannot be said for the field of computer science.

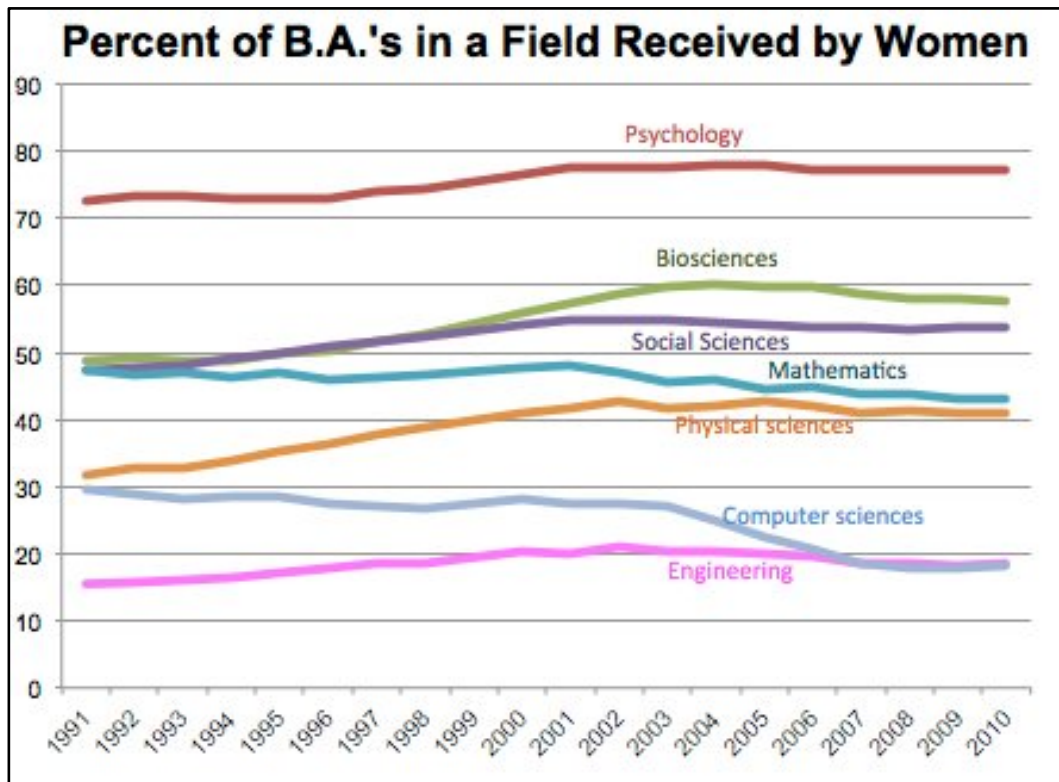


Figure 4: Percent of bachelor degrees in a field received by women, 1991-2010 (Source: Catherine Campbell, NY Times Economix Blog, “Women gain in some STEM fields, not computer science,” 11/15/2013. Data from “Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering,” National Science Foundation)

Sharla notes that “women’s representation in computing or the jobs we tend to think of as ‘tech work’ hit a peak around 1990 and has fallen since.” Despite considerable investment from the federal government and technology companies, women’s representation in computing had decreased. Her research explores why this is the case.

Literature cites several reasons that women do not enter technology fields, including women’s lack of confidence (Correll 2001; Cech et al 2011; Meelissen and Drent 2008; Robnett 2013), desire to prioritize balancing family and work (Ceci et al 2009; Frome et al 2006), shortage of female role models (Sonnert et al 2007), and teachers and peers suggesting they do not belong in the field (Margolis and Fischer 2002). If women choose to enter technical fields, several suggest that they don’t stay because of a masculine culture of teams (Guerrier et al. 2009; Powell et al. 2009; Evetts 1998, Kelan 2008, Cooper 2000) and

difficulty balancing work and family (Blackwell and Glover 2008, Ceci, Williams, and Barnett 2009).

While the technology field has grown significantly over the last decades, women's representation in the field has not. Sharla points to structural changes needed to increase their representation. To find out more about the stories and experiences behind the data Sharla interviewed 45 tech workers, 32 of whom were women, and observed interactions at three tech conferences, seven workplaces, and one hackathon.

She further explored the culture of engineering, its predominantly masculine character, and job roles where women often face hostility and invisibility. Williams (1995) uses the metaphor of a "glass escalator" which refers to the promotion of men over women into management positions in female-dominated fields such as nursing, education, and social work. The underlying process Williams described is a tendency towards matching normative gender traits to gendered job expectations. Managerial work in computing requires extensive interpersonal skills (at which women are more conditioned to excel) plus engineering know-how. Sharla examines whether women experience a glass escalator effect in computing work, in which they may be promoted from frontline engineering or software development roles into management positions, which may be perceived, paradoxically, as less prestigious and make them more vulnerable to the changing business landscape.

Sharla found ethnic considerations also affected women's career paths. Many of the white women she interviewed had moved into management positions by mid-career. They were in jobs she calls translational because they were "translating" between the technical and business-oriented parts of their companies. Many of the women in management pursued these jobs after supervisors identified their "people skills" and encouraged them to pursue this path. None of the women of color she interviewed experienced unexpected and unsought promotions into management positions. Instead, they worked in a job they had specifically chosen and for which they had intentionally trained. This includes Asian women who are generally not considered racial minorities in tech since they are not underrepresented. Despite the fact that each of the 13 women of color she interviewed had degrees, credentials, and experience specific to her job; none described ever receiving unexpected promotions or encouragement to pursue management based on the strengths of their "people" skills.

More about Sharla's research is available on her [website](#).

NEXT STEPS

At the close of every Round Table, attendees commit to direct actions they can take back to their organizations to help improve the success, experiences, and advancement of women.

Direct action items included:

- Ask alumni to self-report gender metrics as part of future presentations
- Offer reward, credit, or recognition for doing diversity group within the university
- Train interview panels to incorporate these practices and to track metrics
- Create connections and calls to action to report and share metrics
- Continue diversity work throughout transition from academia to industry
- Explore future partnership with UC Berkeley for WEmpower
- Include more student speakers in diversity workshops and events
- Develop funding for research in this area and share results more broadly
- Ask companies and interviewers, especially those recruiting on campus, about their gender and diversity metrics
- Remember to consider all dimensions of diversity

The Spring 2019 Round Table is scheduled for June 7, 2019, on the UC Berkeley campus. All past participants of the WiT Leadership Round Tables are cordially invited.

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