

MAR12-2011-020195

Abstract for an Invited Paper
for the MAR12 Meeting of
the American Physical Society

Intersections of Gender and Power: Improving the Status of Women in Physics

SAEQA VRTILEK, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics

Numerous problems bedevil the twin goals of increasing the numerical participation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields by women and increasing the quality of that participation. The nature of the difficulties is everywhere slightly different, but there are underlying commonalities. A wide portfolio of lessons learned that can be applied to the confluence of cultures, backgrounds, and experiences that shape any given institution have been developed and will be presented. Among these, common and dominant themes are the need for mentoring, management training, and the increased visibility of successful women scientists. These have been identified (Nelson and Rogers 2004; Sonnert and Holton 1995a; Vetter 1996) as some of the key factors in securing the encouragement and increased stability needed for more senior women scientists to thrive to their full potential and provide the example and mentoring needed for a larger and more productive new generation.