

A Career in Accelerator Science and Engineering

Lia Merminga, PIP-II Project Director LAWISE Workshop 20 August 2020



Brief CV

Education

1989 Ph.D. Physics, The University of Michigan *Ph.D. thesis in Accelerator Physics at Fermilab*

1987 M.S. Mathematics, The University of Michigan

1986 M.S. Physics, The University of Michigan

1983 B.S. Physics, University of Athens, Greece

Employment

2018 PIP-II Project Director, Fermilab

2015 - 2018 Associate Lab Director, Accelerators, SLAC

2008 - 2015 Head, Accelerator Division, TRIUMF & UBC

2002 - 2008 Director, CASA, JLab

1992 – 2002 Scientist, JLab

1989 - 1992 Postdoc, SLAC









Proton Improvement Plan – II (PIP-II)

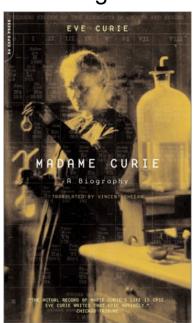


Some early influences....

I was lucky to have superb and lasting influences through family and teachers who definitively influenced my decision to go into Physics



George C. Dousmanis Ph.D. Columbia University 1956



13 years old



Αλκμηνη Γιουργα:
High school Physics
teacher: A woman who gave
excellence to her teaching
and demanded excellence
from us

16 years old



Mentors

In the work environment, it takes enlightened colleagues who feel secure about themselves to mentor young women and influence their careers positively.

Work with the best in the field!



Steve Peggs BNL



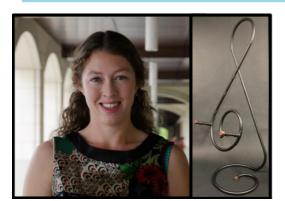
Swapan Chattopadhyay NIU & Fermilab



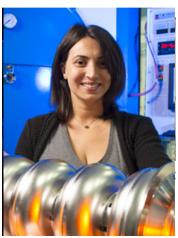
Nigel Lockyer Fermilab



Giving back



Alysson Gold Stanford University



Anna Grassellino Fermilab



Marco Marchetto TRIUMF



Ramona Leewe TRIUMF



Eduard Pozdeyev & Chris Tennant Fermilab & JLab



Doug Storey SLAC



Career and family

Pursuing a scientific career and raising a family is not easy.

 I found it the hardest to balance my family and my work, especially when my child was younger. At the end of a long day I often felt I am not doing a good job in either.

"...and she wasn't!"

Alfred Chao

UChicago, Division of Social Sciences



Leadership

- In my mind, leadership is based on a set of immutable principles about which I feel quite strongly:
 - Integrity/honesty
 - Having a vision and being able to articulate it clearly to employees at all levels so they feel motivated to support it.
 - Respect for others
 - Technical proficiency
 - Decision making
 - Ownership; Taking responsibility for one's decisions and actions
 - Willingness to accept risk once the level of risk is defined
 - Determination, tenacity/persistence

We must identify opportunities for women to advance in the ranks, so there are more women in leadership positions



Some advice I never forgot

Many years ago, I heard Florence P. Haseltine, Ph.D., M.D. give a talk. She was
at a very high level at the US National Institutes of Health at the time. She said
she had two pieces of advice to young women in scientific and engineering fields:

- "Stay focused"
- "Don't take no for an answer"



I took her advice to heart. This may not have to do with my being a woman, but if
you come up with a new idea, somehow the tendency is that people want to turn it
down (especially in science!). Don't stop. Just keep pushing. Not all ideas are
good, but don't stop at the first no.

To be determined and to persevere are very important.

Inspiration

- > The endeavor
 - Make a difference, contribute to something of lasting value, enable new scientific & technological breakthroughs
- > The team
- ➤ The fact that we all stand upon the shoulders of giants

Helen Edwards
Master Builder of Accelerators: 1936-2016





Closing Remarks

- There are a lot of opportunities in science and engineering, and this field is more merit-based than most other fields.
- I feel it is very important to be technically competent, really competent.
 - > Technical competence levels the playing field
- Decide what it is you want to work on, and pursue it with focus and determination.
- The road will be arduous but amply rewarding!

And have fun! Let's not forget:

We got into Science for the love of it!

