

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Conference website: <http://www.physics.mcmaster.ca/ccuwip/>

CCUWiP APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

University Conference for Women in Physics
Seeks to Inspire and Connect

The Canadian Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics (CCUWiP) is opening its doors even wider this year. The group hopes to welcome more participants from colleges and universities across the country through outreach and travel grants. CCUWiP has been gaining momentum, welcoming twice as many students in 2017 as four years ago.

An estimated total of 120 students will be arriving to McMaster University on January 13th. For a cost of only \$35 their food, hotel, city travel, and conference programming will all be covered. "It's really important for us that anyone who wants to attend, can, regardless of their finances," says Courtney Mulholland, an organizer. The CCUWiP organizing committee has been gathering sponsors across the country to help the conference reach our goal of an affordable, accessible conference for all students.

At the conference, attendees will take part in workshops, networking sessions, and have the opportunity to hear from a diverse group of speakers. They will learn how to handle sexism and gender bias, negotiation, and learn about the many applications of a physics degree. "We hope students will be inspired when they see everything they can do", says another organizer, Jennifer Scora. The attendees will have the chance to present research posters and network with McMaster alumni, as well as tour the campus.

Unfortunately, there are still few women in physics. As of 2010, NSERC reports that only 20.4% of physics Bachelor's degree students are women. The figure falls to 19.3% for physics PhD students. The Canadian Association of University Teachers reports that in 2008, only 7% of full physics professors in Canada were women. One of the primary goals for CCUWiP is to encourage women and change these figures.

The McMaster CCUWiP will be the fourth conference to take place in Canada. Conferences were previously held at Dalhousie (2016), Laval (2015), and McGill (2014). The conference is growing from 80 up to 120 people this year, and will stretch from January 13th to 15th, 2017.

The keynote speaker at the conference will be Nergis Mavalvala (PhD), an astrophysicist and professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is well known being on the team of scientists at LIGO to first observe gravitational waves.

CCUWiP is partnering with APS (American Physical Society) to join with the American CUWiP conference series. There are nine CUWiPs happening across the United States in 2017. This year, all of the current and previous conference chairs met to share insights and advice. Starting from 2018, the Canadian and US conferences will share a registration and application system, as well as conduct pre and post conference surveys. "We hope that Canada can host two conferences in the future," commented Anastasia Smolina, this year's CCUWiP chair.

The results from APS' 2016 conference surveys show that students feel more valued, respected, and part of the community after attending. Students are much more interested in physics and aware of the opportunities available to them.

Additional Information

CCUWiP 2017 website: <http://www.physics.mcmaster.ca/ccuwip/>

McMaster University: http://www.mcmaster.ca/opr/html/opr/fast_facts/main/about.html

McMaster University Physics Department: <http://www.physics.mcmaster.ca>

APS conference series: <https://www.aps.org/programs/women/workshops/cuwip.cfm>

Please email ccuwip.mcmaster@gmail.ca if you are interested in sponsoring CCUWiP 2017

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