



Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to include another issue of RFS Briefings with some timely and encouraging updates on women in science.

Of note in particular:

**RFS Will be a 2019 Sponsor of the Raw Science Film Festival**

RFS is thrilled to be a sponsor of the 2019 Raw Science Film Festival on January 25-27, 2019 at Paramount Studios in Los Angeles. The event theme is “Lunar Landing 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary,” and will focus on celebrating past accomplishments while looking to the future. We are planning to have an RFS Board Member as one of the featured speakers. [Read more.](#)

**Applications are now open for the 2019 Vilcek Prizes for Creative Promise**, vilcek.org, March 5, 2018

Applications are now open for 2019 Creative Promise Prizes in Biomedical Science until June 11, 2018, and the prizewinners will be announced in February 2019. The Vilcek Prizes for Creative Promise were established nine years ago as a complement to the Vilcek Prizes to encourage and support early to mid-career immigrant artists and scientists who have already demonstrated exceptional achievements. As with the Vilcek Prizes, the Creative Promise Prizes are awarded annually in biomedical science and in a rotating category of the arts, this year recognizing accomplishments in the field of architecture. [Read more.](#)

**See below for more news about women in science**

Please continue to share important news and opportunities with us so that we may share it with you, and others who are committed to supporting the careers of exceptional women in science.

With regards,

Karla Shepard Rubinger  
Executive Director  
*Rosalind Franklin Society*

**RFS Briefings**  
April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018

**Ellen Stofan, Former Chief Scientist at NASA, Named To Head National Air and Space Museum**, newsdesk.si.edu, April 5, 2018

Ellen Stofan, currently consulting senior scientist at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, has been named the John and Adrienne Mars Director of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, effective April 30. She has more than 25 years of experience in space-related organizations and a deep research background in planetary geology. She is the first woman to hold this position. "Ellen's scientific background, leadership skills, communication acumen and strategic thinking have positioned her superbly to lead the National Air and Space Museum," said Smithsonian Secretary, Dr. David Skorton. "Her passion for science coupled with her love of education will ensure that the museum will continue to be a global treasure and world leader through its extensive programming, exhibitions and scholarship." [Read more.](#)

**Anne Wojcicki Wants to Be Healthy at 100**, nytimes.com, April 4, 2018

Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of 23andMe Anne Wojcicki discussed her company, goals, partnerships and more in a recent New York Times Q&A. 23andMe conducts DNA tests that can tell what countries your ancestors were from or what genetic diseases you may have but Wojcicki's ultimate goal is to use data from the customers to find cures and develop drugs. "There's very little money that goes into prevention programs, and I think that's not reflective of what you and I want. What we really care about most is not 'How do I manage my Alzheimer's?' but 'How do I never get it in the first place?'" [Read more.](#)

**2019 Gruber International Prize Nominations Now Open**, gruber.yale.edu, April 4, 2018

The International Prize Program honors individuals in the fields of Cosmology, Genetics, and Neuroscience, whose revolutionary work provides new models that inspire and enable fundamental shifts in knowledge and culture.

[Read more.](#)

**Reversing Systemic Bias Against Women Scientists in the Media**, bbc.co, March 31, 2018

When writing up scientific breakthroughs in *The Atlantic Magazine*, Ed Yong realized he was quoting more male than female scientists in his stories. Yong set out to investigate why, and redress the balance. Similarly, a study into the gender of authors in the big IPCC climate science reports also showed a much lower percentage of female authors. Is there an unconscious, systemic bias, and will increasing the percentage of women referenced change anything?

[Read more.](#)

**Fighting Disease Is a Battle Often Won With Spreadsheets**, nytimes.com, March 30, 2018

Dr. Christine Tan, the state epidemiologist at the New Jersey Department of Health, plays a crucial role in protecting people's health by tracking and monitoring both common and unusual diseases and providing data to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Tan discusses her role and background in a recent Q&A with *The New York Times*. [Read more.](#)

**Nathalie Cabrol Searches the Earth for the Secrets of Life on Mars**, nytimes.com, March 22, 2018

At just five years old, Nathalie Cabrol knew there were questions in space ready to be answered. As the Director of the Carl Sagan Center at the SETI Institution, she seeks to explore, understand and explain the origin of life in the universe. Traveling to some of the world's most extreme and dangerous environments, Cabrol searches for organisms that live in similar conditions to those on Mars, and in

October 2016, she led an expedition to Chile's high-altitude deserts to test methods of detecting life on Mars. [Read more.](#)

**Katsuko Saruhashi: Why Google honours her today**, Aljazeera.com, March 22, 2018

Described as one of the greatest Japanese geochemists and hailed as an "iron scientist", Katsuko Saruhashi would have been 98 years old on March 22. In her honor, Google changed its logo in 15 countries to an illustration of her. It's important to note, however, that she was not always recognized for her achievements while alive, but rather faced discrimination. [Read more.](#)

**Economics: The Price of Our Energy**, paw.princeton.edu, March 21, 2018

As the United States is deep in a fracking boom, Janet Currier, Princeton University Economics and Public Affairs Professor says the effects of fracking must be examined. And, as the director of Princeton's Center for Health and Wellbeing and co-director of the Program on Families and Children at the National Bureau of Economic Research, Currier has organized a new study on the health effects introduced by fracking. Published in Science Advances in December, the paper by Currier and two colleagues sounds an alarm for those living close to the wells. "If you can separate out the polluting activities from where people are living," you would have fewer health effects, Currie says. "Places that have high population density may want to make different decisions about whether they allow fracking at all." [Read more.](#)

**Women In Medicine Shout #MeToo About Sexual Harassment At Work**, khn.org, March 20, 2018

The #MeToo movement has inspired countless women (and men) to speak up about sexual harassment in the workplace, and women in medicine are joining the force, taking to Twitter using #MeTooMedicine. In the healthcare field, which has far more women than men, the power at the top is predominately male – and in a [recent survey](#), 30 percent of women on medical faculties report experiencing sexual harassment at work. "We know harassment is more common in fields where there are strong power differentials," said Dr. Reshma Jagsi, who is director of the Center for Bioethics and Social Sciences in Medicine at the University of Michigan. "And we know medicine is very hierarchical." [Read more.](#)

**Hundreds of Start-Ups Tell Investors: Diversify, or Keep Your Money**, nytimes.com, March 20, 2018

What happens when more than 400 tech entrepreneurs and chief executives come together? A loose coalition, known as Founders for Change, is formed to pressure the venture capital industry to diversify its ranks. This new generation of entrepreneurs is ready to shake up the balance of power in Silicon Valley and overcome the gender and racial biases. "It's pretty obvious the venture industry is not where it needs to be" in diversity, said Jack Conte, chief executive of Patreon. [Read more.](#)

**Science's Invisible Women**, nytimes.com, March 19, 2018

Two female authors - Patricia Fara in her book *A Lab of One's Own* and Clair Evans in her book *Broad Band* – provide readers with a glimpse into women scientists in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Britain as well as during the 1940s-1990s in the United States. Both Fara and Evans highlight unsung female scientists' accomplishments and abilities to succeed in a male-dominated world. [Read more.](#)

**She was the only Woman in a Photo of 38 Scientists, and Now She's Been Identified**,

nytimes.com, March 19, 2018

The social media search for a woman named Sheila began when illustrator Candace Jean Anderson wanted to write a picture book about the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration sent her information, and buried in dozens of pages of text was a photograph of 38 attendees at the 1971 International Conference on the Biology of Whales – all identified men except for one unidentified woman. Turning to Twitter, Candace let her followers know she was on a mission to identify the sole woman in the photo. Catching the attention of author Margot

Lee Shetterly, she said, “Here’s a working scientist, contributing alongside her colleagues, and she’s not even given the professional courtesy of having her name recorded at a scientific conference. The photo, with her brown face half obscured by the people around her, is a perfect metaphor for the larger issue of history’s failure to record the work of women scientists, particularly women scientists of color.” [Read more.](#)

**Few women in science, fewer on stage of Science Congress to speak about it,** [indianexpress.com](#), March 19, 2018

The Women Science Congress is in its seventh year despite repeated calls from the women scientific community that it be eliminated to allow women to present papers in the much longer Indian Science Conference (ISC). An inaugural session of the 7th Women Science Congress was held on the sidelines of the 105th ISC on March 18 at Manipur University in Imphal, India. In the history of ISC, only 4 women have been general presidents, and, at this year’s meeting, only 2 women (among the 11 participants) occupied the stage as guests of honor. “A separate women’s congress is an easier way to ensure representation than to ensure that there is diversity in the whole congress,” said Nandita Jayaraj, who runs a web platform chronicling the lives of women in STEM. One member of the audience, a female scientist in organic chemistry said, “I think we have become so de-sensitized that I don’t even notice a male-heavy panel nowadays.” Kesari Nath Tripathi, Governor of West Bengal, recognized the importance of women in science and their underrepresentation in the field. [Read More.](#)

**Women in STEM encounter Bias,** [thehindubusinessline.com](#), March 18, 2018

The 7th Women in Science Congress was held during the Indian Science Congress on March 18 at Manipur University in Imphal, India, offering a forum for women scholars, scientists, and students to become more inspired about being part of the scientific community. Kesari Nath Tripathi, Governor of West Bengal, addressed the problem of bias in women’s involvement in science and technology with regard to “disciplines and academic or professional level of responsibility.” Though half the population in India are women, they are significantly underrepresented at almost levels of science education, R&D, and employment. Tripathi explained that many qualified women stay away from mainstream science for two reasons, “women’s perception of their role and function in society and society’s expectation of their contributions.” The Department of Science and Technology (DST), in collaboration with the Indo-U.S. Science & Technology Forum (IUSSTF), is attempting to bridge this gap by launching the Indo-U.S. Fellowship for women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine), a program designed to provide Indian women scientists, engineers and technologists with an opportunity to collaborate in premier U.S. institutions. [Read more.](#)

**Picture a Leader. Is She a Woman?** [nytimes.com](#), March 16, 2018

A single prompt – “Draw an effective leader” – generated a series of images of men. Tina Kiefer, a professor of organizational behavior at the University of Warwick in the United Kingdom, stumbled upon the exercise accidentally while leading a workshop full of executives who did not speak much English. Since then, it has been adopted by organizational psychologists across the world and the results are almost always the same: both men and women almost always draw men. So, how does this unconscious assumption affect people’s abilities to recognize emerging leadership? And, how can this problem be overcome? [Read more.](#)

**Defining the Barriers to Women Publishing in High-Impact Journals,** [jvi.asm.org](#), March 15, 2018

Recognizing that publications are a crucial measure of success in science, especially those in top-tier journals, Julie Overbaugh, PhD, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, examined gender differences in publication of HIV-related papers based on a sampling of several “high-profile” journals: *Science*, *Journal of Virology*, *Nature*, and *Cell*. With her review showing “very poor representation” of women as senior and corresponding authors in the HIV field in these journals, she notes that it is not clear if this finding is specific to this field. Dr. Overbaugh’s commentary suggests various stages in the

submission-to-publication pipeline where gender parity may be compromised: manuscript submission, editorial decisions, editorial reviews, or in communication between authors and editors. [Read more.](#)

**Three Views of the Crisis in Women's Health**, nytimes.com, March 13, 2018

Maya Dusenbery's well-researched new book, *Doing Harm*, is one of a cluster of new investigations into gender bias in medical treatment that also includes *Ask Me About My Uterus* by Abby Norman and *Invisible* by Michele Lent Hirsch. Dusenbery provides readers with an array of studies and statistics, as well as personal anecdotes, that take a close look at sexism in every level of medicine. Norman details years of suffering from terrible unexplained pain (later to be diagnosed as endometriosis). Hirsch looks at how chronic sickness affects the personal and professional lives of young women, while pulling from her own experiences enduring medical issues. Together, these three books tell a disturbing story about how difficult it is for women to access quality care. [Read more.](#)

**Virtual Lab Rats Could Replace Living Animals in Early Drug Testing**, gizmodo.com, March 12, 2018

A research team at the University of Oxford won the 2017 International Award from the UK-based National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement, and Reduction of Animals in Research for its work on a computer model of human cardiac cells that correctly predicted whether compounds would cause arrhythmia in 89% of cases, compared with a 75% accuracy rate with rabbit cardiac cells. Lead author Elisa Passini, a researcher at Oxford's computer science department, noted that the team's model could someday save a number of animals from being used (and killed) in the name of science. [Read more.](#)

**7 Women VCs on How Female Founders Can Get More Venture Dollars**, fortune.com, March 8, 2018

Just two percent of venture funding went to female founders in 2017 and just eight percent of partners at the top venture capital firms are women. In honor of International Women's Day, venture firm Alpha Edison wrote a Medium post about "doing something about these statistics through action." Male and female investors were urged to take meetings with eight women outside of their networks in the month of March and trending movement - #StartWithEight – to highlight female founders and investors was created. [Read more.](#)

**Young female scientist hopes to create energy efficient biofuel from bacteria**, abc.net, March 8, 2018

Environmental microbiologist and science champion Marianne Haines hopes her work converting bacteria into biofuel will lead to more sustainable outcomes and more women to study science at the postgraduate level. "Thinking back on it [Haines' postgraduate level studies], I thought 'Who are my female role models in science?', and the fact that I would have to go out and look for them is kind of disheartening," she said. As she undertakes her PhD in Canada this year, she will research how to generate renewable, carbon-neutral energy from bacteria, fungi and algae. [Read more.](#)

**Advances in Neurodegenerative Disease Research and Therapy**, keystonesymposia.org, March 5, 2018

Join Keystone Symposia for the June conferences on Neurodegenerative Disease and Neuroinflammation. The four-day conferences, from June 17-21, 2018, will focus on emerging areas of neurodegenerative disease research; discussing recent advances in imaging, genetics and immunology, exploring the origin and functions of inflammatory glia, the blood brain barrier, myeloid cells and other signaling elements; and more. This upcoming spring conference hosted by a member of our Council of Academic Institutions. [Read more.](#)