
January 2012

Aerospace Section

Barbara A. Williams

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, barbaraw@mit.edu

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Recommended Citation

Williams, Barbara A. (2012) "Aerospace Section," *Sci-Tech News*: Vol. 66: Iss. 1, Article 8.

Available at: <https://jdc.jefferson.edu/scitechnews/vol66/iss1/8>

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News from the Aerospace Section

Aerospace Section

Barbara Williams, Chair



The Aerospace Section of the Engineering Division encourages communication and cooperation among information professionals concerned with aerospace, aeronautical and related technologies. In addition, it fosters dialog with entities such as NASA, the AIAA and other important sources of technical data and bibliographical services.

My name is Barbara Williams, current Chair of the Aerospace Section, and I want to introduce myself since I do not know at least two-thirds of the Section members. I currently work as the Aeronautics and Astronautics Librarian and as the Instruction Coordinator for the Engineering and Sciences for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Libraries. I came to MIT by way of the University of Arizona, and before that I worked at Kettering University, and prior to that at my alma mater Michigan State University. My first order of business will be to put names with faces.

The songster Jim Croce wrote, "There never seems to be enough time to do the things you want to do..." This certainly rings true for me, and probably for you, also. As soon as I can find an extra hour, I tell myself, I am going to skim through the articles that are accumulating on my desk. Yet if the future is any indication of the past, these articles will end up in the recycle bin several months from now. If only someone would create a platform for audio articles similar to audio books!

Being a part of the Aerospace Section hopefully gives us an edge on our jobs by providing us with practical tools and innovative forums to stay on top of current trends in our area. Membership entitles us to productive networking opportunities to leverage the expertise of our community. At the 2012 Leadership Summit I had the opportunity to network with some really great people and I learned so much about what people in the trenches are doing: where they are having success, what's not working well, etc. I discovered that we are an awesome group. The informal conversations that take place between and after sessions when more time is available to explore specific topics is what I found most valuable about the Summit. The challenge for us is to figure out how to duplicate that atmosphere in cyberspace.

Our Section is indebted to Adrienne Washburn,

Past Chair, for creating a Guide that outlines the responsibilities and timeline for new Aerospace Section Chairs. The Guide includes a compilation of correspondences that reduce the need to reinvent the wheel for routine processes. I intend to contribute to the usefulness of this Guide before passing it on to my successor. Whenever I brainstorm with Adrienne I am reminded of why I chose this profession, which is to contribute to the development of an informed citizenry. Everyone should have an "Adrienne" to remind us why we became librarians, especially on those days when, in spite of our best efforts, we still feel dismayed.

The annual Aerospace Business Meeting and Breakfast is slated for Wednesday, July 18th from 8:00 to 9:30 a.m.; this is a ticketed event and the cost is \$35.00. The George Mandel Award will be presented at the breakfast, which will be followed by the Aerospace program, Mobilizing the Message: It Takes a Village to Recruit Creative Problem Solvers, from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. This session is in response to the Intel study, which revealed that a majority of teenagers do not understand the role of engineers in our society. The focus is on ways information professionals and practitioners can help publicize the various engineering disciplines and what engineers do. Jeffrey A. Hoffman, former NASA astronaut who has been on five space flight missions and current Professor of the Practice in the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics at MIT, will participate in the discussion.

Mary Strife, the Aerospace Section Chair-Elect from West Virginia University, is at work piecing together the history of the Aerospace Section, which was formerly a full-fledged Division. At the Leadership Summit, Mary and I chatted about ways to stir up the membership for the purpose of strengthening our community; we thought taking a quick look back at our history might help us navigate our future. The above discourse inspired one of my goals for the

upcoming year, which is to poll the Aerospace Section to determine how to revitalize and increase our membership. The electronic survey will be short and simple -- please consider filling it out when it arrives. I feel privileged to serve as your Chair this year and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible, either in cyberspace or in Chi-town at SLA 2012 Annual Conference & INFO-EXPO. ❖

Barbara Williams, Chair
barbaraw@mit.edu