

**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM A WORKSHOP:**  
**Professional Societies and Increasing Diversity in STEM**

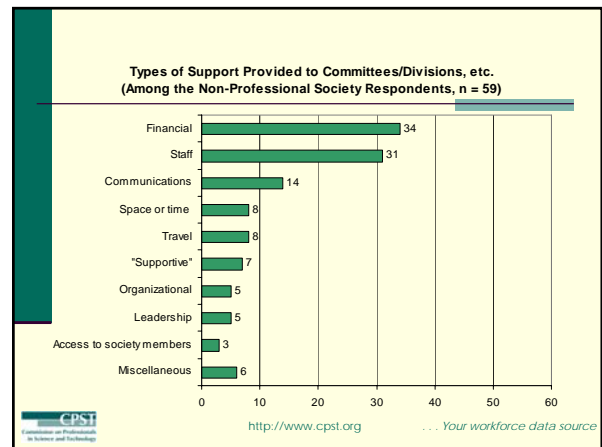
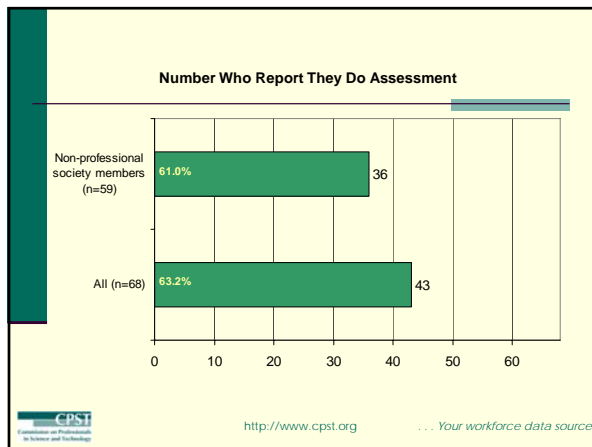
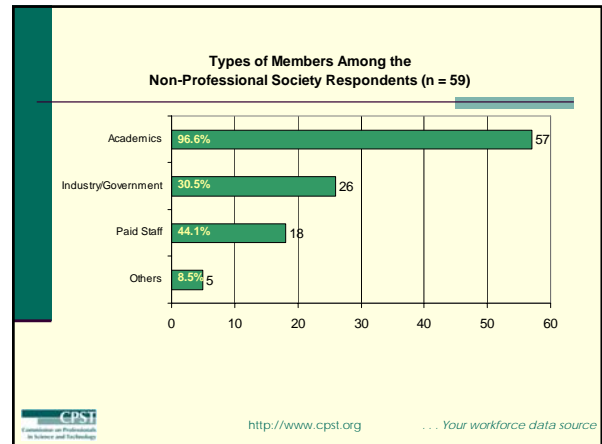
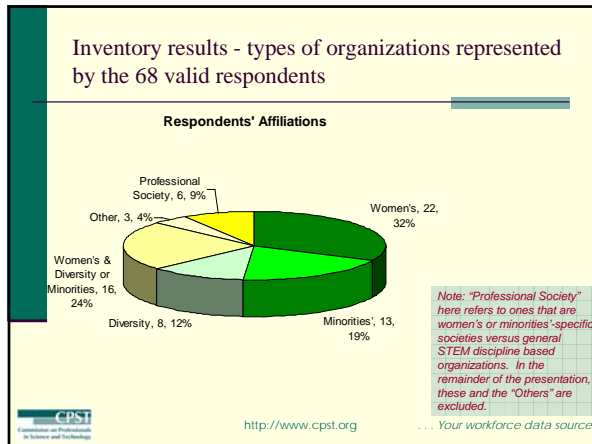
Boston, MA  
February 14, 2008

As part of an NSF-funded project titled “Effective Strategies to Diversify STEM Faculty” CPST and AWIS conducted a workshop for people involved with various professional societies’ diversity efforts. In some cases, these are staff members of professional societies, including those that are focused on diversity issues (e.g., the Society of Women Engineers) but most were chairs or members of a committee/section/division on women, women and minorities, minorities, or diversity within a “parent” professional society. Prior to the workshop, we requested information from 120 such people.

The workshop was attended by 27 people from 24 organizations on February 14<sup>th</sup>, to share the results of the pre-workshop inventory of practices and to develop ways to increase collaboration across these organizations. Some of the results of this survey are on the back of this page: 70 people responded for a 58% response rate representing a range of disciplinary organizations. The brainstorming and discussions at the workshop resulted in the following list of recommendations for how professional societies can increase diversity within their disciplines.

**How can professional societies increase diversity in their disciplines?**

- 1. Measure and assess the effectiveness of the society’s current internal diversity efforts (e.g., staff, volunteers, and membership)**
  - Evaluate successes using goals and objectives.
  - Pinpoint areas for improvement.
  - Benchmark externally for best practices and establish mechanisms of accountability.
  
- 2. Articulate the society’s business case for diversity**
  - Define diversity and inclusiveness for the society.
  - Outline how diversity supports the vision, mission, and goals of the society.
  - Identify specific benefits to the society.
  
- 3. Mainstream diversity**
  - Provide training and resources (e.g., staff support and funding) for diversity committees and caucuses.
  - Continually educate and engage membership in diversity initiatives through surveys and communication vehicles. Communicate survey results back to membership.
  - Determine how diversity can be infused throughout the organization, including leadership positions (e.g., make attention to diversity a data point on society ballots and for leadership positions).



#### Data from previous graph – types of support provided by “parent” organization (n = 59)

	Number	Percent
Financial*	34	57.6%
Staff	31	52.5%
Communications	14	23.7%
Travel	8	13.6%
Space or time	8	13.6%
"Supportive"	7	11.9%
Miscellaneous	6	10.2%
Leadership	5	8.5%
Organizational	5	8.5%
Access to society members	3	5.1%

\*Note: 1 person made a point of saying that they received no financial support.

CPST  
http://www.cpst.org ... Your workforce data source

#### Challenges, as reported by all respondents (n = 68)

General volunteer issues (time, coordination, etc.)	21	30.9%
Increasing participation	15	22.1%
Resources, incl. support from "parent organization"	14	20.6%
Structural issues	6	8.8%
Finding/promoting best practices	6	8.8%
Changing the status quo/climate	6	8.8%
Small numbers	4	5.9%
Making measurable progress/assessment/tracking	3	4.4%
Monitoring/coordination among many programs	3	4.4%

CPST  
http://www.cpst.org ... Your workforce data source

You wouldn't rely on volunteers to do the payroll for your organization.  
If diversity and equity are important, then why rely on volunteers for this effort?