**History of AIS “Women in IS”**

Prepared by Dianne Cyr (cyr@sfu.ca), Co-Chair 2007-2009

**Early History of the ICIS Women’s Breakfast**

(As recalled by Cynthia Beath and Kate Kaiser)

The first Women's Breakfast was in 1980 in Philadelphia and was comprised of a small number of women in the hotel restaurant. This group included Mary Culnan, Kate Kaiser, Beverly Kahn, Lynne Markus, Margi Olson, and Gemma Welsch, and was “crashed” by Gary Dickson. These early groups were small enough that everyone fit around a restaurant table. After a while the breakfast became more formalized with a speaker, the first of whom was Donna Stoddard from Harvard. In those years Kate Kaiser took on the role of sending emails to promote the breakfast. Cynthia Beath joined this group when ICIS was in Houston in 1983, when there were about ten women attendees. Also in 1983, Ben Konsynski joined the group and was shocked when told he had just attended the third annual Women's Breakfast. Foxie Mason was doing the organization at that point, and she sent engraved invitations to all the women in the MISRC directory (Jan DeGross provided the names). Kate Kaiser’s editor at Scott Foresman agreed to fund the breakfast, take reservations, and organize the catering arrangements, etc.  Cynthia Beath took responsibility for the breakfast in 1986 for several years. In the late 1980s, ICIS started providing a continental breakfast, about the same time funding from the publisher stopped. Due to rapidly increased interest in the breakfast a full sit-down breakfast was no longer feasible, and also excluded faculty and doctoral students who were not informed of the breakfast prior to arriving for the conference. Hence began the "pick up a coffee and join us" format.  At one point ICIS deliberated outlawing the breakfast but eventually embraced the event as developmental. Over the years, several men have attended (most notably Dave Salisbury), and receive a warm welcome.

**ICIS Breakfast Chairs/Co-Chairs**

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|  **Years** | **Chair or Co/Chairs** |
| 2010 - | Eleanor Loiacono (Worchester Polytechnic) and Cathy Urquhart (Manchester Metropolitan University) |
| 2007-2009 | Dianne Cyr (Simon Fraser University) and Milena Head (McMaster University) |
| 2006 | Yolande Chan (Queen’s University), assisted by Dianne Cyr and Milena Head |
| 2004-2005 | Yolande Chan (Queen’s University) |
| 2001-2003 | Kate Kaiser and Cynthia Beath, assisted in the latter years by Yolande Chan |
| 1999 | Nancy Shaw (American University) and France Belanger (Virginia Tech) |
| Other | Cynthia Beath (University of Texas), Foxie Mason (University of North Texas), and Kate Kaiser (Marquette University) |

**Previous Topics/Panels/Speakers at ICIS Breakfasts**

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| **Year** | **Speaker/Panel Members** | **Topic** |
| 2011 | Panel: Cynthia Beath, Annemieke Craig, Doug Vogel, Ilze Zigurs, & Jason Thatcher | Thirty Years On and Counting: Do We Still Need The ICIS Women’s Breakfast? |
| 2010 | Networking & Table Discussion.Kathy McGelliot (CIO, Emerson Electric)  | Networking |
| 2009 | Eileen Trauth (Pennsylvania State University) | Gender Research in the IT Field |
| 2008 | Panel: Klarissa Chang (National University of Singapore), Rita Walczuch (Maastricht University) , Maha Shakir ( Zayed University, United Arab Emirates) | Global Dilemmas and Solutions |
| 2007 | Cynthia Beath (University of Texas) | Mentoring and Coaching Relationships |
| 2006 | Lynne Markus began the discussion. Other contributing senior scholars included Anandhi Bharadwaj, Deborah Compeau, Jane Fedorowicz, Mary Granger, Kate Kaiser, Ann Majchrzak, Anne Massey, Blaize Horner Reich, Jeanne Ross, Nancy Russo, Ulrike Schultze, Christina Soh, Eileen Trauth, Cathy Urquhart, Jane Webster, and Ilze Zigurs. | Life Lessons of Women Academics |
| 2005 | Dianne Cyr and Blaize Horner Reich (Simon Fraser University) addressed topics from their co-edited book *Scaling the Ivory Tower: Stories from Women in Business School Faculties;*  Panel:Ritu Agarwal (U. of Maryland), Sirkka Jarvenpaa (U. of Texas at Austin), Claudia Loebbecke (U. of Cologne), Carol Saunders (U. of Central Florida), and Veda Storey (Georgia State U.) | Secrets of Our Success |
| 2004 | Suzi Iacono (National Science Foundation) | Writing Successful Grant Applications |
| 2003 | Debbi Gillotti (Microsoft) |  |
| 2002 | Jane Fedorowicz (Bentley College) | Role of Professional Service |
| 2001 | Margi Olson (General Manager, Global-based Systems Lend Lease Corporation, Sydney, Australia) |  |
| 1999 | Kathy Brittain White (CEO, Cardinal Health) |  |
| 1989 | Donna Stoddard ( Harvard Business School) |  |

**AIS Online Discussion Forum** **(2008)**

Dianne Cyr instituted a place for the "Women's Breakfast" on the AIS Discussion forum. The discussion forum appears on the main AIS website under “Women’s Breakfast”. Members can post notices, reply to other’s postings, and request automatic notifications of posting to their personal mailboxes, if desired.

**New Initiatives (2010-2012)**

Three new initiatives were started as part of the feedback from a survey conducted in 2010 of those who had attended ICIS 2010. The three keys areas of interest identified were: 1) the need for mentors, 2) the need for more networking events at other conferences, and 3) the need to create virtual spaces for AIS members to discuss women’s issues throughout the year.

1. **AIS Women and Mentoring Program**

Currently, there are over 20 pairings of mentor-mentees and a six-month survey shows the pairings seem to be doing very well. There are an overwhelming number of requests for mentors and the program is flourishing. Contact Eleanor Loiacono at eloiacon@wpi.edu for more information.

1. **AIS Networking Events**

As part of the second key area identified in the 2010 survey, starting in 2012 the Women in IS networking sessions expanded beyond the annual ICIS Women’s Breakfasts to include networking sessions at ECIS and AMCIS. Cathy Urquhart and others held an informal networking event at ECIS. At AMCIS in Seattle, Dianne Cyr organized a “Women in IS Networking Event” as a wine and cheese social. Sarah Spratley, a Senior Project Manager from SAP Canada was the guest speaker. Approximately 70 women attended. There is interest to institutionalize “Women in IS” networking events beyond ICIS, and to include regular networking events at AMCIS, PACIS, ECIS, and HICSS.

1. **Social Media**

There are multiple initiatives started by Eleanor Loiacono and Cathy Urquhart to help connect AIS members outside of the face-to-face meetings. They include a Facebook page and the ICIS Women’s Network on LinkedIn. The LinkedIn group has over 200 members and growing; similar growth has been seen on the Facebook site.