Promoting Equity in Engineering Relationships

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Discuss hypothetical story of young lady going through engineering

- Birth through Middle school
  - Experience of Bias from parents and teachers
- High school through College
  - Stereotypes and de-valuation of tasks
  - Biases in teachers and engineering fields
- College into workplace
  - Salary, promotions, privilege, etc
Emily – Childhood Years
Bias- Gender Roles

- The men in Emily’s life are mainly in technical fields, and the women are in liberal arts fields
  - Father and uncles are scientists and engineers
  - Mother is a social worker and her aunt is a teacher
- Mother puts less emphasis on math and science
  - “Men = Math” stereotype
- Upholds cultural norm and gender roles stereotypes
- Subtle gender issues
Emily – Young Adult Years
Stereotype Threat – Self Handicapping

- Turning known obstacles or stereotypes into a barrier to use as an excuse for a potential failure
- Emily feels as if she can not compete with her Asian classmates
- Leads to poorer performance in her math class
Stereotype Threat – Task Discounting

- To question the validity or importance of a certain task or test
- Emily sees her falling grade in math and tells herself that the class is not important anyway
Solutions to reduce stereotype threat

- Encourage students to reexamine and affirm their “self-worth”
- Provide constructive feedback
- Have positive role models
Bias – Later in Life

- Professors
  - Men versus Women
- Engineering Fields
  - Male Dominated
- How to help
  - More female teachers
  - Male teachers motivate female students
Emily – Adult Years
Privilege

- **Men in Male-Dominated Fields**
  - Higher pay
  - Higher Position/Rank
  - Societal Support
    - No “fish out of water” feeling

- **Emily**
  - Higher position than most women in her company
  - White
Recruiting Allies

- Explicitly invite students to engage in ally actions: (Advisors)

- Create environments where ally behavior is expected: (Role Models)
Conclusion

Issues in Inequality

Privilege
- Men in Male-Dominated Fields

Bias
- Gender Bias
- Self-Handicapping

Stereotype Threat
- Task Devaluing
Thank You