

CeMENT: Mentoring for Junior Faculty National Workshops

CSWEP runs a series of mentoring workshops to help junior economists overcome the tenure hurdle, with a special focus on addressing the unique challenges that women face at the beginning of their careers. The national workshops are aimed at junior faculty in institutions where tenure is primarily based on research output.

A randomized evaluation shows that our mentoring program makes a difference:

http://people.ku.edu/~dginther/Publications/AER_May2010.pdf

Here's what participants from previous years have to say about their experiences.

Our group kept in touch regularly after the initial meeting. This led to organizing and appearing in conference sessions together, reading each other's work, sharing helpful things like grant applications, and inviting each other to speak at our respective institutions. When I went up for tenure, it was very helpful to know two successful senior people, whom I could suggest to my department as letter writers.—*Elizabeth Powers at University of Illinois.*

CEMENT was tremendously useful for me. I am in an Economics Department where there are few development economists and I am the only applied development person. By introducing me to a group with similar research interests and by establishing a network of people with whom I could correspond on professional and personal issues, the CEMENT workshop laid a foundation on which I could grow. I have so far co-authored three papers with one of the senior mentors in my group, and she has been an invaluable source of encouragement and advice in the years since January 2004.—*Nidhiya Menon at Brandeis University*

The workshop has had a huge impact on my career. I was at an Economics Department with very few women, and I was the only experimental economist. My team was wonderful in giving me the support and help I did not get from my home department. At the ASSA meetings in 2000 (two years later), the whole team sat down for two hours to go through my NSF proposal paragraph by paragraph. It greatly improved the quality of the proposal. We send drafts of papers to each other before sending them out to journals, and the feedback I receive from my team is usually equivalent to two rounds of referee reports and thus has greatly reduced the publication cycle. This workshop was the best thing that happened to me since my marriage.—*Yan Chen at University of Michigan.*

The workshop has resulted in many concrete benefits as well by introducing me to two of my current co-authors. In one case, for instance, I remembered five years later that my roommate during the workshop was an expert in a particular methodology that I needed for a research project. Although she wasn't in my group because we were in different fields, I called her only on the basis of that weekend encounter, and found her very receptive to first helping me on an (ultimately successful) grant proposal, and later becoming a collaborator. These collaborations would not have been possible but for the workshop.—*Rajshree Agarwal at University of Illinois.*

My participation in the CEMENT workshop was without question one of the best investments in my career. I learned a great deal about the publication and tenure process and gained a number of strategies for making it through this process successfully. Before the workshop, I felt to some extent discouraged by the many challenges faced by assistant professors. After the workshop, I felt much better able to rise to these challenges because of the information and advice I obtained at CEMENT.—*Megan MacGarvie at Boston University*

I am so glad I was able to participate in the CEMENT workshop. I found it encouraging to meet so many women in the profession who have accomplished their goals using different but successful approaches. It was comforting to hear that even the most brilliant, professionally accomplished women have experienced stress and overcome challenges. It gives those of us early in our career some assurance that this is normal, and that we can be successful in handling whatever challenges we face – whether it's publishing, balancing work and family, or other issues – without abandoning our personal and professional priorities.—*Sarah Hamersma at University of Florida*

We are pleased and excited to continue CSWEP's tradition of mentoring junior faculty. We hope you will apply, and look forward to seeing you at one of our workshops!