ADVANCE Midwest Partnership – Joining Forces to host film, panel discussion on reducing gender bias in STEM fields

KALAMAZOO, MI - Western Michigan University – in collaboration with Iowa State University, Michigan Technological University and North Dakota State University – is hosting a virtual film and panel discussion to enhance awareness of gender bias and continued lack of diversity in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.

This virtual event will take place on Thursday, October 1, 2020 beginning at 7 p.m. EDT. A screening of the film, “Picture a Scientist,” will be followed by a panel discussion. Learn more about the event and RSVP today.

The four host universities are working together to create a more diverse, equitable and inclusive STEM workforce through the ADVANCE Midwest Partnership – Joining Forces, funded by the National Science Foundation ADVANCE program. The NSF ADVANCE program provides grants to study systemic factors that create gender inequities in the academic profession and workplaces and to develop and implement strategies to mitigate these factors.

“Picture a Scientist” is a feature-length documentary film chronicling a groundswell of researchers who are writing a new chapter for women scientists. Biologist Nancy Hopkins, chemist Raychelle Burks and geologist Jane Willenbring lead viewers on a journey deep into their own experiences as scientists, overcoming brutal harassment, institutional discrimination and years of subtle slights to revolutionize the culture of science. The film also highlights new perspectives on how to make science itself more diverse, equitable and welcoming to all.

Scheduled to premiere at the postponed 2020 Tribeca Film Festival, “Picture a Scientist” paints a subtle, emotional but unflinching portrait of the struggles women in science face. The film challenges audiences of all backgrounds and genders to question their own implicit biases and move forward with change strategies.

This event is the first in a year-long, Cross-Institutional Caucus Series, hosted by the four institutions engaged in the ADVANCE Midwest Partnership – Joining Forces grant. The series, taking place in 2020-21, will highlight gender inequities in STEM workplaces, and suggest institutional strategies to counter these inequities.

ADVANCE Midwest Partnership – Joining Forces

The ADVANCE Midwest Partnership - Joining Forces is a cross-institutional effort of these four research-intensive, doctoral-granting public universities funded by the NSF ADVANCE program.
to promote increased equity, diversity, and faculty retention and career advancement of faculty in science, technology, engineering or mathematics.

The partnership, which is supported by a three-year, $996,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, focuses in particular on faculty with two key intersectional identities: (1) underrepresented gender and ethnicity and (2) underrepresented gender with significant family caregiving responsibilities. The goal of the partnership is to assess and implement systemic change strategies through activities including the development of cross-institutional mentoring communities, implementation of male advocates and allies training, providing department chair professional development, and creating a cross-institutional women’s caucus.