



TELL ME A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR ROLE WITH WOMEN OF WIND ENERGY...

My love of renewable energy started at a young age when I saw it as an opportunity to turn my enthusiasm for math and technology into exciting solutions for the environment. I went to Cornell University to study engineering with a specific interest in renewable energy. I learned quickly that some of the major obstacles to renewable energy development in the U.S. were in policy, markets, and public perception and I decided to go work for the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) Clean Energy Program.

As I watched the conversations around climate policy, I was becoming more and more frustrated with how few women were at the table with expertise in energy. The Executive Director position opened up with Women of Wind Energy and I decided to make the switch. It was an incredible opportunity to combine my passions for renewable energy with an interest in seeing more women advancing in the field. As Executive Director and the only full time staff person of WoWE at the moment, I get to do a little bit of everything from budgets to strategic planning.

CAN YOU GIVE OUR READERS AN IDEA OF WHAT WoWE IS AND ITS MISSION...

WoWE is a national nonprofit, rooted in the idea that in order to have a successful

renewable energy industry we must see more women at all levels and in all sectors of the field. We believe that building the renewable energy future we want to see (and believe we desperately need) will require as many diverse talents and voices as possible.

WoWE was started in 2005 by a small group of women that were frustrated with the lack of women at higher decision-making levels in the industry, in the policy conversations, at the podium of wind conferences, and even just a lack of women in the audience. Pooling money from friends and wind companies, they started a fund to cover the costs of travel and registration for young women that wanted to attend the annual conference put on by the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA).

WoWE has been able to build on that success offering broad-based programs focused on community, education, and leadership — including: a vigorous network of U.S. and Canadian chapters; online and in-person mentoring; an annual leadership forum; K-12 initiatives; and annual honors like our Woman of the Year, Rising Star, and WoWE Champion Awards.

HOW CAN SOMEONE BECOME INVOLVED IN WoWE?

Anyone can get immediate access to some of our greatest online resources like our mentoring program, member directory, and resource library including our webinar archive by filling out the form to become a member at www.womenofwindenergy.org/membership.

A great place to start learning more about WoWE is by exploring our website and connecting with us through our various social media communities on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

We also have 35 chapters around the U.S. and Canada so there are often opportunities to connect locally with other WoWE participants.

TELL US ABOUT THE WoWE MENTORING PROGRAM...

Presently, women comprise a small but growing demographic of employees in the renewable energy field. Having a mentor is an important success factor for career advancement and growth, particularly for women. Especially in industries evolving as quickly as ours, it can be vital.

Our mentoring program provides an opportunity for people at different levels of experience or people with expertise in different areas to come together and share insights. Our mentoring partnerships are often two people (but could be a small group) working together on a set of goals for professional development. We offer a variety of levels of participation from one-time informational interviews to year-long partnerships.

TELL US ABOUT THE ANNUAL LUNCHEON AT WINDPOWER 2013...

WoWE's Annual Luncheon is a premier networking event for the wind industry and it is held the last day of WINDPOWER (so this year Wednesday, May 8). It is free for WINDPOWER attendees but it is usually at full capacity, so registering is critical. Registration will open up in this month on our website here: www.womenofwindenergy.org/annual-luncheon.html. The luncheon is a great way to learn more about our organization and our work, network with other women and men, and join us in celebrating our Rudd Mayer Fellows and our annual honorees. ♡

For the complete Q&A with Kristen Graf,
visit windsystemsmag.com.

