

Designers Light Forum

Networking Breakfast: Women and Leadership with Women in Lighting + Design

Opening Remarks by Kelly Roberts

Break-out Sessions led by Megan Carroll, Lisa Reed, and Ann Reo

Breakfast sponsored by Axis Lighting

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Learning Objectives

1. Learn about past women leaders and their contributions to design.
2. Discuss current issues and brainstorm ways to reshape the industry.
3. Examine how to encourage the leaders of tomorrow by mentorship and networking.
4. Network with other industry peers and make lifelong connections.

WOMEN IN LIGHTING + DESIGN

The letter 'W' is enclosed within a white circular outline that resembles a lightbulb, with two curved lines below it suggesting a glow or reflection.

Growing from a need for community and networking opportunities in the lighting industry, Women in Lighting + Design (WILD) began meeting casually in the 1990s. From small beginnings, WILD has blossomed into an established organization with multiple chapters nationwide and a burgeoning international presence.

Our mission is to provide an inclusive and open environment for professional and personal growth by offering community, mentorship, and knowledge sharing. We are a feminist organization, believing in the equality of the sexes, and strive to promote and encourage this in the lighting industry. WILD connects and supports our members, convening for discussions on topics such as professional growth, workplace sexism, financial health and parental planning, as well as supporting charitable causes. Some events are open to men to help further understanding of current issues, to broaden perspectives, and to inspire engagement in the process. These are not simply women's issues, but are problems that affect the entire community. We acknowledge the struggles of our past while focusing on how to build forward into the future.

We are WILD.



Breakout Sessions

Equal Pay

Family Leave

Building Leaders of Tomorrow

Breakout Sessions

Equal Pay

with Ann Reo

Family Leave

with Lisa Reed

Building Leaders of Tomorrow

with Megan Carroll



A HISTORY OF *WILD* WOMEN



“Well-behaved women seldom make history.”

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, American historian

Equal Pay

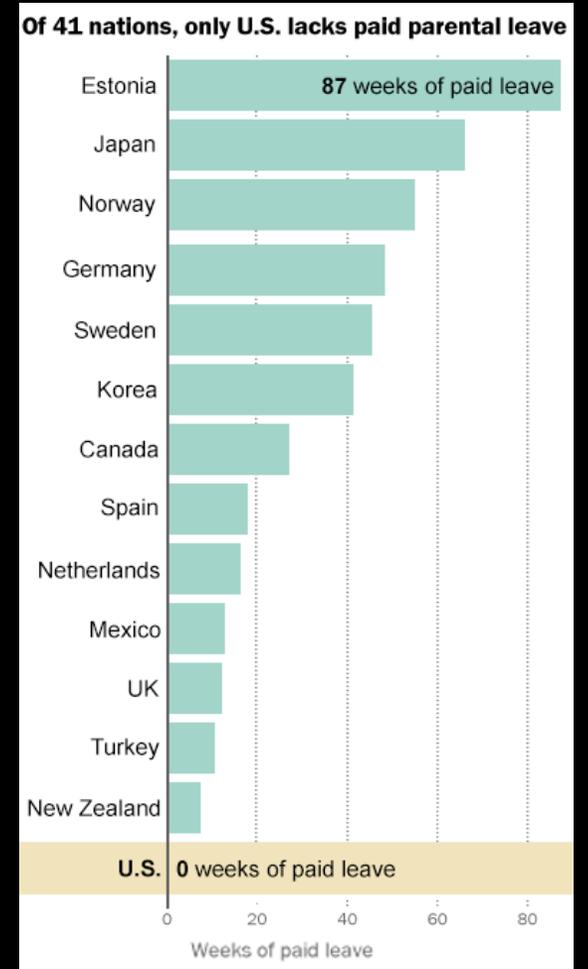
The case study *Do firms respond to gender pay transparency?* concluded that gender pay gaps shrink when companies are required to disclose them. In addition, pay transparency indicated an increase in the number of women being hired, and increases in the number of female employees being promoted. This came at the expense of men's salaries, which largely stayed static during the study. Employers also found that the increased wages of women and any additional expenses of tracking transparency were largely offset by the static growth of men's salaries.

Given this research, should the lighting industry make salaries transparent? What are the pitfalls? How can we push this forward as an industry standard?

Family Leave

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) study in 2016 determined that, out of 41 nations, only the US lacks paid parental leave. Estonia leads with 87 weeks of paid leave, but even the lowest country offers a minimum of 2 months. Some US states have begun to offer paid leave, but traditionally these are only available for larger companies. In addition, not all programs offer coverage for men. As a whole, this puts women at a disadvantage in the workforce during and after pregnancy.

What can we do locally to encourage employers to offer paid family leave? How can we normalize leave for men?



Building Leaders of Tomorrow

The recent NY Times opinion piece “Where Are All the Female Architects?” discusses issues similarly facing the lighting industry. At least half, if not more, of lighting students are female and yet the numbers fall in middle management and especially at the highest leadership levels. Yet a response piece called “Stop asking where all the female architects are; we’re right here,” questions this position. The author maintains that there are many woman in the industry, if you look for them, and if their stories are told. Which stance is correct? Both. We must acknowledge that there are a large amount of women in the industry and share their stories, but a gender gap in management still exists and must be filled.

In what ways can we encourage and promote leaders of tomorrow? Will increasing representation of the women currently in the industry inspire those to follow?

References

Equal Pay

- Case Study: *Do firms respond to gender pay transparency?* (Nov 2018)
Harvard Business Review: “Gender Pay Gaps Shrink When Companies Are Required to Disclose Them” (Jan 2019)
By: M. Bennedsen, E. Simintzi, M. Tsoutsoura, and D. Wolfenzon

Family Leave

- Pew Research Center Article: “Among 41 nations, U.S. is the outlier when it comes to paid parental leave” (Sept 2016)
Reference: OECD Paid Family Leave Data from April 2016
- Department of Labor Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993
Public Law 103-3 Enacted February 5, 1993

Building Leaders of Tomorrow

- NY Times: “Where Are All the Female Architects?” (Dec 2018)
- The Architects Newspaper: “Stop asking where all the female architects are; we’re right here” (Dec 2018)



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