

Leading the way

Professional Women in pest management

Time has changed life as many of us remember it over the past 20 years. From transistor radios, offering only AM stations, to MP3 players. From typewriters and word processors to laptops weighing only 2.5 lbs. Likewise, there have been the many advances in technology and services in the pest management industry, including the role of women.

Women have always played a critical role in the pest management industry, but in the past it has been more of a behind-the-scenes role where they received little recognition for their contributions. Today the steady growth in the number of women serving in leadership positions across the industry confirms the impact women have had, and will continue to have, in the pest management industry.

Professional Women in Pest Management (PWIPM), formerly the Women in Pest Control, was founded by Glenda Love of Cook's Pest Control in Atlanta, Georgia almost twenty years ago. From its inception, PWIPM has provided a place for women in the industry to network and learn from their peers. Since partnering with the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) in 2000, PWIPM has taken the initiative to define its role and the value of women serving in the industry. PWIPM now has several hundred members and continues to spread its mission of attracting, developing, and supporting women in the pest management industry through educational programs, resources and peer networking.

*By Dominique Stumpf,
Vice President
of Conventions &
Meetings, NPMA*

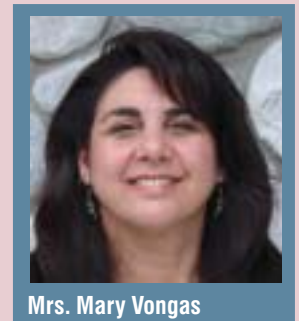


As PWIPM continues to grow and the role of women in our industry becomes more prominent, so does their presence at industry events, including NPMA's annual convention and exposition, PestWorld in Grapevine, Texas. As part of PestWorld's top-notch educational curriculum, PWIPM is sponsoring two learning opportunities for all attendees:

- *Attracting Women in Pest Management* with Jean L. Seawright, CMC, Seawright & Associates, Inc. of Winter Park, Florida (Thursday, October 26).
- *Perceptions and Personalities in Pest Management*, with Dr. Rebecca Baldwin, University of Florida of Gainesville, Florida (Friday, October 27).

As education has a primary place in the PWIPM mission, networking is a strong element as well. PWIPM will host its annual Reception on Thursday, October 26. All professional women in the pest management industry are invited to attend.

As part of their reception on October 26, PWIPM will present its first annual scholarship recipient, Mrs. Mary Vongas of Chemtec Pest Control Corporation in SaddleBrook, New Jersey. The PWIPM Scholarship is awarded to at least one female interested in advancing or securing a career in the pest management industry.



Mrs. Mary Vongas

In her application essay, Mary shared, "Our industry has advanced technologically through the years. Although we have done well disseminating this information to our world, we have not shared our successes and increased sophistication with the general public. Our success as an industry over the next several years will be the image we create and ingrain in society. This will not only impact our relevance,

Women in Pest Management

necessity and role in the public's daily life, but also how we grow because it will be this image that will attract the new generation to want to seek a career in pest management. As this evolution takes place, there will be more demand for non-technical skill sets which will create more opportunities for people outside the industry, such as me. This increased focus on more diverse talent will open up opportunities for more females to find their niche in our industry. I believe that we hold a significant opportunity to let many talented women and men know that we are a viable, attractive career choice. We are a great industry and we should make certain that this message gets out."

Mary understands the mission of PWIPM and its goal of strengthening the forces and network of women in the industry. As the winner of the 2006 PWIPM Scholarship, Mary will be awarded the scholarship in the amount of \$2,000.

At PestWorld 2006, the PWIPM will continue to raise funds for the scholarship program so that they can continue to reward women, like Mary Vongas, for their efforts to grow within the pest management industry. Raffle tickets will be sold by PWIPM throughout the convention (primarily at the NPMA exhibit hall booth) for the chance to take home a gorgeous piece of jewelry from the illustrious, Tiffany's. Be sure to buy your ticket(s) at PestWorld for the opportunity to win the beautiful *Tiffany Magnolia Cuff*, 18k green gold and sterling silver, valued at \$1,000. Visit www.npmapestworld.org/pwipm to view this gorgeous piece of jewelry.

For more information on how to get involved with PWIPM, contact Dominique Stumpf at dstumpf@pestworld.org or call 703-352-6762.

