

Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet 2011 Evaluation Report

Overview

The 2011 Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet was held on May 20 in Santa Clara, CA. To gather feedback on the event, a brief survey was sent to approximately 500 attendees. Of those, 238 (48%) completed the online survey. As in past years, the most common word used to describe the event was “inspiring,” and the award winners’ speeches were considered the most inspirational aspect and highlight of the event. **In fact, 98% of respondents “agreed”/“strongly agreed” that they were inspired by the role models they saw at the Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet.**

Most (93.7%) of the respondents were women; 15 men filled out the survey. Two-thirds (66.4%) of the respondents came from industry, and 27.3% were students. The remainder indicated they worked in academia (6%) or “other” sectors (9%).

Of the respondents, 69.6% were familiar with the Anita Borg Institute for Women and Technology prior to attending the Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet 2011, the same percentages as last year. When asked how to make the event more effective, a number of respondents suggested more promotion/visibility so that more women, especially students, would know about it:

Keep getting word out - I am associated with De Anza Community College Women in Science and Engineering Group - my attendance brought awareness of the Anita Borg Institute to this group of STEM students which will serve these young women well as they move on to their degree pursuits.

Overall Satisfaction

Survey respondents were asked to rate the Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet on a number of general factors. Overall satisfaction with the organization of the event was quite high, and **97.8% rated the overall quality of the event as “good” or “excellent.”** With the exception of the food, the average quality rating for each component was 4/Good or higher on a 5-point rating scale (1=Very Poor to 5=Excellent). (See Table 1.)

Table 1: Average Quality Ratings

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Overall Quality	4.6	.548
Venue	4.56	.605
Food	3.76	1.036
Administration	4.63	.536
Website (n=155)	4.33	.713

*Not Applicable responses excluded.

The majority of respondents reacted quite positively toward the timing and venue. In terms of the overall event, some of the comments made by respondents included:

Thank you so much for providing me with the opportunity to attend this event. It changed my outlook on the possibility of success for me.

Before I began participating in Anita Borg events, I never realized how many resources were available to me, how many others shared my issues and concerns as a woman, and how important it is to help other women be successful in STEM fields.

I hope I can make such great impact in people's lives that one day I am up there receiving an Women of vision award :) I have always been inspired to do so; now, I am more than ever. Thank you for such great experience.

I've attended the dinner/awards ceremony for 2 years now! It's really awesome! I've told all my friends about it and even brought 2 friends with me this year, who felt really inspired! Awesome job!

While overall satisfaction was high, respondents offered a number of suggestions for how to make the event more effective in the future. The majority of comments centered on a few key areas.

Networking: Respondents appreciated time for networking and connecting with others. Several asked that attendees not sit near corporate tables to allow more opportunities. Others would have appreciated some time with the speakers (either in person or virtually) to ask questions.

Longer reception hours and chance to mingle with attendees from other companies for networking. I met people from outside of my company which was wonderful. Also, the some of the panelists from the workshop were present at the reception prior to the awards ceremony, which gave us opportunity to talk to them personally.

It might be nice to give the audience the opportunity to ask questions of the award winners. Maybe people can submit questions before the ceremony, and then, either before the dinner, or online, the award recipients could answer some questions.

Co-mingle the tables, instead of having companies sit together. I realize that companies buy entire tables, but the interaction with others is what really makes the event special.

A time to be social afterwards would be nice to discuss what we just heard as well as stagger the huge parking lot line wait to leave the venue.

Food: The overall rating for food was above average; however, many respondents were not pleased with the offerings, in particular the fact that there were not enough chicken dishes and the vegetarian option was disappointing.

Student outreach/participation: Students – and those who work with them – appreciated the Anita Borg Institute's efforts to include them in this event:

Thank you SOOOO much for opening up the opportunity so students can attend. I took 4 young women from my community college and they could not stop talking about how

inspired they were. They have been telling all their friends today about the people they met and the stories of the women who were highlighted and honored. The experience makes our Women in Science & Engineering (WISE) Club even stronger and more motivated. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Thank you very much for hosting students. I could not have attended otherwise. It was a wonderful opportunity!

In the past, attendees have asked for opportunities for students to sit with people from industry. The Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet 2011 did incorporate this suggestion (although those who did not have the opportunity would like to!):

*I'm a student who was unexpectedly invited to sit at a corporate table with an alum of my University, while my friends were seated in the back few tables. Based on comparing our experiences, and maximizing the potential to connect with role models, it seems to make sense to disperse students throughout the audience where possible. **From that seating I'm having lunch with a new mentor this Friday!** [Emphasis added.]*

Not segregating the students from the professionals. The back tables were all students and sponsored tables while all the company tables were put in the front. This will not allow future generations to expose themselves and network throughout night with mentors that can have an impact on these students.

While the focus of this event is to honor and inspire women in technical careers, several respondents suggested that high school and even middle school students be invited to attend or otherwise involved. They want all girls and young women to have the opportunity to become inspired and be more exposed to women in these careers:

I would have loved to have my teenage daughter hear these speakers. I wonder if their speeches could be made available.

This event was very inspiring and invigorating. I have a daughter who is a high school sophomore who is attending a Math and Science magnet school. I strongly felt that she would have been inspired from this event. High school students would greatly benefit from hearing directly from such phenomenal women and their stories. A number of other women at the event shared the same thought. I was thrilled to hear from Deanna Kosaraju (who heard my comment) that there is opportunity for students and asked me to contact her for next year's event. I work with AAUW Torrance branch that provides a TechTrek camp for middle school girls to motivate them to go into the STEM fields. I will follow up with my branch to see if we can raise funds to sponsor a few students to attend this event for the next year. Another option is to explore if industry sponsors can fund a few high school students to attend this event.

I would like to see more students, even high school students attend the banquet.

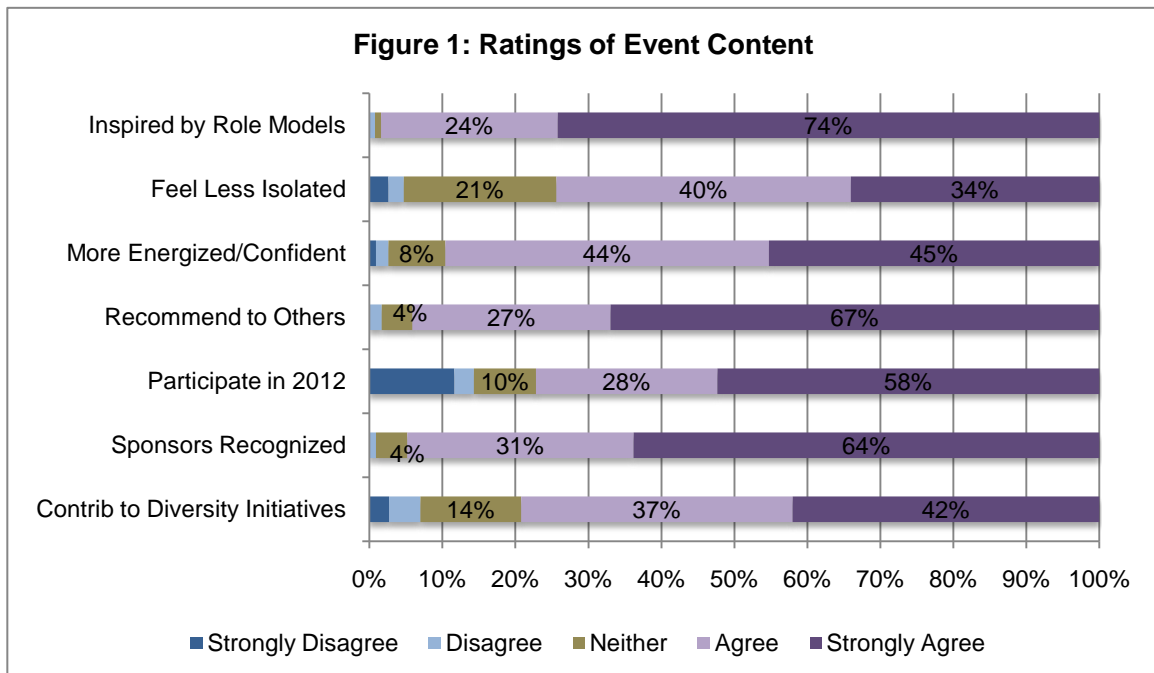
Continue the effort to bring college students to the dinner. Perhaps have an afternoon event for junior high and high school students

I felt more young women (college students) should be invited to this event. Everyone should have access to this inspiration but in my opinion high school and college students even more, for they are very impressionable.

Other suggestions. Other suggestions included having more academic women attend and having more men at the event so that they can better understand the accomplishments of women in the field.

Evaluation of Event Content

Survey respondents were asked to rate the Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet 2011 content on a number of factors. As Figure 1 shows, attendees rated the event highly in these areas. (“Not applicable” responses excluded.)



Participation. Most respondents (68.5%) had not attended the Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet in the past. **When asked if they were likely to participate in the 2012 event, 86.1% of respondents “agreed”/“strongly agreed” that they would.** Further, nearly all respondents (94%) “agreed”/“strongly agreed” that they would recommend Women of Vision to others in their field. While these figures are good, they are slightly down from last year.

Motivation of technical women. **When asked if they felt more energized and confident as technical women after attending the Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet, 89.6% of respondents “agreed”/“strongly agreed” that they did.** Additionally, 74.3% of the 191 respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they felt less isolated as a technical woman after attending.

Diversity. Respondents were asked if the Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet contributes to their company’s or university’s diversity initiatives. Of the 188 respondents, 79% “agreed”/“strongly agreed” that it did.

Quality of Speakers

Overall, attendees were quite pleased with the quality of the event speakers (See Table 2.). On a 5 point scale ranging from 1=Very Poor to 5=Excellent, no one rated lower than a 4/Good. **Respondents overwhelmingly gave “excellent” ratings to Chieko Asakawa (81.1%), Karen Panetta (80.3%) and Mary Lou Jepsen (79%).**

Table 2: Average Speaker Ratings

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Telle Whitney, Anita Borg Institute Pres & CEO	4.06	.772
Anousheh Ansari, Keynote	4.6	.634
Monica Kim, MC	4.23	.704
Brenda Dietrich, Top Company	4.08	.818
Chieko Asakawa, Leadership Award	4.79	.446
Mary Lou Jepsen, Innovation Award	4.71	.642
Karen Panetta, Social Impact Award	4.76	.538

*Not Applicable responses excluded.

Open-ended comments from the survey further emphasize these results. **When asked to name the “Highlight” of the Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet, most respondents mentioned the speakers.** Their comments included:

All speaker women's stories were absolutely amazing to me. Very motivating! All of them were very unique with their own story as well as their lovely sense of humor. It was definitely very empowering to have attended this event. Thank you.

Chieko Asakawa's speech was particularly touching because it not only highlighted the importance of women in technology, but also the need for usable software for those with disabilities.

The highlight was the amazing speeches by the keynote and winners. I can't pick a favorite, because they were all such inspiring, engaging, and enjoyable presentations.

I loved the keynote speech and the speeches of the women receiving the awards. It's always inspiring to hear about how these successful women overcame great obstacles to accomplish great things. I also liked being surrounded by other technical women before the ceremony and during the meal.

The women who received the awards and the keynote were the best. They are inspiring and were authentic in who they were. Really - they ARE the event!

The speeches by the 3 award winners were both inspiring and entertaining, as all 3 women were so accomplished yet humble.

I came to hear Anousheh Ansari but I must say I was floored by all the awardees. I want to congratulate the Anita Borg Institute for putting in the effort to recognize such amazing women.

All of the award winners were deeply impressive and inspiring. A couple of them brought tears to my eyes because they overcame so much to achieve their vision. The speeches and videos were very moving and just the right length and tone.

Conclusions

The Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquet consistently offers students and professional women in technology inspiration and motivation by highlighting top women in the field. Attendees express high satisfaction with the event, particularly the award winners' speeches.

The Anita Borg Institute for Women and Technology continues to enhance the event to give attendees a high quality experience. While participants always want more opportunities to connect and interact, the respondents to this year's survey made fewer comments related to wanting more networking time and appreciated the efforts to mix students with industry professionals. This finding suggests that improvements in networking opportunities have been successful.

For future Anita Borg Institute Women of Vision Awards Banquets, the organizers may want to continue to incorporate survey respondents' suggestions. If possible, participants would like to have more interaction with the awardees, either through a Q&A or more informally during the event. The most common suggestion this year was for future events to include younger women and girls, particularly middle and high school students, in the event.