



Campus Women



**Women in engineering:
More than just numbers:
"University Affairs"**

Participants at a national conference on women in engineering have recommended that all efforts to recruit women into engineering be paralleled by the creation of welcoming environments in engineering faculties and development of promotion strategies and family-friendly policies for female engineers on the workplace.

About 240 individuals from across Canada attended the conference organized by the Canadian Committee on Women in Engineering. Held at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton, the latest research on the under-representation on women in engineering. Conference participants were asked to examine and review CCWE recommendations emerging from research and briefs presented in six public forums over the past year.

In opening the conference, CCWE chair Monique Frize explained the aptness of the conference title 'Women in Engineering: More Than Just Numbers.' "We want more women in engineering. That's the numbers part. But we want more than just numbers. It is crucial that we make the environments in our universities and our workplaces welcome to female engineers."

Conference participants, one-third of whom were men, came from every Canadian province, the Northwest Territories and England. They represented

every professional engineering association and large engineering faculty in Canada as well as several major employers on engineers. Also attending were individuals from the primary and secondary school and government sectors.

In the opening address the participants were told that women won't seriously consider engineering as a career until the profession truly welcomes them. Kate Viscardi of the Women in Engineering Centre at South Bank Polytechnic in London, England, said men must believe in the need to recruit women before progress can be made. "real change in a company, as opposed to lip service, can only come about with the commitment of senior management." She said it is not good enough for senior management just to announce a policy. "That's because the people who are at the sharp end of workforce relations, the supervisors and junior managers, understand that they have a policy, but they don't really understand why there is a policy."

Major recommendations emerging from conference workshops in the primary and secondary school sector included enhancing the mathematics and science learning experiences of female and male students by making curricula more relevant and providing teachers with special training to ensure gender equity in the classroom.

Participants in workshops examining the university environment called for faculties of engineering to