Women and Minorities Continue to Grow in Workplace

The size and composition of the professional work force is changing, according to a report prepared by the Scientific Manpower Commission. The report, Professional Women and Minorities, chronicles the increasing participation of women and minorities in the science, engineering, and professional populations, calling particular attention to the gains made by women. Among the changing trends noted in the Scientific Manpower Commission report are:

- In 1970, women earned 41.5 percent of the bachelor’s, 39.7 percent of the master’s, and 13.3 percent of the doctorate degrees awarded. However, by 1982, women were earning more than half of the bachelor’s and master’s degrees and 32 percent of the doctorates.
- Despite the entry of record numbers of women, growth of the professional labor force has slowed down since the 1960’s. This is particularly evident in science and engineering where the total number of bachelor’s graduates is now 41.5 percent of the bachelor’s, 39.7 percent of the master’s, and 13.3 percent of the doctorate degrees awarded. However, by 1982, women were earning more than half of the bachelor’s and master’s degrees and 32 percent of the doctorates.
- Except for Asian/Pacific Islanders, minorities continue to be underrepresented in the physical and mathematical sciences, where they earned 9.6 percent of the bachelor’s, 7.4 percent of the master’s, and 5.3 percent of the doctorate degrees awarded in 1982. However, a significant percentage of these degree awards, especially at the graduate level, are earned by Asian Americans.
- Particularly at the graduate level, the proportions of graduates who are foreign nationals on temporary visas has grown significantly over the decade. In engineering, for example, foreign students earned 3.3 percent of the bachelor’s, 11.9 percent of the master’s, and 21.1 percent of the Ph.D.’s awarded by U.S. schools in 1969. By 1983, their share had risen to 8.5 percent, 25.8 percent, and 39.4 percent, respectively.

- Although women’s proportion of scientists in the labor force is still below their proportion in recent graduating classes, women are now 41 percent of life scientists, 18 percent of geological scientists, 30 percent of mathematicians and computer specialists, and 57 percent of psychologists. Their proportions are less in the doctoral population, but growing.
- Employment of women and minorities in higher education has grown slowly over the 1970’s and women’s progress up the academic ladder still lags far behind that of men. Women continue to be disproportionately overrepresented among nonfaculty researchers in higher education, while men are disproportionately overrepresented in the tenured professoriate. Only 51 percent of women faculty in all higher education institutions have tenure in 1983, compared with 70 percent of men.
- Women’s proportion among scientists and engineers at academic institutions has increased slowly. Between 1974 and 1983, women moved from 13.4 to 17.6 percent of mathematicians and from 19.7 to 24.8 percent of biologists employed at academic institutions. More than half of college teachers in English, foreign languages, health specialties, and home economies are women, but they are less than 5 percent of the total in engineering and physics.

These statistical parameters are among many available in the new 288-page fifth edition of Professional Women and Minorities—A Manpower Data Resource Service, which provides a comprehensive statistical picture of yesterday’s, today’s, and tomorrow’s professional work force. Data from more than 200 sources are detailed by sex and/or minority status. The volume includes annotated recruitment resources, both for specialized fields and for general recruitment of professional women and minorities, and a detailed bibliography and cross index of the 250 tables. Both historical and current data on enrollments, degrees, and the general, academic, and federal work forces are presented by field and subfield.


Betty M. Vetter
Eleanor L. Babco
Scientific Manpower Commission

“Report on Science” Honored

“Report on Science,” the daily 90-second radio feature program produced by the AAAS Office of Communications and the CBS Radio Stations News Service, has been awarded an honorable mention in the 1984 National Psychology Awards for Excellence in the Media by the American Psychological Association (APA).

The program, which began production in 1981, now airs on many radio stations across the country (see Science, 2 September 1983, page 942).

Allen L. Hammond, editor of Science 84, is the on-air reporter/editor; Carol L. Rogers, head of the Office of Communications, is the AAAS project director/executive producer; and Terence Monmaney is the writer.

The APA did not award a first prize in the radio category this year.

AAAS Fellows End Summer Assignments

Two groups of AAAS Fellows have completed their summer assignments. The Association-sponsored programs placed six Environmental Science and Engineering Fellows at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for 10 weeks while 15 Mass Media Science and Engineering Fellows spent the summer at newspaper, magazine, and television and radio sites around the country.

During the summer each of the Envi-