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AWIS member since 2017



### What is your favorite word?

#### Evolve

#### How has this word influenced you?

The path I traveled to achieving my dreams was not necessarily a straight line. The momentary detours I encountered helped me to develop the strength, character, and skills I needed to navigate successfully through my journey. As I evolve, I use my experiences to help others visualize their future.

#### Describe an amazing opportunity in your STEM career.

Serving as president of the Society for Birth Defects Research and Prevention, an organization that promotes cutting-edge research and is an authoritative source of information related to birth defects and reproductive disorders. I was the first African American to serve in this capacity.

#### What's the most important leadership lesson you've learned?

Often we lose sight of others as we advance in our careers. Leadership success is about people, and we should not undervalue the importance of being a catalyst and championing others to their success.

#### What do you consider to be your most important career achievement?

I was recognized by a local news network that was celebrating living history during Black History month. I had the opportunity to share what inspired me to enter the field of science and highlight my contributions to biomedical research, my greatest achievement to date, and the role of mentorship.

#### What do you aspire to accomplish in your career and why?

To use my scientific resources, networks, and platforms to promote diversity, equity, and inclusiveness within my discipline and the broader STEM community; be a catalyst for change; empower the scientific leaders of tomorrow; and pay my success forward through mentorship and sponsorship.

#### How was AWIS helped you professionally and/or personally?

Mentors are invaluable assets who can equip, motivate, inform, inspire, and believe in us as we navigate a course to our destiny. Through AWIS, I have been able to grow and develop as a mentor of young scientists, underrepresented minorities, and other women in STEM.

#### What is the best advice you've ever received?

Do not be afraid to let others see who you are. Let your light shine. Each of us has a story worth sharing about our personal pursuit of education and a career. 🌟

*Dr. Elise Lewis is employed by Charles River Laboratories, Inc., a contract research organization that focuses on improving human and animal health by advancing the search for drugs from discovery through market approval. She is a Principal Director of Toxicology, specializing in reproductive, developmental, and juvenile toxicology. She is active in the scientific community, serving as the Past President for the Society for Birth Defects Research and Prevention and the current President of AWIS Philadelphia.*