INFORMATION DIGEST FROM
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WOMEN IN ENGINEERING: STILL A LONG WAY TO GO!

MOVING INTO A MALE DOMINATED PROFESSION

• Women have made steady but slow movement into the engineering profession. In 1985, 6.7% of working engineers were women, an increase from 1.1% in 1975. Their numbers are higher in engineering technology, 18% in 1985. However, their participation is still far below their proportion in the total civilian workforce which was 44% in 1985.

• Within the engineering specialties, women's participation rate varies widely:

	Percent women in 1985
Mechanical engineers	3.7
Aerospace engineers	4.7
Civil engineers	4.7
Electrical and electronics engineers	8.3
Chemical engineers	8.8
Industrial engineers	10.9

RAPID RISE IN ENROLLMENTS BEGINS TO SLOW

• In 1985, women earned almost 15% of all undergraduate engineering degrees. Thirty years ago, they earned less than .3% of undergraduate engineering degrees, and in 1970 they still earned less than 1%. The number of women engineering students increased rapidly through the early 1980's, but in the mid-80's is leveling off.

IDENTIFYING THE MOST PROMISING FUTURE

• The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects continued growth in engineering jobs through 1995. Particularly rapid growth is expected in electrical, mechanical and civil engineering. To date, women have not entered these high growth specialties as frequently as men. For example, about 21% of the female undergraduates now major in electrical engineering compared with 30% of the male students.

SALARIES FALL SHORT IN A LUCRATIVE FIELD

• Beginning salary offers for engineering graduates at the bachelor's level range from $23,000 to $30,000 depending on the subfield. Yet the National Science Foundation reports that salaries of recent women science and engineering graduates are 67% of those paid to men. Women who attain master's degrees can expect 76% of salaries paid to men.

Sources: College Placement Council, Inc.
Engineering Manpower Commission
National Science Foundation
U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

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