

This article was published in ASHRAE Journal, September 2023. Copyright 2023 ASHRAE. Posted at www.ashrae.org. This article may not be copied and/or distributed electronically or in paper form without permission of ASHRAE. For more information about ASHRAE Journal, visit www.ashrae.org.

Challenge Accepted

What an honor to be a Life Member of ASHRAE and see Ginger Scoggins, the most recent woman to serve as ASHRAE's president, on the cover, along with her hopeful and optimistic address in "Challenge Accepted: Tackling the Climate Crisis."

I have known Ginger a long time, while I was working on various Society committees and as a former Boston Chapter president.

Her statement, "I can see a day when being a woman in this industry will not be an anomaly but will be the norm," was saddening. I had thought we were in a better place as a Society because we had reached that time.

Although it sadly took 116 years until my friend Lynn Bellenger ascended to the role of ASHRAE president (2010), after Sheila Hayter (2018), Ginger is now the third woman to serve as ASHRAE president in 13 years!

Let's rally behind Ginger and get everyone you know to accept the challenge!

*Steven L. Rosen,
Life Member ASHRAE,
Boston, Mass.*

SCOGGINS RESPONDS

Thank you for the letter and for accepting the challenge of tackling the climate crisis.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, while women account for approximately 56% of the total U.S. workforce, women make up 27% of all professional engineers and 1.7% of the overall HVAC&R industry workforce. The gender inequity is greater with even fewer women holding leadership roles in engineering and HVAC&R.

Despite some progress, women still face barriers when it comes to pursuing careers in traditionally male-dominated fields like engineering and HVAC&R. This underrepresentation not only deprives these industries of valuable perspectives and talents, but also perpetuates a gender disparity that has far-reaching societal implications.

To address this imbalance, it is imperative that we take proactive steps to encourage and support young women interested in pursuing engineering and HVAC&R careers. More and more, educational institutions, employers and industry organizations are collaborating to create mentorship programs, scholarships and outreach initiatives aimed at inspiring and empowering women to enter these fields. Furthermore, efforts to challenge stereotypes and biases must be intensified to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment.

Through the ASHRAE Board of Directors' Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee and other efforts, the Society is playing a pivotal role in creating a culture that not only values and embraces the contributions

of women but is actively forming pathways of ascension for diversity in leadership roles. I hope that by acknowledging the gender disparity that still exists and highlighting my own journey as a woman who has excelled in engineering and HVAC&R, my story can serve as powerful inspiration for aspiring female professionals.

Through open communication and a willingness to work together, we can break down barriers and create a more inclusive environment. We can harness the full potential of diverse talent and drive innovation that will profoundly impact the industries we serve and the world.

*Ginger Scoggins, P.E.,
ASHRAE President, Fellow ASHRAE,
Cary, N.C.*



Have something to say?
Send letters to:
rebecca@ashrae.org

Other ways to contact us:
Submissions:
<https://tinyurl.com/JournalSubmit>
Archive: technologyportal.ashrae.org
Missing Issue: cservice@ashrae.org