



Join us in welcoming Siying Wang as the March 2019 Section Spotlight Member! Siying is a young professional who works as a Project Engineer for Jacobs Engineering. Her focus is on water and CSOs (Combined Sewer Outflows) and Green Infrastructure projects. She is active in the Student Affairs and Young Professional Committees and helped organize the 2019 Annual Student Filter Building Competition. During the 2017 Annual Student Filter Building Competition she was a member of the team that was awarded 1st Place.

How did you decide to go into the field of water?

I initially majored in physics. During my senior year on winter break, I had the chance to visit my Mom who worked in a remote village in China – and that experience changed me. While visiting my Mom, I saw the local people drink water from wells even though the water had visible sediment. My Mom’s team had to drive 2 hours from town in order to obtain treated water to use so that they would not become sick from the ‘dirty’ water. Water was scarce. I was shocked that people had to drink ‘dirty’ water. After this experience I decided that I wanted to do something for people who don’t have access to clean drinking water and reuse water. When I went back to school I had my first Environmental Introduction class and decided to go into the field of water.

How did you become a volunteer for AWWA? What motivates you to be active in the Section?

I had the opportunity to attend the 81st AWWA NJ Conference during my first semester of my Master’s Program at NJIT. I was introduced to Sophia Heng ... who introduced me others. Sophia encouraged me to become involved at the Section and with others who shared the same interests as me, and I did. I attended events such as the golf outings, water treatment plant tours, and the networking happy hour events. I enjoyed talking to everyone about their projects and saw how proud they were about their projects. It excited me! After graduation from NJIT and after I finished my internship with the City of Newark Water and Sewer, CH2M (now Jacobs) hired me and I met even more young professionals. For me, it just came naturally to become more involved in the Section so I could share my ideas and learn from my peers.

How long have you been an AWWA member and what have you gotten from your membership?

When I was a student at NJIT in 2016, I became a Student Member. After graduation I continued my membership. Through membership and my committee work, I have been able to meet and learn from individuals in the industry. I’ve attended seminars, conferences, and networking events, received information, and used membership discounts as available.

Hobbies and outside interests?

I play the violin in the NJIT jazz band and I used to play in NJIT orchestra. I like food, hiking, movies, music and hanging out with friends.

What legacy would you like to leave behind?

Water is important in our daily lives, but I feel that it is undervalued. I would like to encourage more people to work for water. I would like to show people the value of water so that they may realize how

valuable and precious it is. Also, I would like those people who devote their lives to water to be appreciated.

I want to give a special thanks to Andrea Hall Adebawale who was the Director of City of Newark, Department of Water & Sewer and who passed last November. She dedicated a tremendous amount of effort to improve the lead issue in the drinking water at City of Newark. I met Andrea at the 82nd AWWA NJ conference. Her speech encouraging young engineers inspired me. As an international student and unlike local students, it was extremely difficult to get an internship. But Andrea gave me this valuable opportunity to begin my dream of working for water. I would like to thank her for the opportunity and her dedication of improving water quality at the City of Newark. In my eyes, she was a real Queen at the City of Newark and a real role model in the industry.