



Saudi Arabia launches a Professional Development Network

In April, WIT Saudi Arabia launched its first Professional Development Network (PDN) at the Learning and Technology Symposium held at Effat College in Jeddah. The Learning and Technology Symposium was inaugurated by Her Royal Highness Queen Rania of Jordan, Prince Khaled Al Faisal, Governor of Makkah Region, Princess Loulough Al-Faisal, the Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees and General Supervisor of Effat College, and Karin Eisele, the Executive Director of IIE West Coast Center. Almost 100 women, including Unlimited Potential and Professional Development administrators, trainers and WIT students past and present, attended the launch event, which took place at the Hilton Hotel in Jeddah.

To date, a total of 150 participants have participated in the WIT program at Effat College which started in November 2006, and about a 100 of them attended the PDN's launch event. During the meeting the women discussed the mission of the PDN, objectives, activities and expected speakers for the coming monthly meetings, and also decided to name the network 'IT Club'. They received their membership cards for the newly established IT Club as well as certificates for attending the launch meeting.

The most popular topics for future meetings included issues related to professional and personal development, which over half the PDN members expressed strong interest in, followed by discussions on social issues such as women's empowerment and leadership roles. The surveys that were conducted indicated that there was strong interest among participants in organizing training events in the fields of web design and internet training. Also suggested were PDN social events such as field trips to areas of historical importance, book discussions, cooking groups and film screenings. The PDN members suggested names of prominent women in Saudi Arabia who they would like to invite to future PDN events and involve in the PDN's activities, possibly as guest speakers or presenters.

The launch event was a resounding success and fully showcased all the hard work and achievements demonstrated by the WIT Saudi Arabia program staff, led by Program Manager, Dr. Eman Mohamed.