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Female Contributions in Nuclear Science: Experiences at the Brazilian Commission for Nuclear Energy (CNEN/LAPOC)

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Female professional contributions in nuclear science and technology are no longer a novelty. Names such as Marie Curie, Chen Shiung Wu and Rosalyn Yalow are evidence of the incessant, worldwide efforts of women to take part in fields largely reserved for men. Although society has witnessed high level female achievements as early as in the 1800s, female scientists and technicians still face a long journey ahead in empowering themselves into full and equal participation in these areas. Today, the Laboratory of Poços de Caldas of the Brazilian Commission for Nuclear Energy (CNEN/LAPOC) experiences a process of women empowerment at all levels of the institution. At the Technical Section, two of the seven research departments are headed by female researchers who play essential roles in the institution's quest for excellence. Today, their work include coordination of a major environmental research project involving most researchers at LAPOC, successful participations on international intercomparisons of radiometric analysis and development of new methodologies in nuclear field applications. At the administrative level, female collaborators lead the Administration Section, improving several aspects of internal management, promoting further interaction at the workplace and strengthening cooperation among all departments. Regarding the capacitation level, the Commission has a long tradition of welcoming students and junior researchers through institutional programs of training and collaboration in several projects. Today CNEN/LAPOC works with twenty scholarship grantees –half of which are women. Not only the Laboratory has reached equality in participation, but unarguably the female participants have demonstrated the most remarkable achievements among the group, attested by their continuous academic pursuit through Master's and Doctoral degrees, full collaboration in scientific publishing and attendance in training programs at international level. The purpose here is to present in detail the achievements mentioned, demonstrating the relevance of female contribution in Nuclear Science.

Country or International Organization

Brazil

Primary author: CARRIJO DA SILVA DIAS, Danila (Brazilian Commission for Nuclear Energy, Brazil)

Co-authors: Mr AUGUSTO DA SILVA ALFENAS, Ricardo (Brazilian Commission for Nuclear Energy); Mr LEANDRO BONIFÁCIO, Rodrigo (Brazilian Commission for Nuclear Energy)

Presenter: CARRIJO DA SILVA DIAS, Danila (Brazilian Commission for Nuclear Energy, Brazil)

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