



Adrienne Cahalan [1] and Alexis Cahalan

Sisters making their mark

Paula Wallace speaks with sisters Alexis and Adrienne Cahalan about their accomplishments, passions and plans for the future

In the course of speaking with people in the industry about the upcoming gender diversity feature in *Daily Cargo News*, the names of the Cahalan sisters came up repeatedly. Alexis Cahalan, 56, and her sister Adrienne Cahalan, 54, have both made outstanding contributions to the maritime field through practicing law and on the ocean.

When DCN spoke with Adrienne she was just about to compete in the 2225-mile LA-Honolulu Transpacific Yacht Race. A world-class navigator and trailblazer in the sport of bluewater racing, Adrienne received an Order of Australia Medal this year for services to sailing.

“The award relates to my career as a professional sailor and the work that I’ve done on the Board of Australian Sailing, and on World Sailing the international body as head of the women’s forum,” Adrienne says.

The medal was also awarded for her work on the International Regulations Commission and Oceanic-Offshore Committee for World Sailing from 2009 to 2016.

Nominated for the Order of Australia by an old friend from college, Adrienne says, “It’s a highlight to be recognised by your peers”.

“I didn’t do it alone, because I’ve grown up in a family where my parents, and my friends, have always encouraged me to

continue in a sport that’s not the usual,” she continues.

“It doesn’t have the normal pathways that say tennis and other more mainstream sports have.

“So whether it’s from encouragement when you’re finding it tough, to looking after your children while you need to quickly go and swing a compass, I’ve always had that support that has enabled me to move through the sport.”

Adrienne competed in her first Sydney to Hobart yacht race when she was 20. She’s now been in 27 races (she was the first woman to complete 25), with six line honours and two overall wins.

“I’ve always specialised in offshore sailing, bluewater racing like the Sydney to Hobart Yacht race and around the world races because navigation and weather strategy is my thing,” she says.

“So I’ve always moved between the two careers in terms of a career as a professional in the sport and in maritime law.”

IN THE FAMILY

Adrienne and Alexis have always had an affinity with the water, growing up on the Lane Cove River in Sydney.

Both sisters studied law and it was Alexis who first moved into maritime law, later encouraging Adrienne to do the same.

“I had just returned from crewing on a tall ship sailing expedition which commenced in Antigua and sailed onward to Bermuda and then the Azores and applied for a position with Ebsworth & Ebsworth who were the leading maritime law firm at the time,” Alexis says, who is now principal lawyer at Thomas Miller Law in Sydney.

“My sailing experience landed me the job and I remained at Ebsworths for over 10 years which included a secondment to the London shipping firm Richards Butler.”

When Adrienne first graduated from the College of Law she spoke to her sister who suggested that she look for a career in maritime law.

“And so I did, she helped me put my application together and so we both started out within a couple of years of each other working in rival maritime firms,” Adrienne says.

From 1995-1998 the sisters worked together at maritime law firm Norton Smith & Co and then Norton White.

"Norton White was a national firm and an opportunity came up to move to northern Queensland to work with Brian White who was then Norton White Cairns. I stayed for 17 years as a consultant with Brian," Adrienne says.

"It was very much the frontier, responding to marine incidents in remote locations, ships aground on the reef, Papua New Guinea, all the western Pacific, it was really hands on.

"You're not on the circuit 365 days a year in pro sailing... and I knew in the long-term that I always wanted to keep practicing maritime law."

THE PEOPLE-FACTOR

It is dealing with the unexpected that has been one of the most interesting aspects of maritime law for Alexis.

"Anything from dealing with stowaways, vessel casualties, to oil spills. At Ebsworths we had the A-List of maritime clients, and I worked on cases which have been the subject of much law in the area," she says.

Alexis also enjoys the "human element". "It is never just the documents, speaking with witnesses and the personalities both of witnesses and clients (and opposing lawyers for that matter) involved in claims is an important aspect," she says.

"Another highlight has been working with many great legal minds over the years. I was fortunate to have learnt from and worked with the best of the best of maritime practitioners."

Commenting on her sister's Queen's Birthday Honours, Alexis says, "As a family we are very proud of what Adrienne has achieved... she has nerves of steel and great determination to do what she has done at sea".

"Everything that we have collectively been able to achieve is due to our supportive families," Alexis continues.

"Mine has had to put up with me be constantly on email and phone, day night and on weekends as transport is a 24-hour industry."

As for sibling rivalry, Alexis says, "Growing up in a family of six children there was always room for some friendly competition.

"In our adult life it is more about helping one another than competing I like to think," she says.

CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN

While it's not so unusual now, Alexis was one of the first women in New South Wales to be made a partner in a law firm on a part-time basis.

"The juggle of family life is very real," she says. "The busy home life has had to be underplayed over the years and I was always conscious not to draw attention to this in the workplace."

With the benefit of hindsight, Alexis says she probably missed out on some networking opportunities over the years.

"It was more manageable to attend industry functions which were lunches rather than 'drinks' or seminars after work.

"While the children have been growing up it has been a real struggle to get to these functions after a long day at work, then returning to feed and help four children with homework," she says.

With two of her four daughters now following in her footsteps and studying law, Alexis is keen to see more support for younger women.

"I'd like to see more mentoring for younger women - and not just women for women - but by men in the transport sector."

She thinks there should also be more investment in industry-based training, "getting people away from their desks and onsite in the transport industry".

You're not on the circuit 365 days a year in pro sailing... and I knew in the long-term that I always wanted to keep practicing maritime law.

Adrienne Cahalan

CLOSER TO HOME

After breaking the round-the-world sailing record in 2004, Adrienne was married and has two children.

"Having had children I no longer compete full-time on the pro circuit, however I continue to take part in the major races which means competing in about five or six races a year," she says.

On the July 1, Adrienne opened her own law firm Agar Cahalan Maritime, in Sydney.

"I'm a team person so now stepping out on my own will be a challenge. But having said that, there's quite a few people now at my age who are taking the same step as me and we're just establishing a new network," she says.

Will the sisters work together again? This would be an exciting opportunity for the sisters in law they say. ■



Who helps those who are key to our industry?

Piracy, shipwreck, abandonment and separation from loved ones are just a few of the problems merchant seafarers face. Around the world, The Mission to Seafarers provides help and support to the 1.6 million men and women who face danger every day to keep our global economy afloat.

Your financial support would be much appreciated.

Donate now: 6593 082 074 Account 1000 8002 (tax-deductible)

www.missiontoseafarers.org.au



THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS, Sydney
24 Hickson Rd, Millers Point NSW 2000
Tel 481 636 0000
www.missiontoseafarers.org.au



Connecting women in the APAC region

Lawyer and president of WISTA in Australia, Alison Cusack, writes of her first international conference recently in Hong Kong

Heading to the WISTA APAC conference, I'd never travelled to Hong Kong before and my preconceived notions of the place were Disney, dumplings and a very welcoming WISTA HK committee.

When I landed during a lightning storm, torrential rain and peak hour traffic, it wasn't the most thrilling start to my first international conference. The protests were heating up and as a non-local I was starting to wonder if the conference would proceed amongst the million strong protestors (more from a logistics standpoint).

Fast forward to a reassuring email from the WISTA HK president, Catherine Smith and the delegates arrived to the welcome cocktail reception. It was held at the Hong Kong Royal Yacht Club in conjunction with the Nautical Institute.

As is the norm when Australians travel overseas, you're more likely to meet fellow Australians than bother to meet up locally. This was the case with Jillian Carson-Jackson from the Nautical Institute. We'd corresponded and chatted multiple times under the banner of NI and WISTA however it took a joint function in HK for us to finally connect.

If you haven't been following the Women in Maritime 365 Instagram project (see boxed section), head over and check it out. Jillian and Jeanine Drummond are profiling a woman from the maritime industry every day for the duration of 2019.

APAC FOCUS

The WISTA APAC conference is in its second year, with the inaugural conference being held in Singapore in 2018. This year's conference theme was "Changing tides and shifting sands" and the conference was held over three days.

For some perspective, WISTA International has 46 national WISTA associations and WISTA Australia receives invitations to a lot of conferences around the world, including the International AGM in the Cayman Islands in November this year.

As the only delegate from Australia, I was promptly taken in by the WISTA Singapore delegation which provided for a great experience. When you can be so readily taken in by a group of strangers (who are also not locals) who are determined to make you feel included and enjoy your stay shows the true power of WISTA. It weaves its way through culture, language barriers and geography. It also sets the foundation for WISTA to achieve change on a large scale.

THE CONFERENCE

After our joint networking with Nautical Institute (and a cultural dragon display) we returned to the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club for a day of learning, discussion and skill development.

Panel 1: Hong Kong's strategic place as a modern shipping, logistics, technological and disputes centre on the Belt and Road and in the Asia Pacific Region.

This topic was headed up by lawyers and representatives from the Hong Kong government and arbitrators. It was an interesting discussion around Hong Kong's role as the gateway to Asia (or China in some views) and whether that had been eroded over time. It was also particularly interesting in the context of the protests over the introduction of the Extradition Bill.

As I had been following the story through the Australian media, I did raise the question to the panel about perception and PR. Normally with international stories you rarely hear the resolution

These types of conferences are critically important to provide women (and men) in the shipping industry with the foundations to discuss important issues.

or solution to the problem, only the problem itself. Based on that I asked whether the HK government and arbitrators were considering running a charm offensive PR campaign to educate and reassure those looking to have Hong Kong as the seat of arbitration in their various shipping contracts.

As the entire issue was still in a state of flux, there was not a clear answer but I felt it was useful to show in this international conference the perception other countries' media can play (rightly or wrongly) in decision making on a large commercial scale.

Panel 2: Diversity and Inclusion – making your maritime and transport company more profitable.

One of the main takeaways from this panel was about flexible

[l-r] **Magdalene Chew**, WISTA Singapore president; **Alison Cusack**, WISTA Australia president; and **Catherine Smith**, WISTA Hong Kong president [l-r] **Jillian Carson-Jackson**, Nautical Institute (International); and **Despina Theodosiou**, WISTA International president;

working for *all* employees. There has been an increased cultural shift towards understanding how flexible working can assist all employees, not just working mothers, but working fathers, those who care for other members of their family or even those who want a work-life balance.

The best question from the audience was a former mariner who asked why companies don't ask those directly affected, in this case female seafarers, what assistance they need. It is great to see male allies stepping up and being vocal about simple strategies to promote gender inclusion in the maritime sector.

Panel 3: Technology and shipping

There was a great debate about the merits of blockchain, electronic bills and other new technology that didn't so much find a solution but made for a rousing debate.

A particular highlight was the WISTA International president Despina Theodosiou (joint CEO of Tototheo Maritime) presenting as the head of a technology company.

There was also an interactive workshop on leadership and training skills, "How to make your personal brand work for you". They deliberately split up the tables and reformed them to get a

more diverse cross section of tables to really challenge our thinking. One of the lessons I learnt was how little time we sometimes give to deliberately creating our brand, instead letting it happen to us.

CONFERENCE AIMS

The aim of the conference was to better connect women in the APAC region as we are geographically closer than our European and African cousins and are more likely to be travelling and interacting on matters within the APAC region.

These types of conferences are critically important to provide women (and men) in the shipping industry with the foundations to discuss important issues but also to provide a basis for solid networking and future collaborations on an international stage.

A very big thank you to my hosts, the WISTA Hong Kong committee, headed up by their president Catherine Smith who made everyone feel incredibly welcome. Also thank you to the WISTA Singapore delegation for temporarily adopting a stray Australian and making sure she didn't accidentally join a protest. Finally the biggest thank you to the WISTA Australia committee whose volunteer efforts assist WISTA Australia to grow and thrive a WISTA chapter.

APAC 2020

Stay tuned for the location of WISTA APAC 2020 – but it may be closer (geographically) than you may think! ■

THE WOMEN IN MARITIME 365 PROJECT



■ Every day this year, The Nautical Institute South East Australia branch has been publishing images and profiles of inspiring women in the maritime field all over the world as part of its WiM 365 project. This is in support of the IMO's 2019 theme of "Empowering Women in the Maritime Community".

Some of the women profiled include Hanan Abu Othman from Jordan. She works as a third mate at Arab Bridge Maritime Co.

"The first time I stepped on-board ship almost every officer and crew member asked me the same question, what am I doing here and why did I choose Merchant Navy as my career?" she says.

"Every time I came across a new face in this industry, the initial topic of our conversation would begin with the same questions. It was very discouraging and disconcerting.

"Most seamen are stereotypes and have a common belief that women have

no business on board ship... some even advised me to quit my career and look for jobs ashore."

By applying willpower, strength and a lot of effort, Hanan is now treated with "equal importance and respect". She is well on her way to achieving her goal to become the first Arab captain in the Middle East working in large ships.

Through the NI project we have also been introduced to Ajak Anthony Akol from the Republic of South Sudan.

Like many other women featured on Instagram, her story is a fascinating one. After graduating from law school, Ajak decided to pursue a maritime career. She studied in Alexandria, Egypt and graduated with a second officer CoC and a BSC in "Maritime Transport Technology".

Unfortunately she has been unable to secure a permanent job at sea since graduating in 2014, partly because Ajak is the first and only person from her country to be trained in such a field.

"Moreover, my country South Sudan is the world's youngest nation and since it got its independence in 2011, it became a landlocked country and lack of orientation about the maritime field has played a negative role in [me] getting employment," she says.

"Not to mention that being a female is factor that can't be ignored. Most of the shipping companies and crewing agencies have turned me down simply because I am a female.

"It's so frustrating, but I cannot give up on my dream of becoming a master mariner because I love my profession and believe that being a pioneer comes with lots of challenges and burdens," Ajak says.

Follow the project on Instagram: <https://authgram.com/women.in.maritime> Women who are interested in participating are encouraged to send a brief profile and images to: women.in.maritime@nisea.org



Welcoming women into logistics

General manager of corporate affairs at LINX Cargo Care Group Sheridan Jones, talks about why diversity is part of the company's future focus

Shauna Straney, road transport safety and compliance manager, LINX & C3

LINX Cargo Care Group is firmly focused on the future. During the past three years, LINX CCG has seen a shift in the industry as well as an increase of women bringing great capability and balance to its business, which has been a welcome change across the workforce.

In 2016, the business had less than 10% of women in the organisation. This statistic has increased to 14%, with 26.4% of management positions in the LINX group held by women.

LINX CCG includes employees on parental leave in salary reviews and makes superannuation contribution on either company or government paid parental leave scheme. This is considered leading practice by the Workplace Gender Equality Authority.

DIVERSITY OF ROLES

A critical factor for LINX CCG is how it diversifies skillsets across the workforce for people to work within the increasing complexity of the industry.

With access to real-time data, customers' needs can change daily through all parts of the supply chain. Increased visibility of their cargo via technology increases their expectations of real-time responses. This transparency means employees need to anticipate responses and provide tailored solutions to meet customers' changing needs – anytime, anywhere.

“To remain agile and nimble in an ever-changing market, workforce capabilities and attitudes need to change and employees need to keep up with this new way of working to ensure we are responsive to our customers' needs,” Anthony Jones, group CEO says.

“Diversity for us is not just about ensuring more women are given the opportunity to join our team – that's a key component – it's about pro-actively creating a diverse and inclusive workplace with a broader mix of capabilities and mindsets,” he says.

“We see diversity and inclusion as leadership responsibilities, not HR responsibilities, which is why our leaders play a key role in building capability to work more effectively in diverse teams, and adapt quickly to the future needs of the logistics industry.”

Road transport safety and compliance manager for LINX & C3, Shauna Straney, came into the business after discovering a passion for OH&S while doing a Human Resources Diploma. She started at LINX in a health, safety and environment role and has now moved into management.

“Every day I find I'm still learning something new... moving up into a manager role and having two direct reports, one of the best parts of my job is actually getting to watch those two ladies grow in their roles,” she says.

CORE VALUES

One of LINX CCG key organisational priorities is to engage and strengthen leadership to champion change and foster a diverse, respectful and inclusive culture.

“We believe our future business success is heavily reliant on how well we recruit, engage, develop and manage people with different backgrounds and thinking styles,” Mr Jones says.

With diversity a key business focus, LINX CCG became a founding sponsor of Wayfinder in 2017, an initiative it sees as a “game changer”. Wayfinder's focus is on attracting women into operational roles in the supply chain and logistics sector. The program responds to the significant capacity and capability challenges currently experienced across Australia.

The program has produced several videos of women working in supply chain logistics careers, including one with Kate Carulli, head of media, marketing and sponsorship at LINX CCG.

“I have a really supportive manager and a group CEO that likes to do things differently. He encourages diversity in the workplace and what that means for me is how I can think differently to drive awareness for the group,” Ms Carulli says.

“I believe being a woman in the industry is a really exciting thing. We work differently, we think differently and if you work with people that understand this, women can really thrive.”

As the supply chain and logistics industry continues to transform and change, LINX CCG knows the workforce of today will not be the workforce it needs in the future so the group will continue to build and grow in order to compete globally. ■



Jeanine Drummond, harbour master – Newcastle & Yamba, Port Authority of New South Wales and IAPH Women's Forum vice chair – Asia, South East and Oceania

Maritime women on the international stage

Jeanine Drummond writes about the International Association of Ports and Harbors' program to attract and retain female talent in the industry and DCN's Paula Wallace looks at some other global initiatives

At the International Association of Ports and Harbors World Ports Conference in Guangzhou (China) in May, the IAPH Women's Forum were excited to launch a pilot program for the professional mentoring of Women in Ports.

Established in 2012, the IAPH Women's Forum aims to advance and empower women in the port industry, attracting talented female professionals to join the sector. The Forum seeks to ensure women can better compete for career positions at all levels in ports as well as discuss women's issues in the maritime industry.

The new program's launch coincided with the year of the International Maritime Organization's World Maritime Day theme, namely 'Empowering Women in the Maritime Community'.

The theme reflects the identification of the need for, as well as a growing level of interest by maritime organisations, to provide training initiatives to retain and attract women employees. This comes at a time when organisations are seeking to continuously improve overall business performance through being more diverse.

This mentoring program had been a long-anticipated action on the IAPH Women's Forum committee's list of priorities. Evidence has demonstrated that formal mentoring programs can support and empower women within organisations and other industry

sectors, particularly when women are in a significant minority at their workplace.

In order to reduce this gender gap and foster greater diversity and inclusion in ports, the IAPH Women's' Forum identified the need to provide additional support and guidance to women who have already chosen a maritime career as well as attracting new talented women to the sector. Mentoring assists these women build networks, embrace their own leadership strengths, and receive guidance and active support along their career trajectories. This is particularly important at critical career milestones where women need to prepare for promotion. In an effective mentoring relationship, the mentor should also equally benefit from the experience as the mentee.

KEY ENABLERS

As the Women's Forum explored the mentoring idea it encountered several challenges in setting up a focused program for such a diverse international organisation as the IAPH by means of a volunteer committee.

Nothing can be more challenging than the excessive administrative burden that comes with managing elaborate spreadsheets of mentors and mentees, notwithstanding the bulk email that accompanies the process. Above all, the limitations of having skilled human resources available to oversee the program with the specialised knowledge required to ensure benefit for both mentor and mentee weighed heavily on the proposal.

Only recently has innovation and technology improved to be able to deliver online, cloud-based solutions to build a scalable mentoring program whereby excessive administrative workload can be avoided.

The IAPH Women's Forum searched the market for a solution, speaking with other similar users of cloud-based mentoring software such as Ally Cedona, founder of Women Offshore. Based on their findings, the Women's Forum sought and successfully obtained IAPH board approval to invest US\$10,000 in deploying the Mentorloop software platform in a pilot program for Women in Ports Mentoring.

The platform provides for instant sign-up of mentors and mentees with customised survey questions. It creates ideal mentor-mentee matches, ensuring mentor-mentee interaction is engaging and productive. Thanks to available online mentoring resources, learning and development tools and diagnostics to measure and report on the program's tangible results, Mentorloop has the potential to increase active participation and engagement.

GLOBAL REACH

The Women in Ports Mentoring program has so far connected IAPH Women members from variety of port roles including marine pilots, port engineers, information communications technology specialists, harbour masters, HR experts, as well as executive management from diverse countries such as Panama and Namibia to the UK, Sweden, US, Australia and beyond.

The IAPH Women's Forum is excited to see this mentoring program gain such momentum and is working to further women's career prospects using this innovative, knowledge-sharing tool.

Alongside the recently-launched Women in Ports Mentoring program, the IAPH Women's Forum provides a Biennial Training Scholarship worth US\$15,000 for a successful applicant from a developing country to study abroad as well as a Women's Forum

Annual Meeting Scholarship which sponsors a young professional to attend the IAPH annual World Ports Conference.

The forum is open to any women working in ports from IAPH members and IAPH associate members alike, who are interested in networking, examining best practices, resolving professional challenges and supporting womens' careers in ports.

SHE-POWER IN INDIA

Director of Sitara Shipping Ltd, Sanjam Gupta has conducted the first research into the participation of women in the maritime sector in India. She will be unveiling the full results of her surveys on World Maritime Day in September.

It all started back in May 2018 when she was recognised in the Gender Awards of the Swedish company Sandvik.

"Each year they hold the Gender Awards in India where they acknowledge the work of people working towards gender parity," Ms Gupta tells *Daily Cargo News*.

"As part of my award they were to fund my project, in this case being India's first survey to get data for women as there was none."

There were three surveys conducted in total: for women seafarers; for women in shore-based positions; and for employers. For the latter, Ms Gupta employed the SHE Index of Norway as a tool to collect data, which ranks companies on how friendly their policies are towards gender.

The surveys involved 205 companies, 700 women in shore-

In an effective mentoring relationship, the mentor should benefit from the experience as much as the mentee.

Jeanine Drummond, IAPH Women's Forum

based positions and 91 seafarers. It shows that around 11% of top management positions are held by women and the total share of female employees across the industry is 18% in India.

"Maritime doesn't value female voices, because there aren't enough female voices in maritime."

This has led Ms Gupta to create an initiative to increase "female voices" and on September 27 she will launch the SheEO project.

"The aim of SheEO is to create the next generation of woman maritime leaders," Ms Gupta says. "And while it's important to have more female voices in maritime, it's essential they have the right skills and opportunities to rise to leadership positions."

SheEO will focus on the business case for diversity across all sectors in the industry and it aims to "sensitise" the management of shipping companies towards inclusion of more women.

"Raising the bar is never easy, but it's necessary," Ms Gupta says.

"The ultimate aim is to have a complete support system for women working in maritime. To work with employers to make a friendly ecosystem wherein women get the much needed support at all stages of their career cycle," Ms Gupta says, adding that this includes flexible hours, work-from-home options and options to come back to work after a break.

TRANSGENDER PEOPLE AT SEA

While the subject of women's participation on the maritime sector



Sanjam Gupta,
director, Sitara Shipping Ltd

has received interest in recent years, there is still much work to be done in understanding the issues confronted by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender identified people at sea.

Non-government organisation Human Rights at Sea is pioneering work in this area and has released a briefing note to introduce its work in the area.

"Understanding sexual orientation and gender identity is essential to be both fully aware and educated of issues that LGBT+ people might face in the maritime community," David Hammond from HRAS says.

The reality is that in at least 76 countries same-sex relations are illegal; penalties range from corporal punishment, to jail terms, life imprisonment and the death penalty.

Around the world, discriminatory laws are found in both explicit terms, and in vague language related to morality, the policing of gender, and offences against the "order of nature".

When asked what whether we have any idea of the participation rate of LGBT+ people in the maritime sector, Mr Hammond says, "In short, no. When Human Rights at Sea triggered the LGBTQ+ discussion in 2015 ... there was little appetite from the shipping industry.

"The charity initially lost growing professional relationships based on the fact that we were raising the issue at first instance, and that we were quote: 'mixing with fags' which was one of the side comments I had," he says.

"Further, there was push-back from Mediterranean colleagues who said it would cause the charity to become avoided in its work. At that stage it was a very sad indictment of the state of affairs."

Due to a lack of available funding streams, capacity and support HRAS has not undertaken any further research in the area.

Mr Hammond says the issues likely faced by LGBT+ people at sea would include, "Embedded and institutional prejudice based upon personal and religious beliefs, and sections of the world which do not recognise the rights of the LGBT+ community".

"This is especially so for seafarers who transit multiple jurisdictions which have wide-ranging approaches, laws and views on the topic," he says. ■

USEFUL LINKS

sustainableworldports.org/womens-forum

iaphworldports.org/womens-forum

facebook.com/groups/126585944210142/

<http://goo.gl/bgaVYQ> (LinkedIn)

Navigating the hazards

The Nautical Institute's Jillian Carson-Jackson looks at change that has occurred and changes that need to occur

I want to tell you a story – three stories to be exact. The first involves a young woman who wants to be an engineering technical officer and writes entry exams for two reputable marine colleges. One of the marine colleges selects her for an interview. She presents for the interview, only to be told “What? You are a girl cadet? Sorry, didn’t notice that in your application – sorry, we don’t take girl cadets”.

The second story is of a female officer in the offshore industry who becomes pregnant and approaches the company for information on maternity leave policies, only to be told they don’t have any. She is forced to quit her job to have her baby.

The third story tells how newspaper clippings about how women should not be on ships are left on the bunk of a female cadet. Flowers sent to celebrate her birthday are thrown overboard, she is told repeatedly that it is bad luck to have women on a ship, and that the work is too difficult for a woman.

Okay, now a pop quiz – when did these incidents happen?

- a 100 or more years ago?
- b In the 1950s?
- c In the 1970s?
- d Since 2000?

What did you say? Frustratingly, these incidents are all too common today.

The third scenario happened to me when I was a cadet (about 30 years ago). I almost gave up on the maritime industry as a career, but I persisted. Unfortunately, while this happened when I was a cadet in the 1980s, women are continuing to receive the same comments today. And these comments are not only for shipside positions, women on the shore side are also facing bias – unconscious or not – which limits their employment and prospects of promotion.

Stories 1 and 2 were identified in the Women in Maritime 365 (WiM 365) challenge. In the first instance, the young woman applied to another college that accepted her for an interview. Still conscious of the last interview debacle, she confirmed with the college that they knew she was a woman, and was pleased to hear they encourage women to apply. In the second instance the woman re-applied for a job with the company after the birth of her baby, and is now working ashore for the company to develop policies and procedures to tackle the problem. The stories on WiM 365, show positive change, with indication of strong support for gender diversity in the maritime industry.

Did you know the International Maritime Organization’s *International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 1978 (STCW) (as amended)* promotes women in maritime? In 1997, *Resolution 14 – Promotion of the Participation of Women in the Maritime Industry* was introduced. The text noted the IMO’s medium-term plan for the integration of women in the maritime sector, and invited governments to give

special consideration to securing equal access by men and women in all sectors of the maritime industry; and to highlight the role of women in the seafaring profession.

In 2010 the Manila Amendments to the STCW recognised the limited progress made in promoting the participation of women. The amendments strengthened the text of Resolution 14, including reference to the resolution adopted by the International Labour Organisation in 2006 concerning the promotion of opportunities for women seafarers.

Yet, there is still a significant gender divide in the maritime industry. This is an issue that the IMO is taking seriously. In addition to the #IamOnBoard theme of the International Day of the Seafarer and the World Maritime Day Theme ‘Empowering Women in Maritime’, the issue is being highlighted during IMO meetings. At the recent Technical Cooperation Committee 69 (TC69), held in June 2019, delegates at the IMO heard from a number of focus groups working to promote and empower women in maritime.

Some key points include (as referenced in IMO TC69/10):

- Provision of fellowships for officials to attend the training course on women in port management.
- Provision of fellowships for women to attend training on aids to navigation management (IALA AtoN Management Level 1 course).
- Fellowships for women to attend the port senior management programme at the Galilee International Management Institute in Israel.
- Nomination of a female candidate to the IMO fellowship at the World Maritime University in Sweden.

The IMO supports regional Women in Maritime Associations in their work to promote gender diversity both afloat and ashore. This work includes bridging the gender gap, addressing institutional barriers and breaking down cultural stigma.

As we near the date of World Maritime Day 2019, officially set for 26 September, I hope there is increased activity to raise awareness of the ongoing imbalance of gender diversity in our industry. I also hope we can start telling success stories, where real and tangible change is being achieved. This is our chance to take stock of how we are doing, consider scenarios that inhibit or actively deride a woman’s decision to work in the maritime industry, and promote an environment that celebrates gender diversity.

For now, though, I leave you with wise words of wisdom from some of the amazing women who have told their story on WiM 365:

“Every girl is having their own, hard story.”

“Failure will never overtake me if my determination to succeed is strong enough.” ■



Jillian Carson-Jackson, senior vice president, Nautical Institute