



INTERGISTIC
SOLUTIONS

INTERGISTIC INTEL

News for your world, today.



Issue #9



INTERGISTIC
SOLUTIONS

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Stories are arranged in *descending order by decade* of birth. I have done this as a means of establishing a timeline of events (i.e. Great Depression, Dr. Martin Luther King, John and Robert Kennedy's assassinations, 9/11, various wars, racial strife, political campaigns, the Pandemic, etc.) as these events impacted the memories and upbringing of the individuals below. *Each generation is shaped by significant happenings of its time.*

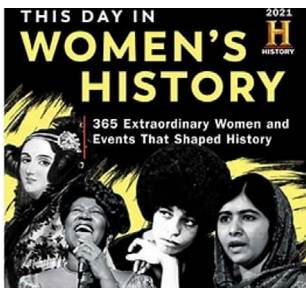
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Honoring Women's History Month – March 2021

This March, we join women across the nation as we **celebrate** women's **contributions to history**, culture and society. We also want to recognize those who are **making** history, like the many individuals featured in this edition of "Intergistic Intel News Magazine."



Most of these ladies are graduates of the Executive MBA Program at the University of Denver (others are good friends of DU) and they have gone on to hold significant positions across industries--

Manufacturing, Oil and Gas, Education, Aerospace, Consulting, Real Estate, Cannabis, Health Care, Engineering Services, etc. They share common traits which their stories reveal: Perseverance; a thirst for learning; a positive optimistic attitude; the ability to juggle many roles at once; resilience; an incredible work ethic (which most learned while growing up); great role models and mentors, and a vision of what they want to accomplish in life.

The Individuals highlighted here represent a cross section of ages ranging from 39-88. The decades in which they "became of age" were filled with turbulent events which impacted each one differently. These events are often cited in their stories. Family situations—like marriages, divorces, moves, economic status, birth order, etc. also left marks on the souls of these women.

While America is full of influential women today, hundreds of women came before them, paving the way. Women's History Month serves as a way to not only remember them but keep carrying their torch onward. In 1777, all states passed a law that took away women's rights to vote. In 1855, a black woman who was a slave was declared

property with no right to defend herself against her master's act of rape.

There was a time when a single woman in the U.S. couldn't get a line of credit, a mortgage or a car loan without help from a man. Flight attendants could be fired for gaining weight or getting married. Women were expected to stay home, raise the children and make sure dinner was on the table when her husband got home from work.

Not that long ago, domestic violence was always a private matter; rape happened because of what women wore or how women behaved;

birth control wasn't openly discussed and unwed mothers were shamed and sent away to have their baby. In 1947, the U.S. Supreme Court stated that women are equally qualified with men to serve on juries.

Now, women can do so much more than being able to own their own property and serve on a jury. Women can vote, and women have voices, all thanks to those who fought for equality.

America currently has its first female vice-president, every board of directors in the S&P 500 has a woman on its board; and, following the 2020 election, women now make up a quarter of all members of the 117th Congress. Women's History Month is designed to celebrate the contributions women have made to the U.S. and recognize the specific achievements women, like these noted here and are making over the course of American history.



A Lesson in Family History and the Women's Movement

Editor's Note:



I (Barb) come from a long line of strong, educated women. I've known it for most of my life, but I wasn't certain about the roots of that lineage until my 20's. My mother was born in 1911 and she had three sisters, all of whom graduated from college. Though their

educations were impacted and interrupted by the Great Depression all four went on to enjoy various careers. My grandfather (their father) could be described as a serial entrepreneur, always gravitating to the newest invention which he tinkered with while maintaining fields and growing crops, then selling vegetables from a stand located in front of his Lodi, WI home. He was a hardworking man who smelled like the dark fertile earth. I remember my mother

telling me how her dad sent her off to school and told her she had to provide for herself, and 'don't come home' until she had her degree. My Grandfather saw no difference between raising daughters and sons, and that perspective perpetuated through the generations. My grandfather died at age 96 after becoming the nation's oldest postal delivery person, a job he accepted in his 80's.

From him I learned the importance of hard work, how to bait a fishing hook, and how to whistle by sucking in air rather than blowing it out. He was my first role model. He was also a cousin of **Frances Willard**, noted female activist and good friend of Susan B. Anthony. It is interesting how characteristics and traits are passed through the generations. I am sharing Frances' story here and believe those of you who know me, will recognize some similarities between us.



The Life and Impact of Frances Willard

More than a hundred years have passed since Frances Willard, a distant relative of mine on my mother's side of the family, was considered the "temperance heroine of the United States". Frances (1839-98) devoted most of her life to building the women's organization that ultimately secured the prohibition of alcohol. She also was an effective advocate of other causes, especially women's suffrage and education.

Based on publicly released diaries and papers, it is known that Frances diligently supported many causes that have become part of the permanent fabric of American life, including women's voting rights, public kindergartens, and separate correctional institutions for women.

According to Ruth Bordin, author of Frances Willard's biography, (published in 1986), "The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was the first mass organization of American women and that through its work women were able to move into public life by 1900." Frances, my mother's father's cousin, supposedly inspired this process with 'skillful leadership, and her broad social vision.' According to Bordin, Frances was considered a "political maverick, who won the support of the white middle class of her day. Willard led American women so successfully because she did not appear to challenge society's accepted ideals."

It is reported that Frances' interactions with her parents point to the directions her life was later to take. Her immediate family was close-knit, especially during the years in rural Wisconsin, however Frances' father was always active in public life.



Frances at age 23

Raised in Wisconsin; Became Dean of Northwestern's Women's College

Born in Churchville, New York, she lived there with her parents, and her older brother until 1841 when the family moved to Oberlin, Ohio. In 1846 the family, with the addition of a sister, moved to southeastern Wisconsin to a farm near Janesville, about 40 miles south of Madison (where I was raised). Frances spent most of her childhood there and was almost entirely educated at home by her mother but did attend a single room school for a short time and then Milwaukee Female College for one term.

In 1858, at age 18, Frances moved with her family to Evanston, IL to attend North Western Female College, a Methodist-affiliated secondary school. She graduated in 1859 and began a teaching career that included both one room schools in nearby towns and, as her reputation grew, more prestigious positions in secondary schools in Pennsylvania and

New York. During this time, she was engaged to Charles Henry Fowler, an Evanston resident and classmate of her brother, and later had a romance with a fellow teacher at Genessee College in New York. Neither relationship culminated in marriage, though, and Frances remained single throughout her life. (Unusual for her day)

In 1871 Frances became president of the newly formed Evanston College for Ladies. When this college merged with Northwestern University in 1873, Frances became the first Dean of Women of the Women's College. In 1874, after months of disagreement with university President Charles Henry Fowler (her former fiancé) over her governance of the Women's College, Frances resigned. That summer she began to pursue a new career in the fledgling woman's temperance movement, traveling to the east coast and participating in one of many crusades. When she returned to Evanston, she was asked to be president of the Chicago group supporting the crusades.

In November 1874, Frances, who had a close personal friendship with **Susan B. Anthony**, participated in the founding convention of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and was elected the first corresponding secretary of the WCTU. As such, she was given the task of corresponding with and traveling to many of the small towns and cities in the United States, working to form local Unions and build support for the WCTU's cause. Frances was known to have worked hard during these early years to broaden the WCTU's reform movement to include such things as woman's suffrage, woman's rights, education reforms and labor reforms. She later became an anti-lynching advocate as well. The support for this broader view of the WCTU's reform work became clear when Frances was elected President of the WCTU in 1879.

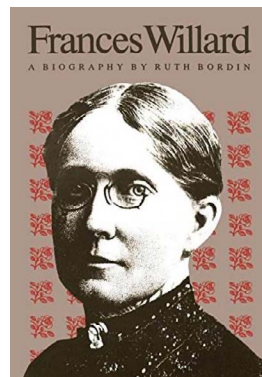
Largest Women's Social Activist Organization of the 19th Century

Under her leadership the WCTU grew to be the largest organization of women in the nineteenth century. She saw the WCTU both as a means for accomplishing societal reform and as a means for training women to accomplish this reform.

She urged WCTU members to become involved in local and national politics, to advocate for the causes in which they believed, to make speeches, write letters, sign and distribute petitions, and do whatever they could (since they couldn't vote) to create support for change. She also saw the WCTU as part of a wider reform movement, especially regarding issues of alcohol and woman's suffrage, and created a broad network of friends and coworkers who advocated for the same reforms as she did.

Since early in the 19th century, northern and southern women reportedly shared little common ground, and Frances was determined to change that by bringing white middle-class southern women into the women's temperance movement. In her autobiography, Frances makes much of conciliatory sentiment in the south and

southern temperance women showing sincere reconstructionist attitudes towards the Civil War. She, among others forcefully advocated education for blacks.



[Frances Willard Biography](#)

Reconstruction was over, White upper-class southerners had regained control of the political process and at the same

time, their reaction to the then Populist fervor had not yet frightened them into believing black men must be stripped of their civil rights. The result was that Frances could move easily from white to black audiences, organize black local groups, and speak on the campuses of black schools.

For a woman to speak on public platforms was described as "an arresting new departure below the Mason-Dixon line." Frances apparently attracted large audiences, partly from curiosity, partly because her cause was seen as worthy and respectable and she was sponsored by churchmen and judges alike. She was described as a "graceful, beautiful woman, simply but tastefully dressed, speaking in soft, sweet tones – a womanly woman." The Southern Carolina Baptist Courier described her speech to an audience of 500 in

Charleston, few of whom had ever heard a woman speak in public before, in the following manner: "She did not posture, used almost no gestures, and produced an address that was a 'literary gem'."

The fact that Frances did not marry relieved her from many domestic responsibilities, but she, like other single women of her time, was not free of family obligations. It was noted in her biography that "probably her mother provided every bit as much support for Frances' strenuous professional life as she took from her daughter in emotional demands and calls upon her time."

After her mother died in 1892, Frances began to suffer from increasing ill health and began to spend more time abroad, staying in England working on founding of the World's WCTU from there. Her absence from the US raised questions about her ability to lead the National WCTU, but support for her leadership never entirely faded. Frances, according to her on-line biography, "by this time was one of the most famous women in

the world, and through her, the WCTU was able to mobilize women and gain the support of men for their causes." The WCTU had a membership of 150,000 and was considered a powerful force in social reform.

In late 1897, Willard's health began to deteriorate rapidly. She went on a pilgrimage to her childhood home in Janesville, Wisconsin, and in February 1898, fell ill with influenza and died at the age of 58.

It was reported that accolades from around the world poured in and Willard's funeral in New York City, as well as the memorials held in towns between New York and Chicago, where her casket was returned for burial, were crowded with mourners. Apparently, she lay in state in the WCTU headquarters building in downtown Chicago for one day and 20,000 mourners paid their respects. After a ceremony in Evanston at the Methodist Church, her remains were cremated and her ashes were placed in her mother's grave in Rosehill Cemetery in Chicago.



End Note: This information was compiled from a variety of sources and serves to document the stories I remember hearing as a young girl. As a result of the friendship between Frances Willard, Susan B. Anthony, and another of my great aunts, Amelia Willard, I inherited several items which formerly belonged to Susan and are engraved with her name. Over the years, I have become deeply proud of this lineage and it is special to share with you here along with the stories of other great women who contributed to this edition of this publication. — **Barb**



Ellie Greenberg, Ed. D

Community Activist, Author and Educator
Colorado Women's Hall of Fame
President and CEO EMG and Associates
Industry: Education and Consulting

[LinkedIn](#)

Born in November of 1932, Ellie Greenberg, Ed.D, has always been motivated by "new problems to solve and social change purposes." Ellie, a 2010 inductee to the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame, is an innovator, theorist and writer who has impacted education, civil rights, and women's rights nationally and internationally. She has authored or co-authored nine books, including *A Time of Our Own: In Celebration of Women Over Sixty*, and was one of the first to create learner-centered higher education programs. Ellie headed the University Without Walls program and started the first BSN weekend college for rural nurses. Other educational firsts include establishing a bachelor's degree program for prisoners, degree programs for Native American mental health workers and the prepaid tuition program for US WEST

employees. She also created the Mountain and Plains Partnership that provided access to online master's degree programs for medical personnel in rural areas of Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, and Arizona. See [Great Colorado Women - Ellie Greenberg on Vimeo](#). Ellie (whom I, Barb, consider as my role model as I progress through my 70's) co-founded the Littleton Council for Human Relations, which brought Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Littleton, Colorado, in 1964, and worked on fair housing legislation.

Ellie describes her efforts as "creating access to opportunity", especially for women and minorities. As a speech pathologist, she focused on severely brain-injured children and adults in schools and clinics in Denver, Colorado. As the Colorado founding director and national coordinator of the University Without Walls, she developed individualized baccalaureate programs for adults.

The founding director of Pathways to the Future, she assisted the US WEST 14-state workforce of 40,000 non-management employees return to college and initiate new careers. As the regional coordinator of the 16-partner Mountain and Plains Partnership in Colorado and Wyoming, she led the development of the first online master's program for rural nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives and physician assistants. She has raised more than \$20 million to support these programs.

She co-led the development of the Colorado Women's Leadership Coalition, the Colorado Women's Economic Development Council, and the Colorado Feminist Luncheon; and has served as President of the Women's Forum of Colorado and as a board member of the International Women's Forum. Ellie, received Regis University's Civis Princeps (First Citizen) Award, has been awarded two honorary doctorates, and received many other awards and honors over the years.

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx sponsored a talk by Ellie entitled the "Three Questions" back in 2013 when she turned 80 years of age. You can view or listen to her talk here: [Three Questions: Elinor Miller Greenberg at TEDxCrestmoorParkWomen - YouTube](#) The three questions she says we should all ask ourselves are: 1) Who am I? 2) To what groups do I belong? and 3) How do I function?

Ellie, whom I've gotten to know (and love) via the Colorado Feminist Luncheons years, wrote her life story

during COVID and shared it with me. I am providing snippets, of what might become a best seller, here. Our life events shape who we become and what we stand for. Ellie is a very good example of that.

In Ellie's Own Words...

"The COVID-19 pandemic has slowed daily life considerably. Since we are quarantined and staying at home, there is no need to rush in the morning. There is nowhere to go, no one for whom to dress up, and no clock to watch. So, in that half-sleeping/half-waking hour each morning, I have been reconstructing the years of my life, especially my childhood. I'm giving myself permission to reminisce and to think about people and events that I have stored away in the memory section of my brain for a very long time.

So, I decided to write it all down....at least, as much as I can remember. Perhaps my grandchildren and maybe even my children, will, one day, be interested in our family's history. Even if they are not, this seems to be an opportune time for thinking, remembering and for some degree of catharsis. So, I'll begin at the beginning."

Ellie explains that she was born at Brooklyn Jewish Hospital in November of 1932 and was the first child of Susan Weiss Miller and Ray Miller who were married in her grandparents' backyard on August 3, 1931 in the midst of the Depression.

Before she was married, Ellie's mother, Susan Weiss Miller, went to night school at the City College of New York, and had been working as a secretary. According to Ellie, that was, at that time, a rather prestigious profession, which required additional study after high school at a special secretarial school. "My mother also studied dance with Martha Graham, a famous modern dancer, who was considered to be quite Avant Garde at the time."

Ellie goes on to say, "Given the Economic Depression years, as well as the Jewish culture of the first quarter of the 20th century, I believe that my mother was probably considered a very independent and modern woman. She was enrolled in higher education courses; she 'went to business' as a secretary in New York.

"I was told that my father, Ray Miller, went to work at age eight, selling newspapers and doing odd jobs.

"My father went to school but I don't think that he even finished high school. If he had graduated from high school, I believe that he would have talked about it and showed us his diploma. I believe that my father left school to go to work and earn money for his mother and two siblings. Also, somewhere along the way, maybe in the 1920's, in order to better "fit in" and avoid antisemitism, which was rampant at that time, my father changed his name from Murray Meisenberg to Ray Miller. His mother became Anna Miller and his brother became Harry Miller. Subsequently, from then on, my family's name was Miller.

"My father was, without question, the most brilliant person I have ever known. He was self-taught and was a superb learner. He read constantly and, for many years, we belonged to the Book-of-the-Month Club, so our home was always full of books. I cannot recall a subject in which he was not interested nor in which he did not have, at least, some knowledge. He highly respected formally educated people and took enormous pride in my academic achievements.

"One of my father's happiest days was the day of my graduation, in 1953, from Mount Holyoke College which was the first women's college in the United States and one of the prestigious 'seven sisters' colleges for women. He had been thrilled when I was accepted to Mount Holyoke and he made it possible for me to attend for four years and graduate. I was the first in our family to graduate from college. No one was prouder of that than my Dad.

"My Dad also sent me on my first trip to Europe in the summer of 1952 after my junior year in college; and, in addition to my teaching assistantship, he paid for my graduate study for my Master's degree at the University of Wisconsin, in 1953-54. He was always my 100% cheerleader and I was always eager to please him and to make him proud.

"Sandwiched in between dance and voice lessons were piano and dramatic lessons. The piano lessons went on for years, while the dramatic

lessons were short-lived. But, all in all, I was being well-groomed for various kinds of performances and for gaining confidence for public appearances, of one sort or another. I continued various public performance activities at summer camp and in college, where I was especially active in public speaking and debating. During one election campaign, in 1952, I represented General Dwight D. Eisenhower for President in a public debate before the Chamber of Commerce in Holyoke, Massachusetts. My opposition, who represented Adlai Stevenson, was another Jewish student from Mount Holyoke. That was my introduction to electoral politics."

Appreciation of Cultural Differences

Growing up, Ellie acknowledges that "We had a live-in maid named Pearl Turnage. Pearl was Negro. Her husband was in the Army. Her room in our home was on the first floor, near the kitchen. Pearl was my closest friend during my teenage years. She was my confidant. She taught me to dance and jitterbug. She befriended all my friends and became their confidants. Pearl lived with us until World War II was over and her husband came home. That was in 1945 and I was graduating from elementary School."

Ellie attributes her level of comfort with the Black community to her friendship with Pearl. "From time to time, she would take me home with her and I had the rare experience of spending time in the Negro community in downtown Newark. When the Civil Rights Movement began in the 1960's, it was natural for me to become actively involved. None of my adult friends had a similar experience with Negroes/Blacks in their early years. I was always grateful for my childhood experiences and relationship with Pearl, which gave me a level of personal comfort with the Black community in my adult years. That friendship was largely responsible for my early and deep involvement with the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s."

Ellie explains that "It may be hard to imagine, today, just what the colleges and universities were like in the 1940s. Only a few states had large, relatively inexpensive public universities. And, many that did were mainly non-residential schools, like NYU in New York. The State of New Jersey, where I lived, did not have any public university. There was no University of New Jersey...and, there still isn't. There were no such



Mount Holyoke's Tradition of attracting students with a cause - Demonstrating for the Vote, 1916

things as community colleges; and the few junior colleges that existed were considered to be two-year 'finishing schools'. So, everyone who wanted to go to college, especially those who lived in New Jersey, had to apply to an out-of-state public institution, where the tuition was comparable to a private institution, or apply to a private women's or men's college, or to one of the few private coeducational institutions like Cornell.

"The way we saw it in my family, it was going to be either an expensive, competitive private women's college or a relatively prestigious, private co-ed university. I applied only to women's colleges and was thrilled to finally be accepted, from the waiting list, to my first choice, Mount Holyoke College, in South Hadley, Massachusetts. Few people at my high school had ever heard of Mount Holyoke. I had learned about it when a young woman at our country club, Elaine Becker, was accepted and enrolled there. I admired Elaine and thought that she was both beautiful and smart. Today, we would call her a 'role model'.

A Sudden Change Affecting All Aspects of Life

Ellie goes on to say: "A truly significant and life-changing event occurred during my freshman year in college. One Friday in December, during exam week, my parents unexpectedly arrived on campus and told me that they were taking me home to Newark for the weekend. That had never happened before, and I was totally surprised. We climbed into our car and I was seated in the front between my driver dad and my passenger mother. As we drove down the Merritt Parkway, south towards New York, watching the pine trees on the median whip by, they told me that they were going to get a divorce. I thought that I was dreaming and could not imagine that my perfect, ideal family was breaking up. We talked and cried all the way home, and when we reached my lovely house in Newark, my father dropped off my mother and me and then drove away to the downtown Essex House Hotel where he was staying."

According to Ellie, her father explained the next day that he had fallen in love with another woman. "I was devastated. My mother was 'paralyzed', and my aunt, grandmother and eleven-year-old sister were in a state of disbelief. Our perfect world had come apart; and there we were, a bunch of female victims

of one male's actions, unable to fully comprehend what was happening to us.

"The contrast between my father's financial position and my mother's was stark. In addition," says Ellie. "My Dad had a real knack of being able to earn lots of money, so his future looked quite bright. My mother, on the other hand, had not worked since she had been married, more than eighteen years prior, was responsible to care for my sister as a single Mom, and had few, if any, updated job skills. She was still totally dependent on my Dad for her financial sustenance, but had been deprived of his companionship, emotional support and financial wellbeing. It did not look like a fair bargain. And, indeed, it was not.

"From then on, my life was different. Gone was my ideal, perfect family. Gone was my beautiful, stylish two-story Tudor house. Gone was my affectionate and loving father. Gone was my entire way of life, full of theater in New York, dinners out at the Tavern, vacations at exotic places, and my sense of wellbeing and certainty. Things would never be the same again. My bubble had burst. I was on my own. I thought that it was now up to me to reconstruct my life and to rely on myself to choose the right paths. I knew that I needed to be of some help to my mother; but, honestly, I did not know what to do to ease her pain and help her to recover. I did not know how to be of assistance to my sister. I was away at college and I was just putting one foot in front of the other and hoping that I would not fall down. My whole world had been shattered.

"During that typical graduate student year, my major advisor spent her sabbatical year in Denver at Children's Hospital; and, when she returned to Madison, she told me about a new facility being opened in Denver especially for brain-injured children. She anticipated that the new facility would need a Speech Therapist and she encouraged me to apply for that position.

"As a result, I was offered the position as the first Speech Therapist at the new United Cerebral Palsy Association (UCPA) Center in Denver, which was affiliated with Children's Hospital, located at 27th Avenue and Columbine Street. The location was in the heart of the Negro community and many of the employees of the Center were Negroes. Again, my close professional and personal relationships with

my Negro colleagues at the Center later became the basis for my early involvement in the Civil Rights Movement."

It wasn't long after arriving in Colorado that Ellie met her future husband, Manny Greenberg. They married and soon had three children under five years of age and Ellie became a full-time mom. She describes her life as being full and busy as "we were focused entirely on our growing family".

Community and Professional Life

By the early 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement was in full swing. As Ellie recalls the time, she says, "One Negro family had wanted to look at a home in our all-white subdivision. Many neighbors were upset and pressured the realtor not to sell a home in our area to a Negro family. The matter grew into a local community issue and resulted in our establishing the Littleton Council for Human Relations to address issues of racial difference, especially in housing. I became very active in the Council. This inter-faith effort became a major local organization and was a model for other suburban, Denver-area communities, which were also grappling with issues of racial integration. My role evolved into a leadership role in the Council and, subsequently, I served as its chairperson.

"My children became accustomed to accompanying me to meetings and grew up with a very busy mother in the midst of continuous organizational commitments. Over the next few years, the volunteer nonprofit Council helped to strengthen Colorado's Fair Housing Law, established the Metro Denver Fair Housing Center in Denver, created a Minority Scholarship Program at the new Arapahoe Community College, and became the basis for establishing the nonprofit Arapahoe Institute for Community Development, of which I became the first paid Executive Director. The Institute's activities were aimed at increasing integration, welcoming newcomers, developing low-income housing, holding inter-group potluck suppers in members' homes, creating educational activities that exposed children and young people to communities of color, and improving interfaith relationships."

"In 1968, I was invited to take a position on the Sociology faculty of Loretto Heights College and

to teach a course on "Minorities in America". That experience led to my being appointed to be the Founding Director of University Without Walls (UWW) at Loretto Heights College. UWW was an individualized baccalaureate degree program for adults who were returning to school. "

In 1991, Ellie established EMG and Associates to serve as her umbrella company for various consulting assignments. "Northern Telecom (Nortel) was one of my primary clients; and, for the first time, I worked for a for-profit corporate entity," she reported. Ellie took on more than a dozen consulting projects in nursing, health careers, the court system, lifelong learning and women's advancement. In 2008, she began the Colorado Feminist Luncheon, an intergenerational effort with women authors as guest speakers. "To date, we have held more than 47 luncheon events," says Ellie.



Ellie has done a great deal of writing throughout her life and has authored more than 250 papers and presentations in addition to nine books. Her second book, which was written with two male colleagues, was called, *In Our Fifties: Voices of Men and Women Reinventing Their Lives* and was published by Jossey-Bass. Her most recent book, *A Time of Our Own: In Celebration of Women Over Sixty* (2008), was published by Fulcrum Publishing Company. "All of my writing has, in one form or another, focused on adult development and women's lives", Ellie says.

Ellie notes that "As I got involved in each new organization, I made new friends and many of those friendships have grown throughout the years. The Women's Forum of Colorado has been an especially important source of new friendships and collegueship for me. I have also met many talented and interesting women through the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame, into which I was inducted in 2010. The Colorado Judicial Institute (CJI) has introduced me to many men and women in the legal field whom I might never have met without my active participation in CJI and our common interests in matters related to the law and the courts.

"As my interests and commitments have shifted through the years, I have been fortunate to meet new colleagues, many of whom have become close personal friends. The social distancing now required by this pandemic has resulted in my not having seen any of my friends for many months. We have tried to stay in touch by phone, but we all miss the interpersonal time we so enjoyed with one another. There are no meetings, no parties, no lunches, no dinners, no weekends away, no trips...no social gatherings of any sort. I often wonder just what the toll of this social distancing will be on our friendships. I look forward to the day when we can, once again, see each other and share new experiences together. Friendship is too precious a part of life to lose. I hope that my friendships do not become secondary casualties of this pandemic.

"All in all, I think that I have solid relationships with many talented and high-quality friends. However, I fear that long term separation, due to this pandemic, may erode these well-nurtured friendships. If that happens, my life will be emptier and not as interesting as it has been in the past."





Patricia Gabow, M.D., MACP

CEO, Denver Health (retired), Author, Educator
Colorado Women's Hall of Fame
Industry: Health Care

[LinkedIn](#)

After 20 years of significant accomplishments as CEO of Denver Health and Hospital Authority (DHHA), an integrated health care system serving one of the poorest populations in the state of Colorado, Dr. Patricia (Patty) Gabow is still contributing to the careers and education of others.

Known as a national leader in delivery system innovation and the care of vulnerable populations Patty is now writing books on leadership. Good books! Last year for instance, her book entitled ***Time's Now for Women Healthcare Leaders—a Guide for the Journey***, was published. In it she notes that women comprise over 80 percent of healthcare frontline employees, but they “often hit the proverbial glass ceiling.

Only 30 percent of healthcare C-suite Executives and less than 15% of CEOs are women. Moreover, while 51 percent of medical students are women, only 16 percent of the Department Chairs and Deans are women. “Clearly,” says Patty, “women are facing barriers to achieving their potential, limiting their ability to add their unique talents and skills to the tables of leadership.” Described as a practical ‘how to’ volume, the book helps women in health care envision their ability to lead.

During a recent conversation, Patty talked about the transition from working full-time into retirement and mentioned issues many people face during this time. She notes that the individual and job need to be considered “separate” and a challenge for many is discovering how to continue to have impact in the areas that were important during one’s working career. She acknowledges that “there is very little guidance available to us on this topic.”

Patty knew she loved to write, and so for her, writing fulfills a passion. It also serves as a platform for her to continue to lecture.

Transitioning to Retirement

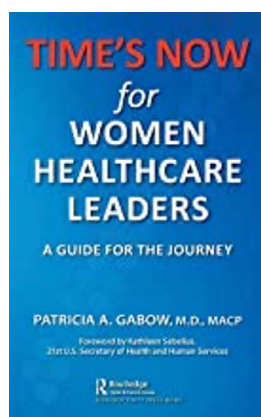
She has witnessed three different paths people take as they transition “after retirement.” Some people decide to discontinue work entirely and use their newfound free

time to be with family, travel, pick up new hobbies, etc. Secondly, some individuals choose to wind down from their professional careers more gradually, incorporating a mix of activities with their work but doing less in the area of their professional career, and thirdly, others discover a new career—a passion that they may not have had time to explore previously. Patty, who now spends much time researching, writing,

and lecturing, chose option #3 and says her schedule is almost as full now at 77 and “retired” as it was when she was working full time at Denver Health.

Can Women Do It All?

Asked if she thinks women can “do it all” her answer is a qualified “yes”. The caveat however is that they can’t do it all at once and shouldn’t feel the need to do everything in just the first three years or even in one decade. “The



fastest growing population in the US today is those over 100 and most likely most of us will live at least to 80 years of age. Given that, we have time to accomplish many things". She cites both Dr. Anthony Fauci, now 80, and Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, age 87 at death, as persons who are or did extend their careers well into their later years of life. She uses the analogy of gymnasts who are known for having support teams. "Women," she says, "need a support team to help with childcare, elder care, etc."—but acknowledges not everyone can afford extra help.

True diversity happens when the abilities and uniqueness of each person are truly leveraged, according to Patty who believes that elders and young people, individuals of varying backgrounds, ethnicity and gender need to be "at the table" together to provide collective input and make decisions. She cites the Biden/Harris administration as a great example of this. "Young people see a future that we (as elders) could not have imagined but we (elders) have the experienced through real experience what the younger folks haven't. "Being able to combine lessons of the past with a robust vision of the future is something very powerful."

Mentors, Sponsors and Role Models

Her parents married in 1942. Her father, a private first class in the US army, was killed in action in March 1945 during the Allied advance from Paris to the Rhine, after which she and her mother moved in with her uncle and grandparents. Her mother, a teacher, remarried in 1951.

Patty cites her grandfather as her first mentor and describes him as a philosopher: "He had a saying for every event in life. My grandmother would translate his comments from Italian to English...and he had so much knowledge and wisdom which he shared with me." Patty, as CEO, had one of his sayings on her wall at Denver Health for many years. "It went like this," she recalls: 'If you have a gift and don't use it, no confessor on earth can absolve you.' Patty said that she has come to believe that leadership is about knowing your gifts—they are inherent, but you have to perfect them."

Among Patty's many gifts are her ability to inspire others and her enthusiasm for things in general. She continues to serve as a mentor to many. Mentors, sponsors, and role models are important throughout all stages of one's life, according to Patty.



"It is important to note however that these three roles are not the all same," she adds. "I think we've now come to understand mentors (often a reciprocal relationship) are important but sponsors are critical to one's career. Sponsors typically can open doors within an organization and need to be a senior influential person who can the advocate for their protégé.

Patty acknowledges that women are often asked to do things (within an organization) that are really are not central to their jobs. According to her, "They are much more likely (then men) to say yes to taking on the additional responsibilities." She claims that a mentor can provide advice as

to whether the new responsibilities are important to one's career path...or not and can help identify the tradeoffs. She notes that some organizations have done a very good job of establishing formal mentoring programs but the relationship between mentee and mentor has to be comfortable to be beneficial. It can't be forced.

Role models, in contrast to mentors and sponsors, can be famous people, historical characters, family members, etc.—they are individuals who we want to emulate and admire.”

Asked when she first knew she wanted to be a physician, Patty said she was about 12 years of age. “Really, I said I wanted to be a doctor probably in junior high. Everybody in my family was a schoolteacher—my grandfather, my uncle, my mother, my stepfather. So I decided to be a doctor; I have no clue why nor did anyone else, but my family was very supportive and my grandfather used to say to me: “My Girl, if you get an education in America there's nothing you can't do. He was a good one to speak as he put my mother and two brothers through college depression and that was unheard of—especially to put a girl through college at that time.”



Patty earned her undergraduate degree in biology at Seton Hill University and her Doctor of Medicine at the Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania.

Authentic Leadership

Believing authenticity is a key attribute of leadership, Patty recalled a “great mentor/teacher from her college days—a Catholic Nun.” She says this person took her to the ‘laboratory’ (wooded area and lake) to conduct research. “I watched her hike up her habit, clothing which they wore back then, to collect specimens with all the male scientists around. That proved to me that you don't have to change who you are to be successful!” She laughed.

Patty was inducted into the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame in 2004. Earlier in her career, she was an academic practitioner and medical researcher in nephrology focusing on polycystic kidney disease. She is the author of more than 130 articles, 36 books and book chapters, and a recent book, ***The Lean Prescription: Powerful Medicine for Our Ailing Healthcare System***. She has received numerous awards, including the American Medical Association Nathan Davis Award for Outstanding Public Servant, the National Healthcare Leadership Award, the David E. Rogers Award from the Association of American Medical Colleges, the Health Quality

Leader Award from the National Committee for Quality Assurance, and the Distinguished Graduate Award from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine; she is a member of the Association for Manufacturing Excellence Hall of Fame and the National Academy of Social Insurance.

Patty is indeed a woman making history...



Flo Mostaccero, EMBA Cohort 50

President, CongentFlo Services, LLC
Engineering & Consulting Services

[LinkedIn](#)

When asked to write a narrative about my beliefs, my history, and my contributions to companies, society, and my family for this magazine, "Intergistic Intel", my first reaction was, "what could I possibly write about?" And as I thought more about it, I started to realize how easy it is to move forward and rely on our experiences, but never really take the time to look back and understand what has formed us as a person and made us a contributor to humanity. This experience has been enlightening and fun and I hope as I share a little about myself and my experiences, it might also enlighten someone else's journey.

I believe that being compassionate, having business ethics and integrity, and doing the right thing are the hard wiring to a

moral and functioning society and yet sometimes, these concepts get lost within individuals as they rush through life to "be on top", "make your mark", "get your credit", or "make an impact". As I look back throughout my career and my personal life, I realize that there have been two fundamental life principles that I lived by shaping my choices, impacts, and life purposes. These principles were reinforced early in my childhood and early days of my career. I will describe these life principles, how I adopted them, and why I feel so strongly about them as my foundation.

Family Roots Run Deep

I am a late baby boomer, white ethnicity with German heritage, and was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas. I am the youngest of seven children, three brothers and three sisters. All my siblings, except for one sister, have two to five children, each of those have one to three children, so, as you can see, we have an enormous extended family. My husband was born and raised in Peru. We met in college and got married before I finished my under-graduate Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemical Engineering. We are both Chemical Engineers and no, we never talked about it at home, other than to bring up weird thermodynamic references as a joke. We have two beautiful children: a daughter and a son. My daughter is married and has two children, and my son has a wonderful partner.

Coming from a very large family impacted me in so many ways. My desire and thirst for learning and my drive and determination to make a difference comes from a bit of sibling rivalry, but mostly from parents that valued education and constantly told us we could be anything we wanted to be if we just worked hard. We were considered lower middle class and my Father worked two jobs most of his life and my Mom started working when I was a little over 3 years old. My Dad did not graduate from high school. He worked as a line operator in a milk packaging plant with a second job as a convenience store clerk and a school bus driver. My mom graduated from high school, however, did not go to college. She became an interior decorator, and later in life, sold real estate. Both parents never shied away from hard work, focusing on making a better life for their kids.

Sharing Her Philosophy

Being the youngest of seven, I remember the stress and conflict when I was a child about how the family

would make ends meet monetarily. However, as I got into my teenage years and my older siblings were married and/or moved out on their own, the money was less of a stress point. One thing that my parents never wavered on was their insistence for all the children to go to college. They could not afford to send us to college, and we were expected to do this on our own. Like most of my siblings, I worked my way through the University of Houston to receive my undergraduate degree.



Building a strong work ethic since I was a child has carried me through all aspects of my life. My own children used to tease me (and still do) that I just cannot sit down and watch a TV show, without

cross-stitching and/or producing something. My childhood has impacted my desire to never be dependent or reliant on others. I always put one foot in front of the other when I am down or depressed about something that did not go my way, knowing and believing that continuing the journey will bring me to the next station of life. Fortitude is not something you are born with; it is something you form through life's challenges. It is much easier to be a victim and much harder to push through adversity.

What is quite interesting is that I never felt disadvantaged as a child or young adult. This was just the way it was, and I knew that if I wanted something better, I had to work for it.

I believe my family upbringing, childhood, teenage and young adult experiences all fostered **two life principles** that I formed early in my career and that I continue to live by:

1. **THINGS HAPPEN IN LIFE FOR A REASON.** You need to look for what you can learn from each experience. If you truly learn, then nothing in your life is a failure. Everything is just alternate paths in your life journey.
2. **IT IS NOT WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU IN LIFE, BUT HOW YOU REACT TO IT.** Your choices determine your future. You can be a martyr

and a victim, blaming others for your life, or you can choose to react positively and proactively.

Nobody Can Take Away Your Education

People ask me, why did you choose your undergraduate degree in chemical engineering; a STEM career that is dominated and (during my early years) dictated by men? I came about my undergraduate degree in a strange and very simplistic way. I went to an all-girls Catholic High School, where I tended to do the things that the "cool group of girls" did not do. I was an independent spirit and I loved Chemistry. I graduated in the top of my high school class, started at junior college, and then transferred to the University of Houston. I started out as a chemistry major and one day, a person asked me what I was majoring in and I said Chemistry. They suggested that I major in Chemical Engineering because I could make a lot more money than with a chemistry degree. My immediate reaction was, OK, this is the way I would go. I had no clue that I did not have the math background to make it in engineering. I just jumped right in "assuming I could do it", flunked calculus, had to go back and take trigonometry and take calculus again and eventually graduated in the top 10% of my chemical engineering class. Again, my life was guided by my reactions.

I worked and self-funded my undergraduate degree, as my parents felt very strongly about not helping me with the cost of college as they could not afford to help my older brothers and sisters. I accomplished this through several jobs and then enrolled in Cullen College of Engineering's Cooperative Education Program (Co-op). The Co-op program partnered with businesses to enable young engineers to practice their degree before they graduated, making a decent salary, while obtaining real life experiences. The jobs that I was able to get Co-Oping enabled me to make enough money to carry me through the next semester expenses while experiencing my chemical engineering degree in the real world. I was blessed to graduate ahead of some of my peers with two years of practical experience.

Later in my career, I got my Executive MBA from University of Denver Daniels College of Business. Prior to going to University of Denver, I was able to form strong business acumen through experiences and on-the-job (OTJ) learning. By going back to get my MBA, at the age of 50, I wanted to reinforce the foundation of knowledge in business strategies, operations, and leadership, as well as give credibility to my credentials in this area of my expertise. I was in DU's EMBA Cohort 50, and one learning that pivotally changed my life both personally and professionally, was garnered from the leadership style self-awareness courses that were taught. Through these courses, I learned a lot about my working persona versus my default personality style. I realized that during stressful times, my default hard wiring would take over and drive my reactions. By gaining an understanding of how my hard wiring worked during times of stress, I was able to make better choices.

Parents as Role Models

My first role model, of course, was my Mom. She was a woman before her time; strong, beautiful, independent thinker, loving all her children, and never limited by what others thought she should be. She was driven by accomplishment and never stopped trying to better herself.

During my early career, in the male-dominated industry that I had chosen, my role models were men, and I adapted to the styles and approaches that enabled me to succeed in a male-dominated culture. I learned to communicate differently, but never gave up my societal team orientation and connected thought patterns. My initial male role model was the person that hired me straight out of college, Mr. Pete Kelly. Pete was a man who respected women and the things that they brought to the table different from men. He always included me, and I never felt separated or singled out because I was a woman. Pete helped me understand that no leader is perfect and that we would all make mistakes throughout our career, but the key is to not let them linger; address them in the best possible way and move forward.

Two other men that were great role models for me were Dr. Joe Jacobs, and Mr. Noel Watson, Founder and CEOs for Jacobs Engineering Group Inc., the company I spent most of my career with. These men were instrumental in building and forming my ethical



foundation in business. Through the core values they built within Jacobs, ethics, safety a culture of caring, and customer service became ingrained in my working DNA.

One woman was a strong role model for me later in my life. Susan Kiely, wife of the CEO of Coors Brewing Company, was a minister and heavily involved in philanthropic activity in Denver. She started a non-profit company called **"Women with a Cause; Women helping Women to Help Themselves"** and I volunteered a lot within this organization because it was totally aligned with my purpose. Susan is an amazing woman, and all her activities centered around supporting her husband, her community, and helping women to better their own lives.

Pivotal Events that Shaped Her Beliefs

A person's beliefs are easily tied back to their upbringing, or emotional events like 911, or just choices that led to actions reinforcing a certain belief. In my life so far, two critical beliefs were formed and shaped because of actions I took.



The first event/action that shaped my belief system was when I attended Tony Robbins "Personal Power Seminar". I had just had my second child, he was 6 months old, and my husband and I took the leap of attending the 3-day Personal Power seminar where we learned about personal responsibility for manifesting your future. Tony Robbins' story about the twin brothers' reactions to the fact that their father was a criminal and in prison really connected with me and my life principle that "it is not what happens to you in your life, but how you react to it that matters". One brother was in prison and the other brother was married, with children and owned his own business. One chose to react negatively and blame his father and childhood for ending up in prison, while the other chose to react positively and learn from the issues he faced as a child to move into a realm of societal good changing his life and his children's life. This is where my belief of personal responsibility cemented for the future.

The second event was when I was given an autographed copy of a book written by Dr. Joseph Jacobs. This book was called "The Compassionate Conservative, Seeking Responsibility and Human Dignity". While I cannot profess to agree with everything Dr. Jacobs spoke about in this book, I truly connected with his fundamental belief that compassion is rooted in the motivation of the person and that both conservatives and liberals can have compassion, because they are personally motivated to make a difference in overall humanity.

Where they differ is how they choose to accomplish it. A quote from his book that has always stuck with me and has driven my desire to actionably help others is: "The true measure of the value of compassion does not reside in the intensity of the emotion, but rather in the public good created when the compassion is put into practice." Actions speak louder than words. This has formed my belief system in not only my philanthropic endeavors, but also in my Leadership style and approaches. A common phrase used in leadership 101 is that you must 'walk the talk' to build trust and be an impactful leader. My compassion, leadership, and my belief around making a difference can only be manifested through my actions.

Career Choices and Progressions

In my career, I have progressed from a technical role, to a project/program role, to a leadership of people role, to a coaching and guidance role. Each of these roles could have been a career in themselves, and yet I choose to see them all as a progression of my one threaded career as I grew as a person, a mother, a contributor, a boss, and a leader.

When I started my career, I was in a very technical role as a contributor and then a leader of technical teams. I began straight out of university as a process engineer working for an engineering and construction company, Jacobs. In the first eight years, I worked as a contributor, a lead process engineer, and a process engineering supervisor. I gained a reputation as the best process engineer, and one that every project manager wanted on their project. This "classification" was a double-edged sword. It afforded me the reputation to have some of the best project opportunities laid out in

front of me to learn from, and at the same time, was used to prevent me from growing in non-technical leadership roles. When you are tagged as a “certain type”, even when it is a good tag, it is hard to traverse into other career roles.

My first major career move involved leaving Jacobs and going to work for an operating company, Himont, Inc., to gain knowledge around commissioning and start-up of manufacturing plants. I led the company's technical team in the US implementing new process enhancements to existing facilities. I leveraged my process engineering skillset, and used it in a different company, learning different operational skills.

Armed with additional operational and people management knowledge, I returned to Jacobs to take on stronger leadership roles; Project Manager, Quality Manager, Operations Manager, Engineering Manager, Program/Alliance Manager, each being additional steps in my career progression around leadership of people and business.

Continuous Desire to Learn

Driven by my continual desire to learn, I again left Jacobs to work for Coors Brewing Company, in a manufacturing industry, one more populated with women, driven by marketing, and with a whole different set of business challenges. This was my first opportunity to work for a woman, and where my belief and desire for inclusivity and diversity came alive and was cemented in my leadership style. I am a team-oriented leader and work continually to engage and include diversity of thought. I would like to challenge the term DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion), to change the acronym to IDE, bringing inclusion to the forefront. If you truly believe in inclusion and foster an environment and culture supportive of everyone, then diversity and equity are a fundamental part of that culture. Without an inclusive culture, diversity and equity are a moment in time, there but not able to bring forth the value they have. A great book that strengthened my belief system around inclusion is called, **“The Loudest Duck, Moving Beyond Diversity while Embracing Differences”**, by Lisa Liswood.

My next career progression involved the desire to learn about different cultures around the world. After Coors, I went back to get my EMBA and the learnings I gained stimulated a desire to understand global business challenges and cultural impacts. I went back to Jacobs and was afforded international assignments as a leader in Europe, and Australia, traveling and working around the globe and working within many different cultures. I had Vice President leadership roles leading teams for business development as well as operational profits and losses. Again, my foundational principles and beliefs were enhanced with a knowledge that all cultures do not believe the same things, nor do they operate under the same moral and ethical structure. This enabled me to broaden my perspectives and approaches while still holding true to my compassion, ethics, and moral beliefs.

I then left Jacobs to work for a consulting firm that focuses on people transformation. Through all my experiences, I learned that it really all comes down to people, their desire, commitment, and motivation to make a difference, and the fabric of the culture they operate within. As of January 1, 2021, I am president of my own independent contracting company called CogentFlo Services, LLC. Why CogentFlo? Because cogent means impactful and compelling. I want to make a difference and bring value to the companies, industries, and projects that CogentFlo serves. Learning new things, being included as part of a group / team, and making a difference is what motivates me. CogentFlo will service clients by pulling together teams from across my extended network to support their business needs and bring value through the best of the best supporting each companies' individual sustainable strategies.

I believe sustainable practices are important because they are the manifestation of the core cultural values of a company. I was born from a company that valued ethical behavior, bringing true value, and making a difference. Ethical behavior to me means doing no harm to other people and to the environment. Sustainable practices will be different for every company depending upon their business and industry. So, to assume that sustainable practices are all the same and should fit within your description of such practices is naïve

and presumptuous that you know everything. Therefore, I reach deeper into the core value system of the company, because through the core value system, you should see how the company will truly act, not just what they say they do, when it comes to sustainability.

Tagged as a Woman

As a woman, the biggest challenges I faced in my career was being “tagged”; first as a “token woman”, second as “the best process engineer ever”, third as “too empathic/soft as a leader to be able to do the hard thing”, and so on. With each tag, came the challenge to prove them wrong. I took on each challenge, by digging deep within my core values, principles, and beliefs to creatively maneuver past the obstacle. Because I was born from parents who had a strong work ethic and a dogged determination to give their children a better life, I never looked at an obstacle as a chance to be classified as a victim, but rather as a chance to climb over the wall, sneak around it, or just encourage someone else to help me remove the obstacle. I learned the value of networking and connecting with all people on a personal level. It is always through people helping each other that true sustainable success is achieved.

Now add on a challenge like COVID, where you take away person to person connectivity. This, like for everyone, has been extremely hard for me. People can connect remotely, but there is just something about seeing people in person, seeing their overall body language, etc., that fosters trust, eliminates inefficiencies, and enables collective action. Virtual meetings are possible, and have made work-life balance much better, but they hinder people’s ability to truly connect. COVID manifested a burning platform for me to start my own company and bring the best of past learnings and future virtual approaches together. I cannot say that I have totally figured out what the future will look like, but I am not afraid to morph and adjust as the VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) future evolves.

Giving Back

Giving back has always been very important to me. Love and wealth of happiness comes back 10-

fold every time you give a part of yourself to help someone else. I have moved around a lot in my lifetime both domestically and internationally, so my non-profit engagements have been tailored to the spot I was located at the time in my career. The current organization that I volunteer for is the Texas City Food Bank. Amid the job loss and struggles of COVID this year, I decided to help give out food at their mobile pantries to the many people that need food.

Today’s youth entering the workforce have different challenges than I experienced. There is no one single silver bullet pointing one to the perfect career. My advice would be to take a sneak peek at your history, what drives you, when you were your happiest and most satisfied. Look for those career opportunities that enable you to continue to grow. Do not be afraid to take on a challenge or even to start over. The only bad decision is one that you do not make. Learn from the past, be complete with it, and move forward with the enhanced knowledge you were able to gain from it. And most of all, express daily gratitude. These phrases have probably been shared repeatedly in every leadership book and career advice book.

I learned a critical concept and technique in my last career position at JMJ Associates called “Completion”. It is easy to say that you learned from an event or a situation, but are you truly complete with it. Have you decided that the issues you faced are finished, the past is the past, and you are truly ready to move forward without anger, resentment, or disappointment? The emotions associated with difficult events in our lives stay with us and live in our amygdala, ready to shape our future actions and responses. By letting go and being complete with the event and the people we interfaced with during that event frees our future decisions from those negative emotions. “Being Complete” is a choice we can make that will enable positive responses and choices in the future.

More than One Purpose in Life

I believe that each person has different “purposes” throughout a lifetime. In my opinion, we do not have a “single purpose”. Our purpose shifts and expands as we grow and change. Our purpose may start out as a single focus and over time expands

and grows into an intricate threaded web of purposes, each facet shining brightly when our life occasion calls for it. When I was young and early in my career, I thought my purpose was to show that women can be just as good and even better than men sometimes. This purpose was about helping other women to show their intelligence and impact in a “male dominated” industry.

When I had my children, my purpose was being the best mom I could be, teaching and imparting the best value systems to my children, balancing motherhood, and work. I did not lose my purpose for helping women, I just balanced how much of my time I spent on my family life versus my work life. I learned to walk in the shoes of other women and I learned and practiced inclusivity, for everyone has had a different history and walks on a different path. After my children went off to university, my purpose shifted to bringing inclusivity, listening, empathy and driving for results into my work. I was able to take on jobs in different cultures throughout the Middle East, Europe, Asia, South Africa, Australia, and I learned the cultural impact on leadership. My purpose was to share and lead upwards as well as within my teams. With the start of my new adventure in 2021, my purpose will be giving back through influencing leadership from a board of directors’ level and volunteering my time to lift those who are in need.

Life's Learning – A Do Over?

I am not sure I would do anything differently in terms of my career choices and path. However, the value of having a professional coach is one area that I did not fully appreciate early enough in my career journey.

If I had a chance for a “do-over”, I would have gotten a coach earlier in my career so that I might have jump-started my grasp of work-life balance and prioritization techniques. A coach would have enabled me to proactively understand myself; my hard wiring and how to deal with stress. I believe I would have learned earlier, the political fabric of business, and techniques to maneuver in and around the politics to achieve my goals with less stress. With the right life-coach, I might have navigated the male-dominated industry faster and with less stress and would have been able to give back so much more.





Mary Rhinehart, EMBA Cohort 28

Chairman of the Board, Johns Mansville, Co.
Industry: Manufacturing

[LinkedIn](#)

Mary Rhinehart, Chairman of the Board of Johns Mansville Co, could have had a very different career if she had stayed with her first choice: “When I was young – 4th grade – I thought I wanted to be a nun who taught (I went to Catholic school 1st – 4th grade). I always admired my teachers and wanted to be just like them.”

“Then, in high school I decided I want to be a psychologist – I was a good listener and was always helping others with their problems and issues. A counselor at my high school talked me out of that and strongly encouraged me to go to business school -- she had lots of confidence in my abilities to succeed in business in general. That was great advice for me,” she says.

It certainly was. Mary never changed companies during her four decades

working with Joh’s Manville, a 3.5B, Berkshire Hathaway global company, but she did hold many roles within the company itself over the years. It was there she felt her challenges and growth were the best. “I was an auditor, a finance leader, an International Cash Manager, Manager of Global Banking and Finance, business unit finance leader, general manager of businesses with complete P&L responsibilities, Global Treasurer, Corporate Controller, VP of Compensation and Benefits, VP of Human Resources, CFO – responsible for all global financial activities as well as Global Supply Chain, CEO and Chairman. I had multiple experiences with business development as well as mergers, acquisitions, and divestments.”

Mary, an Executive MBA alum, Cohort 28 at the University of Denver, says she has a thirst for learning, which ultimately motivates her. “I have curiosity and am motivated by personal growth and development. Challenges motivate me. I am results driven and love to problem solve. People inspire and motivate me. I love interacting with our employees, customers, suppliers and other key stakeholders.”

She goes on to say, “I love watching our teams succeed, grow, innovate and perform. We strive to deliver the positive and powerful JM Experiences to our employees and customers — we recognize that we succeed only when our employees and customers thrive. I am known as a disciplined and compassionate leader who embraces challenges.”

Defining Her Leadership Style

Asked to describe her leadership style, Mary says she is engaged, passionate, disciplined, results driven, people driven. “I set high expectations and give others the resources and tools to meet them. I love to coach and grow leaders, relationship oriented, very transparent – put issues on the table, no-nonsense competitor, I always strived to energize our global talent, challenging the status quo and delighting our customers.

In addition to her career successes, Mary is most proud of her family and her ability to be a great mother though she says she “made my share of mistakes though. I felt like I was very engaged with our two sons as we were raising them and was very intentional about being a key figure and engaged in their lives --- and still am.”

As a businesswoman over the last four decades, and in a predominately male industry, Mary has experienced

many challenges and seen tremendous change over that time period. "I no longer view myself as 'the only woman in the room'.



"We can all be leaders and in today's environment, diversity and inclusion is so valued that I feel more and more that we are all ONE, on the same TEAM. I have to be honest: Yes, I did experience discrimination in the past as a woman, however, I never held a "chip on my shoulder" nor did I ever let myself become a victim. I persevered and was resilient. I let things roll off my back, I picked myself up and forged on in spite of the difficulties." When she was the "only woman in the room" – Mary says she became accustomed to what "used to having the spotlight" on her. "All eyes watching to see if I would succeed or fail. I was determined to show them that I could and would succeed. If I failed, I picked myself up and moved on. I tried to never hold grudges and not let others get to me. I had to have confidence in my abilities and capabilities. I am not a quitter. I have a competitive spirit, so I never give up."

Early Life Influences

Where did some of that competitive spirit come from? Mary's early upbringing may hold some clues.

"I come from a family of nine children with a 20-year span between the oldest and youngest. I have six older brothers; I am the oldest girl and I have two younger sisters. My mother was born and raised in Colorado so when the family moved back, we had her extended family to support us. My father was raised on a farm in Missouri, served in WWII; was injured and was transferred to Fitzsimons Army Medical Hospital in Colorado.

He met my mother who was the librarian at the hospital; they were married and moved to Boulder so my dad could get his Electrical Engineering degree from CU. From there they moved all over the country until settling back down in Colorado in 1963."

Mary says she learned very important lessons from her father who taught her the importance of a strong work ethic; faith; physical health and wellbeing; giving back to your community and conserving our precious resources. From her mother she learned the importance of a strong faith, family, never holding grudges ("forgive and forget"); resiliency – letting things roll off your back; having fun and not taking life or yourself too seriously.

From her brothers Mary learned to have mental toughness and a competitive spirit and doing what it takes to be included – "doing things in spite of your fear".

She says her sisters were much younger than she with four- and eight-years difference between them, however they "taught me about caring for others and tried to teach me patience – although I think I failed in that area."

She added: "My father kept us busy in the evenings and weekends – swimming at the YMCA, dance lessons, sports activities, community volunteer activities, church, library etc. I started working at a fairly young age to earn money for clothes or anything extra; helped my brothers with their paper route and started babysitting. When I was old enough to work at the swimming pools or clerical jobs, I took on multiple jobs at one time – one summer working seven days a week to save money for college.

We didn't have a lot of money growing up in a family of nine kids, however I have to say that my parents found ways to keep us engaged and involved in activities which kept us active for not a lot of money. We were taught money skills – budgeting and saving at an early age.

"Growing up in the 1960's and 70's gave me many unique experiences – Kennedy, Martin Luther King, the Viet Nam War. I had one brother who was a fighter pilot in Viet Nam while another

brother was a peace protestor, etc. I lived through many recessions and survived many workforce reductions throughout my career as JM downsized for various reasons. My children were young when we experienced the Columbine School shooting in Colorado (they didn't go to school there – but it impacted all of us) and 9/11. I traveled quite a bit throughout my career so 9/11 changed travel experiences forever. The freedoms we formerly enjoyed were no longer there.

“We all learned to live with the changes ---- and then the Pandemic came along. I haven't traveled in the past year (it will be one year at the end of February). After traveling several times, a month throughout my career – it has been nice to not to have to rush through airports and sleep in hotels. I like my own bed and being at home.”

COVID and Its Impact on Business

Mary acknowledges that COVID has been a challenge for everyone across the globe. “The challenge is that everyone comes from a different perspective and opinion. Some have extreme fear – while others don't think it is anything to be overconcerned about. Some go to extremes to avoid while others ignore the warnings. It has challenged our lives and our livelihoods. I believe we all have to do our part to be safe and protect ourselves as wells as others (including our communities and world). AT JM we take the safety of our employees, customers, and communities as our top priority. We strictly follow all the local protocols, regulations, and orders across the globe. Our manufacturing employees continued to work throughout the pandemic on the front lines of our production facilities. We followed all local orders for our office employees. We put in all of the protective measures – physical distancing, health checks, mask requirements etc. at all facilities to ensure we were doing all we could to keep everyone safe. I could go on at length on what we did with pandemic task force, facility coordinators etc.

“JM was fortunate, as were many businesses in the construction/building products space, to have had good demand for our products throughout 2020 – with the exception of the 2nd quarter during the early months of the crisis/pandemic. Our engineered products business took longer to

recover but saw good momentum coming in to 2021.”

On the personal side, Mary says “We experienced the birth of our first grandchild in December of 2019. At two months old, she had part of her



lung removed (right at the start of the pandemic) – so we have been very cautious as a family and trying to stay within our bubble as much as possible to keep everyone safe and healthy. Our granddaughter is doing great – a very strong 13-month-old – you would never know she had major surgery at such a young age.”

“How have I coped, I tell everyone: Control what you can and be patient with the rest. This too shall pass, and we will be back to a new normal at some point later this year. Do what it takes and have an upbeat attitude --- don't let it get you down – you can't do anything about it – except for what you can control – yourself!”

Importance of Community Engagement

Community engagement has been very important to Mary from an early age. "My father had us engaged in helping others whenever we could – flood victims, lower income people etc. I have been engaged with the following organizations as a board member:"

- **Craig Hospital – eventually serving as Chairman**
- **Kempe Children's Center – child abuse awareness and support**
- **University of Colorado Hospital and University of Colorado Health Systems**
- **Denver Chamber of Commerce**
- **University of Denver Board of Trustees**
- **Harvard Joint Studies on Housing – Policy Advisory Board**
- **International Women's Forum and the Colorado Women's Forum**
- **Committee of 200**

Mary also volunteers with her fellow employees, family and friends on things such as: Habitat for Humanity, Bike MS (to raise funds for the National MS Society), The Aids Foundation, Feeding the Hungry, Warren Village, Girls Inc., Girl Scouts, etc.

She says that "At JM we strongly encourage being a part of the community and volunteering where possible. We hold a global community day for teams to volunteer in their communities across the globe."

Portfolio Career Advice

Mary's advice for young people today: "Follow your passion; always keep your thirst for learning and be curious; take care of yourself as health and wellness are extremely valuable; exercise gives you energy to do what you want to do and is also a great stress reliever. Be visible, be engaged. Don't be afraid to try new things – don't be afraid to fail --- just pick yourself back up and move on. Attitude is everything! Be a TEAM player and always do the right thing for the right reason!"

As Mary heads into the next phase of her 'portfolio career', she will remain as Chairman of JM and continue to serve on public boards as well as not-for-profit boards. "I believe in sharing my experiences with others – I want to continue to be engaged, continue my growth and development and continue contributing to society. I plan to stay busy throughout my life. The bright spot is that I will also be spending more time with family --- and, especially with our granddaughter and any future grandchildren yet to come."

For Mary, success is having a great family life, an active faith, strong health, and wellness – physically, mentally, and spiritually, and being happy. Staying active always.



Now at age 62 and asked what she'd like her legacy to be, Mary says: "I have told my children, the following are very important to me: My faith, my family, physical health and wellbeing and education. I am still working on my legacy. I would love to have people say that I left the world a better place and had a tremendous positive impact and influence on their lives. I have no regrets – I learn from my mistakes and move forward. Life is a journey and one must look for ways to continuously improve and be better and stronger every day."



Doni Aldine, EMBA Cohort 51

Editor-In-Chief Culturs.org and
DenverPost.com/CultursTV

Cultural Fluidity Expert, FOLIO Top Women in
Media 2020 Honoree

Industry: Media, Culture and Marketing

[LinkedIn](#)

"It began in New York City. I was born the second child of a Costa Rican father and mother from Trinidad and Tobago. As a proud Afro-Latina, this is the best combination for which a girl could have wished. Of course, we know hindsight is 20/20, but I wouldn't change the journey for anything.

At age two weeks began what would be a whirlwind trek and sometimes brief, sometimes years-long stays in and through North, South, Central America, Europe, and Asia before age 12. I would study in Eastern Berlin mere months after the fall of the Berlin Wall and spend an Epic 20th birthday by myself in London. Along the way I would learn, and

forget, and relearn and later remember four different languages while yearning for them all whenever I couldn't use or remember how to speak them. Or even when I would mix and co-mingle them – thinking one or two languages in my head while words for a third escaped my lips. My first accent is one currently I can't even mimic.

A nomadic lover of travel, countries, people, languages, and culture – I was raised in the perfect family. Even so, fewer than ten years of my life were spent with them. To this day, I still travel alone and cherish my alone time.

My grandmother was a nurse, who came from a prominent family in Trinidad, West Indies. One of seven siblings born to ahead-of-their-time parents. She left my mother and uncle in Trini to study nursing in London and sent for them once she settled in the U.S. A foreign-born black woman in 1940s New York City by herself, she built a solid career, bought several brownstones in the city, and sponsored countless people to come to the U.S.A. and search for their own American Dream. My maternal grandfather had been killed at work in a fluke explosion in the city years prior. His son, my mother's only sibling would die fighting for the U.S. Army in the Vietnam War – by yet another fluke accident.

My father left Costa Rica for NYC at age 17 I believe. I would confirm, however he is one of what currently is half a million in the U.S. who succumbed to COVID in the last year. It is not Caribbean Style to publicly share so much information, or in my family, to show emotion – so I guess opening up means I'm truly American after traversing all these cultures and not truly belonging to any.

After spending much of his youth in seminary, my father left for the U.S. after being denied priesthood, presumably due to his Afro-Latin heritage. A fierce student, he put himself through college driving taxi, and graduated top-of-the-class for a first-rate insurance company in the early 1970s. By then, he'd already had a little family with my brother, my mum and me.

Both of my parents had the most beautiful accents -- perfect English with just a hint of sophistication. For



my father, it was his second language. Mum came from all the trappings of a British Isle. Black tea and porridge with milk, words like colour spelled with a U, and what some would call a condescending attitude.

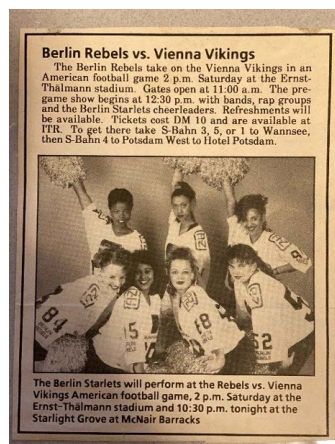
Mum was an amazing homemaker, talented seamstress who created all of our fashions (we look amazing in every childhood photo) and chef whose island fusion creations can make anyone swoon. It's eventually what she chose as a career. All I remember is mornings with freshly baked cinnamon swirl loaf and veggies picked straight from our garden. We weren't allowed sugar cereals, candy, or Halloween treats. Mum loves all things family almost as much as she loves freedom. It was she who took us across the globe on vacations (sometimes getting stranded in foreign lands), let us live with family around the globe, and a sometimes took us on assignment when she served in the U.S. Air Force.

Our Past Shapes Who We Are Today

Every step of this experience shaped who I am today. My older brother and I are perfect examples of nature AND nurture effects in upbringing. While my parents divorced when we were toddlers, my brother became my father's spitting image in look, tone, and mannerisms. I took a fondness for calligraphy and languages, both of which I would find out decades later were part of his repertoire (my father's everyday penmanship was like lettering addressed on a royal invitation).

I wanted to be a Nurse, like granny. In the Air Force, like mummy.

A lover of science, like many countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Asia, I was praised for aspirations to become one of four acceptable professions -- in my case: medicine.



In the end, what overtook me was culture, travel, people, and languages as I switched from Microbiology to Journalism in senior year of undergrad because no one could tell me how to pursue the profession of Quincy M.E., a popular '70s TV show about a medical examiner who solved crimes through science. Today, however, CSI or Crime Scene Investigators are more well-known.

From media, to marketing, and multiculturalism – these three things have been the foundation of my career. Undergrad was Colorado State University with a stop at Humboldt Universität in Berlin, Germany. I began by interning for Pepsi Cola and Colorado State for three years each during the summers and school year, respectively. In my early years at the University, I conducted research in the microbiology lab. After my career switch, I worked for the University's Director of Public Relations. Both organizations offered me positions after graduation.

CSU afforded me a breadth of experience that served well in my career, though dreams of working internationally went by the wayside. From there I became a marketing director in the Western U.S. by age 24, eventually moving back to Colorado and starting a gift manufacturing company that sold award-winning writing products to stores like Hallmark Cards in 45 countries around the globe. Serving as Chief Marketing offer for my company, I garnered many media appearances, including writing a weekly Sunday column for the Denver Post, featuring the latest in the gift market on NBC 9news each month, and getting coverage on The View, Lifetime Television, Extra TV, and more.

Coming Full Circle

I earned my executive M.B.A. at the University of Denver in 2009. While at D.U., I would get to know a Daniels grad who told me there was a term for people who grew up globally: "Third Culture Kid." It unveiled a spark that unearthed what I believe to be my life purpose. While the media and marketing had unfolded up 'til then, the multiculturalism pretty much was kept close to the vest.

Soon however, I would devote myself and my life's work to those with upbringings similar to mine. Founding CULTURS – the global multicultural magazine, we celebrate cross-cultural identity because everyone should feel like they matter. With a focus on people who straddle culture, race, ethnicity nation or location, Culturs uses media, products, and experiences to amplify voices of the marginalized's marginalized. Third Culture Kids, Immigrants, Refugees, multiracial, multiethnic, and multicultural people with many different stories can find home in this community.

Finding Purpose

This is my most important work to date. Having researched the topic of TCKs for the last 16 years and created and taught a university class for it (Media and Global Culture Identity) at Colorado State for the last eight years, my focus is for people who grow up feeling they belong "everywhere and nowhere" find others who speak their language.

Culturs is in its seventh year, our four-year-old luxurious print edition found distribution in Whole Foods, Kroger Stores, Barnes and Noble, Army and Air Force Exchange Services Stores, Books-a-million, Sprouts and Independent bookstores. While our digital edition is read in 208 countries.

I've had the honor of consulting for Turner for its limited television series "I Am the Night," with Actor Chris Pine and worked alongside Wonder Woman Director, Patty Jenkins, who also is an Adult TCK and has graced two of Culturs' covers -- one along with her husband and son.

Our team of more than one hundred contributors and staff in 17 countries on four continents have had the pleasure of working with A-list celebrities, the United Nations, World Bank, NBC Universal, Netflix and some of the world's biggest events including the Sundance Film Festival, South by

SouthWest, the Cannes Film Festival, Cannes Lions, SeriesFest, Monaco Television Festival and more. We often talk to thousands of TCKs and other cross-cultural people each week, and work diligently to capture their essence and convey their unique stories. Our team felt unstoppable before COVID-19 and civil unrest ripped through 2020.

Given the brand's mission, we couldn't step aside while the globe felt as if it would fall apart. In May 2020, we pulled the summer issue back from the printer to pivot and create a publication focused on Blackness around the Globe, as well as the global impact of COVID. In ten days, our team re-imagined, re-designed and re-created one of our best issues to-date and our first sell-out issue called "TIME FOR CHANGE."



What the Future Holds

Since then, we've partnered up with XOTV -- a Silicon Valley startup challenger to YouTube that focuses on privacy and content creators -- to create and amplify CultursTV, which originally had launched with Denver Post TV years prior. Culturs audience members can subscribe to made-for-them

video content right next to Hulu and Netflix on Samsung and Hisense TVs.

Currently, we hold five or more "rooms" on the burgeoning social app Clubhouse – allowing us to chat directly with our hundreds to thousands of our audience in real time, around the globe, every day. Last week we were moderators in two rooms condemning Anti-Asian Violence in the U.S. in the wake of the Coronavirus crisis.

My purpose, which began at birth, is to use the breadth of experience offered me in this life to bridge cultures and people and create understanding. And I wouldn't have it any other way."

Connect with Doni on social: [@cultursmag](#)
Video Channel: [Culturs on XOTV](#)
[Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Pinterest](#) | [Instagram](#)



Dawn Graham, PhD Counseling Psychology, DU

Career Director for the MBA for Executives Program, The Wharton School
Best Selling Author and Radio Show Host
Industry: Education, Media, Career Consulting

[LinkedIn](#)

Editor's Note: We are very fortunate to comments for this special publication from Dr. Dawn Graham, a noted career coach with Wharton's Executive MBA Program, and author of the bestselling book, "Career Switchers". She is also the radio host of "Dr. Dawn on Careers", aired live every Thursday at 12pm E on Sirius XM Channel 132 Radio. Her weekly broadcasts reach over 600,000 listeners weekly who learn to negotiate a great salary, how to stand out in an interview, what to do about a gap in your resume, and more. To reach Dawn during the show, call [844-942-7866](tel:844-942-7866) or tweet [@Dr. DawnGraham](#).

Her doctoral dissertation (at DU) was *"The Impact of Networking Skills Training on Job Search Behaviors"* which explored how introverts and extraverts approach the job search differently, particularly during networking.

This is her story:

As a first-generation college student working weekends and holidays at the local mall in New Jersey, I spent four years commuting to college having never heard of a career center (my undergraduate University had four, I've since learned!). So, it may seem a little ironic that I am now leading one, but careers are like that – unpredictable!

For the past seven years, I've been the Career Director for the MBA for Executives Program at The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. And for the past two decades, I have dedicated my *own* career to helping others manage the twists and turns of their professional trajectories, including the many hurdles of a job search.

Clearly, this wasn't always my professional plan. Despite being asked to select a major when I was 17 in my first term at university, I ended up changing majors (and schools) before graduating with a Bachelors' degree in Psychology in the mid-90's. Like most, my early career was a zigzag of trial-and-error, learning from both great

and awful bosses, accepting roles that were not a fit, receiving many rejections, and believing I had finally found my calling (again) only to realize I was wrong.



Dr. Dawn Graham, Best Selling
Author of Career Switchers

The pivotal moment in my career – the one that set me on my current trajectory and was the foundation for my career coaching model that I strive to teach others – was unexpected and frankly, traumatic.

In 2001, I was working at Arthur Andersen, had recently earned a Masters' Degree through a part-time evening program at the Johns Hopkins University and was about eight years into my career. Being in the middle of a divorce, I was preparing to start anew and in the process of relocating across the country for a role in California with the company. All indications were that I had a long

career ahead of me at the firm, and I was excited about the chance to work with a new team of colleagues. Many already know how this story ends.

The Enron-Arthur Andersen scandal caused the implosion of many careers, livelihoods, and savings in a matter of months. Two global companies shuttered as a result and fallout left tens of thousands unemployed and unprepared.



[Dr. Dawn Graham: YouTube TEDx On Job Search Strategies Your Next Job Is One Conversation Away | Dawn Graham | TEDxJHU DC - YouTube](#)

Like most life-changing events, it was a massive detour that I did not see coming and the timing could not have been worse. All my belongings were in a moving truck on route to the West Coast, I had broken my lease at my residence, and divorce attorneys aren't free. There was no severance, no transition benefits, and the final moving costs fell on me with the company no longer in play. My future evaporated. I was suddenly in debt and without a home address.

While hindsight is 20/20, at the time, it was inconceivable to me that I could have checked all the boxes – strong performance, advanced degree, loyal employee – and still ended up out of work. After all, weren't we taught in school that we are rewarded for following the rules? Well, then this was “welcome to the real world 101” and it was in this moment the illusion of job security was permanently shattered for me.

While I would not wish this experience on anyone, this was the lesson I needed. It instilled the qualities of fortitude, determination, and self-reliance in a way that only surviving hardship can and gave me a purpose to begin on a new career ladder. I knew if I could dig out of this situation, there wouldn't be much else that could stop me. So, I grabbed a shovel and got to work. Not always the case, in my experience I've seen many who've also discovered their next career path through unanticipated circumstances and unfortunate events. And although we can't prevent the impact that economic downturns, reorganizations and now, pandemics may have on our jobs, I believe we can set ourselves up to land on our feet when these situations occur. This belief is what I've based my own personal career trajectory upon.

Learning that job security is a myth completely changed my outlook. I began investing in myself and my skills, earned a doctorate from the University of Denver in Counseling Psychology and built a portfolio career, so my income streams varied and didn't completely dissolve when one dried up.

I stopped aligning my brand with a single employer, realizing that scandal sticks with you, even if you were an innocent bystander. Instead, I developed a strong personal brand that I carried with me to each new role and remained clear on my values so I would quickly recognize situations that threatened them.



[Dr. Dawn Graham creating videos at LinkedIn](#)

Then, I focused on building a diverse and expanding network. Upon leaving Arthur Andersen, 65,000 of my colleagues were in the same boat – unemployed. So, while I had done a decent job of

establishing cross-office and cross-department connections internally (and am still in touch with many of my former colleagues two decades later), my myopia was a barrier once that company no longer existed. So, despite being an introvert

whose idea of a good time is a fireplace, a cat, and a murder mystery, I committed to being intentional about building connections thereafter.

These three things – constant reinvention, conscious branding and creating connections – have been my guideposts for the last two decades of my career, no matter who my employer or what my title. They've saved me after a second layoff, catapulted me when I started my own business, and opened doors to new opportunities when I least expected it.

As a career coach, author of “Switchers: How Smart Professionals Change Careers & Seize Success” and host of “Dr. Dawn on Careers” on SiriusXM Radio (132), this is what I infuse into my clients, readers and listeners. The only place job security exists is WITHIN us, and the best place for loyalty is with our own values.

Markets fluctuate, companies fail, industries shrink and technology advances. There are no guarantees and hard work can only take you so far. Without building trust and the support of others, performance is only one piece of the larger puzzle as the predictability of our world wavers and change remains the only constant.

Through heartache, I found my passion and while there is certainly a through line to my career pivots, we each have *many* passions and I truly believe career switchers are the future. The emerging career cycle is not linear, but circular,

filled with reskilling, industry shifts and even planned work gaps. While not completely random, our interests will shift, needs will change, and happenstance will factor in. It's an exciting time to be working!

When I look back over my career to date, there really isn't anything that I would change because I've been fortunate to have learned valuable lessons that only experience can teach. Perhaps I would have taken more risks or worried less (overthinking is my Achilles' heel), but you do the best with the knowledge you have in the moment and strive to grow a little each day. As I point out in “Switchers” clarity comes through action, and sometimes the best results come from unanticipated detours.

In terms of what's next, I'm focused on the rapidly changing future of work, and how market trends like delayed retirement, alternative work structures and lifelong learning will impact careers and employment models. The career cycle is morphing, and the unpredictability of it is both exciting and a little scary, but I'm optimistic about what lies ahead. While we are all navigating a little blindly at this point, my hope is that I can continue to have the privilege to guide professionals toward meaningful and fulfilling work no matter what the future brings.”



Dawn Graham pretending to be all grown up.



Katica Roy, EMBA Cohort 67

CEO and Founder, Pipeline Equity
Industry: Consulting (Gender Issues)

[LinkedIn](#)

Katica Roy is doing her best to close the gender gap, and she has a personal reason for doing so which is rooted in her family history. "I am the daughter and sister of refugees. My family escaped from Hungary after the fall of 1956 revolution. They lived in a refugee camp in Austria for nearly two months before gaining safe passage to the U.S. by President Eisenhower via Air Force One on Christmas Day 1956. This moment shaped who I am today. The moment that a powerful person used their power to stand forward on behalf of others. My personal duty is to carry that courage forward for others. And, it is why I founded Pipeline, an award-winning SaaS company that leverages artificial intelligence to identify and drive economic gains through gender equity."

Katica, who is CEO of Pipeline Equity, was named **Colorado's Entrepreneur of the Year for 2020.**

"My dad taught me to be a truth-teller. Being a truth-teller isn't always popular, but it's valuable. I am mindful to say things in such a way that people will be most receptive. It's not about being nice, it's about being effective. It's about identifying what the important goal is (the success of the project) and working toward that mutual goal."

Today, Roy is in the business of "bending the arc of history toward inclusion." Her Denver-based company, Pipeline, a SaaS platform that uses data science as its foundation. The advanced technologies of Pipeline enable companies to assess, address, and take action against biases and increases financial performance through closing the gender gap. Using the Pipeline platform, not only can companies get to parity, they know how long it will take.

Inspired by Women Katica realized the impact she could one day create herself after observing female leaders who came before her, like U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and former Republican congresswoman Susan Molinari.

At USF, Ry studied political science with a legal studies emphasis. She went on to work as an intern in Washington, D.C., and earned graduate degrees, in educational technology, and also an Executive at the University of Denver.

While focusing on building her career, Katica felt the landscape of the working world was an equal playing field, until she was faced with an experience that challenged her thinking. After learning she was being paid less to do more than a male colleague, Katica discovered the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. She presented the fair-pay law to her employer's human resources department and then received a raise, back pay, and a promotion.

"Certainly it's a story of success, but why did I have to research my rights in order to be treated fairly?" The experience fueled her desire for change. And she points out that working to create gender equity requires support from both men and women. "What I learned from fighting to be paid equitably is that working hard does not equal success," she said. "I believe we must do our research, we must learn the system, and then change it."

She founded Pipeline as a way of saying “Not on my watch” to gender inequities. “Gender equity is not just a social issue,” Roy said. “It is a massive economic opportunity.”

The United States could increase its gross domestic product (GDP) by \$2 trillion by closing the gender equity gap, said Katica. Her company, Pipeline, has shown through their original research that every 10 percent increase in gender equity correlates to a 1 to 2 percent increase in revenue.

“It’s time to create a new reality and transform the narrative surrounding gender equity so that future generations, men and women, boys and girls, have access to the opportunity to step into a life the size of their dreams,” Katica says.

Katica’s vision for Pipeline is to flip intersectional gender equity ‘on its head’ and close the intersectional gap in this lifetime rather than the 257 years forecasted by the World Economic Forum. She says some people believe gender equity is a social issue; however, “data has shown it’s a tremendous economic opportunity. While Pipeline actively works to eradicate gender inequity and increase financial performance, I work to spur people to think differently about the opportunities that present themselves once we close the gender equity gap.”

Her company launched the first gender equity app on Salesforce’s AppExchange. “With our app on the AppExchange, Pipeline identifies and addresses potential unconscious bias or inequity in sales organizations to ensure companies maximize their economic footprint.”

She notes that the gender bias problem is an expensive one. “In fact, it costs the U.S. \$2 trillion in lost GDP and a solution to this problem would increase the economic opportunity for all. Pipeline marries economic gains and gender equity—taking rich macroeconomic research, driving it down to the company’s microeconomic level and producing an actionable track to deliver gender equity coupled with improved financial performance.”

Founder and CEO of Change Finance, Diana Morton, asked Katica if she would join her team to ring the opening bell of New York Stock Exchange on November 7, 2017. It was to celebrate Change Finance’s first ETF going live. Change Finance’s goal is to transform capital markets so that people and the planet are placed on equal footing with profit. Katica was invited to join the team because of Pipeline’s commitment to closing the intersectional gender gap. “Joining us to ring the opening bell were individuals who understand the economic potential of closing the gender gap. It was remarkable to be part of that moment”.

Asked what advice Katica might share with others, she responded: “I’m not a fan of advice so instead I’ll share with you what I tell myself. Your brand should not be about you—it should be about helping others. Focus your unique gifts on helping others. Know what you want and be brave enough to get there. Chart your own path and have the courage to take that path despite the obstacles. Obstacles are not about you or your worth. Courage is a muscle—when exercised it gets stronger.”



She offers these tidbits of information:

1. “Your mindset matters. Your brain is not wired to make you happy; it’s wired to keep you safe. As an entrepreneur and executive, I’m often faced with situations in which my reptile brain kicks in (fight or flight). My goal has been to rewire my brain—I can feel a certain way, but I don’t need to act on it. I meditate regularly to put the pause between how I feel and my decisions and actions.
2. Get clear on your story and your why—and share them broadly. When we launched Pipeline, my co-founder suggested we could springboard it off of my brand. I was against that because I felt that folks wouldn’t care about my story, rather they would care about Pipeline. I was wrong. My story has given Pipeline more power and made it relatable. It has enabled folks to see themselves in the Pipeline journey.
3. Give first and be of service. I am frequently in situations where I don’t know people, or at least very few people. Instead of being concerned about my own discomfort, I refocus on what I can bring to the situation, how I can be helpful, and who I can help. This refocusing has allowed me to further embrace the interconnected fabric of the human race.
4. Build on your strengths. I am not good at everything—no one is. Focus on what you do well, those are the gifts that were given to you to improve the world. The world needs your gifts—that’s why you have them, to share them with the world.”

Katica considers herself a gender economist and has been a contributor for Fast Company, the World Economic Forum, NBC, and Bloomberg. She is on a mission to achieve gender equity once and for all.





Suzi Dexter, EMBA Cohort 68

System Director, Talent Acquisition SCL Health
Industry: Health Care/Human Resources

[LinkedIn](#)

"My dad was a radio man and a small-town version of a celebrity. It was normal for me to turn on the radio and hear his voice, pitching the latest special at the Ford dealer or promoting the Co-op or the farm implement dealer. I was frequently introduced as "John Brandt's daughter," a label that made me immensely proud. The success he had in his career is truly remarkable. My dad grew up in a *smaller* town in Nebraska, the son of a working-class WWII veteran and dropped out of his first semester of junior college. From a young age, he was fascinated with radio broadcasting and stumbled into a job selling radio advertising. Before long, he was selling and recording the ads.

As a young girl at the age of 14, Suzi's first job was as a radio disc jockey, fully aware that she got the job because her dad was

the sales manager of the radio station. "But," says Suzi, "It was a very cool high school job to have. Looking back on it now, I'm sure my parents loved that job because not only did I have the weekend shifts that kept me out of trouble (Saturday night and Sunday afternoon), but they knew where I was all the time. All they had to do was turn on the radio. And I loved it. I played adult contemporary music for 6 hours, read news and weather and announced the time and temperature every 10 minutes.

"I worked as a disk jockey for four years of high school and one year in college. But eventually, I decided that I would need some practical customer service experience for whatever career lay ahead of me. I started my retail career in a part-time position in a local department store. My journey took me from a management trainee position in Nebraska to a HR manager position in Iowa and finally to an Assistant General Manager position in Colorado."

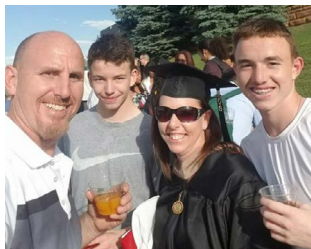
Speaking skills are something that Suzi came by naturally, a quality inherited from her dad. She also developed a communication style by listening to her dad, not only on the radio, but in everyday conversation. "My ability to articulate clearly was commonly tested and honed. I remember distinctly being asked by my dad to repeat words with varied inflection and emphasis, learning how to speak clearly and use my voice to create interest for the listener. I am so thankful for this capability and training. Strong communication skills have allowed me to further my career and overcome hurdles that may have prevented me from advancing otherwise."



Family Dynamics Have a Lasting Impact

Suzi says her parents were married in 1970 and divorced after 23 years of marriage. "I have since overcome the emotional effect, but at the time, my parent's divorce was quite traumatic for me. I do not remember the conversation, other than hearing him tell me that he was going to say with "a friend" and hearing dogs barking in the background. As much as I wanted to avoid taking sides, I could not help but take my mom's. I remember vividly seeing my mom for the first time after he left and holding her hand while she sobbed uncontrollably." Suzi's experience in retail prepared her for her first role in recruiting. "I was recruited to DaVita by one of my

mentors who approached me about an entry level role as a Recruiting Coordinator (R.C.). I had spent some time in staffing and learned a little bit about recruiting in retail, but the job as and R.C. was a new experience for me. It didn't take me long to realized that the sales and customer service skills I gained in retail were transferrable into recruiting. Soon, I was offered an opportunity to become a recruiter, focusing on clinical roles on the east coast.



After four years, I was approached again to lead a small team of corporate recruiters. This role gave me the opportunity to learn more about the kidney care business and how a company was run. It also allowed me to put into practice the leadership skills I'd learned while in retail. I managed eight different teams while at DaVita and when I left for my current job at SCL Health, I was leading a third of the overall recruitment for the company, including executive recruitment."

Did Not Make Strategic Choices

Unlike some of her colleagues, Suzi says she did not carefully and thoughtfully plan her career path. "I have not made strategic choices about my ultimate career goals and the steps needed to achieve those goals. I did not choose recruiting as a profession. I have been presented with opportunities and more often than not, I've taken them."

In the spring of 2019 Suzie was approached by a recruiter from a Colorado based healthcare system, SCL Health, to discuss an opportunity to lead staff recruitment for the organization. SCL Health is a faith based, non-profit organization and she was immediately intrigued by the opportunity. "After 12 years at DaVita, the timing was right for me to move on and continue to learn.

I started in my role at SCL Health in July of 2019 and have learned a tremendous amount about acute care delivery, and even more about the thoughtful, caring leaders who have navigated through the pandemic over the last year. Through the initial surge in the spring of 2020, and the resurgence

in the fall, and now well into the delivery of the vaccine, our leaders at SCL Health have kept the mission of our ministry at the forefront of every difficult decision that has been made. I feel a remarkable sense of pride in being a part of an organization like SCL Health, whose mission is to "reveal and foster God's healing love by improving the health of the people and communities we serve, especially those who are poor and vulnerable."

Suzi currently leads a team of 18 recruiters and two recruiting managers in recruiting over 5000 hires annually for the care sites in the SCL Health ministry. She describes the work as very fulfilling. "In healthcare services, the strength of the organization's talent is key to delivering superior patient care and achieving the ministry's goals. Recruiting is a direct link in the chain to ensuring the proper staffing levels to reach revenue targets as well. Without the proper talent, most organizations will be limited in the goals they are able to reach.

The other aspect of recruiting is that with every candidate interaction and job offer, we change someone's life with a new opportunity. One of my favorite aspects of being a recruiter is calling someone to make them a job offer. I have had many new employees scream with joy when I made the job offer to them. It's really thrilling to be able to impact someone in that way, and then watch as they progress through the organization.

Her Job Does Not Define Her

My job does not define me. I am not motivated by a title or salary. I know leaders who are, and they seem, to me, to be fundamentally unfulfilled. They've based career decisions on the status they will achieve and how they envision themselves to be perceived by others. The pursuit of money and the desire to fill their homes and world with "stuff" has still left them empty and void of true happiness and contentment. I define myself first as a child of God, a wife, a mother, a daughter, and a friend. Without these definitions, I cannot be an effective leader. I do not draw a line between my professional and personal self but endeavor to be my whole self."



Dawn McNaulty, EMBA Cohort 53

K2fly Consulting Account Director
Industry: Software Sales and Consulting

[LinkedIn](#)

"I was just a poor college student, held up at gunpoint and taken off a bus on my way to a remote surfing town in rural Mexico. I was told by the eight men that I was a German spy and my passport wasn't enough proof of my identification and they needed my visa too. I had already said I was a student and my school was holding my Visa. They took every cent I had. I got back on the bus frightened for my life and arrived in Puerto Escondido with nothing but my emergency credit card."

Dawn's life seems to have been filled with adventures. At age 18 after a rather tumultuous childhood, she moved from the Chicago area to Arizona with only her bicycle and six months of waitress tips. Dawn attended Northern Arizona State University and graduated with a

bachelor's degree in Hotel and Restaurant Management, though her career deviated to selling SAP software for a large global consulting firm.

Dawn got her first administrative sales position at the Warwick hotel when she was 23. "I was very social, and I thought some sort of sales role could be fun, plus I wanted a corporate job for health benefits and weekends off. My next job was in an administrative staffing sales position—I would dress in my suit and walk in and out of office buildings leaving my card and a list of all the positions I could supplement if they were short-handed. I was the top sales rep in four Colorado offices within four months. Within three months of selling IT consulting services, I was making really good money a year. With the guidance of my accountant, at age 24, I bought my first home and at age 26 I bought my first rental property. I was told by my peers and clients, as well as leadership, that I had amazing potential. I was having a ton of fun entertaining clients at sporting events, dinners, lunches and living a lavish lifestyle for a 20-something."

Having worked to pay a hundred percent of her college expenses, Dawn acknowledges that she didn't realize how much her father impacted her life until (not sure what she means) she was older. Her, Dad, a carpenter, built homes but his projects were risky. "He would build a few homes at once and sell them. It was always feast or famine and it put a lot of stress on the family. We moved often as a result, and not able to afford our own mortgage, we had to sell our home and lived in a trailer for a time."

The savings and loan crises of some years ago impacted Dawn and her family significantly because "My dad had a few building projects at the time, and his interest rate shot up to 18 per cent and we had to sell our home and everything else to stay afloat."

It seems that history repeats itself and the 2008 Economic crisis also had a major impact on Dawn. She was then an adult working 60-70 hours a week, recently married, and was funding her husband in starting his own consulting firm. At this time, Dawn was selling SAP enterprise software implementations to the Retail Industry and two of her clients had to file for



bankruptcy. “I sat in project steering committee meetings with CEO’s screaming at me saying that my executive team and I were bankrupting their business. When the housing/stock market crashed, my projects and commissions dried up. I was laid off from my job for the first time in my career and I had an important decision to make. I asked myself, what kind of soul sucking sales job I was going to get next or could I take a break from the rat race, help my husband build his business and get my EMBA, something I always wanted.”

“The day I was laid off, I told my husband that there was no use in trying to sell multi-million-dollar software deals in an economy that would take one to three years to recover. He was incredibly supportive and excited about my idea to apply everything I learned to his business while helping sales and operations on the side.”

With that, Dawn entered the EMBA program at Daniels in 2008 during one of the worst economic downturns in decades and says it was the “best decision I could have made in the moment.”

Today, Dawn, now age 46, is highly motivated to align her personal values with her day to day actions. “My husband and children are my number one priority and I crave them when I am away. They motivate me to be the best I can be and stay healthy, young, and fit. My extended family, the communities I live in, volunteerism, standing up for what is right are all very important. I am motivated to help people and bring innovative solutions that will preserve the environment and the planet for generations to come while preserving cultural heritage for all races and religions. I develop deep relationships quickly and genuinely enjoy interacting with my customers just as much as my friends.”

Dawn was a Board Member of Denver Children’s Home for over five years and is passionate about helping children see their own potential and supporting them in doing great things.

The company Dawn currently works for as an independent consultant, K2fly, is a new type of global software company that delivers enterprise-wide technical assurance solutions for environment, social and governance (ESG)

performance. Head-quartered in Perth and with team members around the world, its environment is described as fast-paced and collaborative. Dawn developed their go-to-market strategy in the Americas, but most importantly she says, “I market K2fly’s Environmental Social Governance solutions to mining geoscientists, mine engineers, VP’s of exploration and group executives of mineral inventory.” In May 2020, Dawn sold K2fly’s largest software deal in the history of the company.

Businesses Must Work Toward the Greater Good

She says that given the current environmental and political environment, “I believe that all businesses must innovate, evolve, serve and work towards the greater good for all of humanity. Big business funding government decisions must stop. I learned about the sustainability index while in the EMBA program in 2009. Fast forward to 2021, and the market is driving positive changes in all industries. Our youth and innovation will save our planet and civilization but not without a lot of squeaky wheels.”

Dawn loves the flexibility of her job, but “could write a book” on the many times she has been sexually harassed, and sexually or age discriminated against. For the most part however, “I roll with the punches, get back up, dust myself off and work even harder. I don’t work harder for my employer; I always do it for my customers.”





Kelly Foley Schin, EMBA Cohort 66

Project Manager & Business Strategist,
Ball Corp.
Industry: Aerospace

[LinkedIn](#)

The first five years of Kelly Foley's life were spent in an Ohio country town on a road with five houses, each having a football sized lot; cornfields to the west; potato fields across the street and a "magical wooded area behind our house that included a ravine down to a stream that was also on our property. For my brother and me, the 'world was our oyster', living and exploring outside without fear but with an incredible curiosity and excitement for nature, and life infused by my mom's teachings and leadership drawing me towards natural science. This drove my educational choices and also an early teaching career in my early 20's."

Today Kelly is a Project Manager with Ball Aerospace Co, has a Master's Degree in Geology/ Geochemistry from The Ohio State University, along with an EMBA from the University of Denver. Her undergraduate

degree was from the Western College Program at Miami University of Ohio.

"Education was a cornerstone of my family culture—everybody in my family and extended family has a master's degree and four of us also have additional post undergraduate degrees."

Kelly says her appreciation for the natural world prompted her to travel to every continent by the age of 30. She said she found an advisor at Ohio State who oversaw field research in Antarctic so "I was motivated to go through the unique Antarctic adventure program and did so with my research team."

When Kelly was in elementary school, she wanted to be a veterinarian but then her focus switched to a bigger picture—"all of nature" she says. For a while, Kelly was a data analyst/geologist and she did subsurface geological data analysis and mapping. In 2018 Kelly was hired at Ball where she says she used all her MBA tools and was appreciated by her colleagues who were all engineers with no business background. She says she saw her first department at Ball not making a profit and felt the department was going to be cut. Therefore, she adds, "I took an on-line Harvard Business course, Disruptive Strategies, and wrote a Ball Aerospace Disruptive Strategies paper." She says she circulated the paper to a variety of directors and executives and four months after doing so, a VP in another group read her paper and asked her to work on a failing project in his area. "Two months later, my first department folded. My extra effort coupled with showing myself as a leader at the company's leadership forum, helped me save my job and stay with the company."

Kelly believes the purpose of business is democracy. "Although I realize Russia, China and other countries all have 'businesses', from my American lens I believe business gives us the platform to communicate, exchange goods and services and drive a good ethical national global culture."

Asked who may have been her role models, Kelly readily offers: "Jane Goodall for her work with Chimps; Diane Fossey for her work with the gorillas; Silvia Earle for her oceanography work; Kuki Gallmann for her work with conservation in Kenya; Oprah Winfrey for her courage to navigate her life toward health and wellbeing; Ruth Bader Ginsburg for her fight for justice and equality, and many others who speak for the environment, promote wellbeing and....equality."





Andrea Passman, EMBA Cohort 49

COO, Caerus Oil and Gas Company
Industry: Oil and Gas

[LinkedIn](#)

Andrea was born and raised near her family's gold mine just 100 miles south of the Arctic Circle. Now, at age 45, Andrea is the Chief Operating Officer of Caerus Oil and Gas Company where she manages a team of 248 people across four offices. This is her story:

"I have a sister, who is four years older than I am, and my parents are still married. I grew up on the gravel pit in Alaska that my grandparents homesteaded in 1953; Alaska was a territory then. My grandparents caravanned with my grandfather's two brothers and their families from Michigan when my mom was a toddler. The Alcan highway was not even paved, and it took them two weeks to drive from Iron Mountain, MI to Fairbanks. The brothers chose Alaska because it was the last frontier, they heard that there were building an

oil pipeline, that they were giving away land, and that there were opportunities. But really, they were poor and desperate, and Alaska was hope. Two of the brother's stayed, each homesteaded 80 acres outside of Fairbanks, planted potatoes, later started a gravel pit that supplied gravel for the pipeline, and then opened a trailer court.

The whole family lived on the land surrounding the gravel pit. Our trailer was in the middle, my aunt's family lived on one side, my uncle's family on the other, and my grandparents were across the lake. My uncle and his families lived on the other end of the lake (pit). We never locked our door, and it was always revolving. Someone was always barging in and all hours of the day, barking at the top of their lungs about something that was broken or that they needed help on, and I thought it was perfectly normal."

From a Family of Pioneers

"My family members were pioneers, and today I am still a pioneer. It is in my genes."

Andrea describes her early lifetime as being 'fun'. "I was surrounded by heavy equipment everywhere, and my mom taught me how to drive a loader before I learned how to drive a car. And every morning I would go to the local café, the Sunset Inn, with my dad in the morning before heading to the mine or school, and I would hear all these men talking about how Alaska should build another pipeline for gas."

"My grandfather had oil leases in the Cook Inlet. He had studied civil engineering when he was young but dropped out to work. He would often talk to me about oil, and equally as much about protecting the environment, as everyone in Alaska did all the time. I started going to the gold mine when I was eight. At the mine there was even more equipment. The gold mine often struggled to make money, and the work was hard and cold, and I thought there had to be a better way. And honestly, I think it was the show Dallas that drove me to study petroleum engineering. Riding around on my horse across my oil fields in Texas seemed a heck of a lot better than digging in the dirt and freezing my tail off, whether at the mine or in the gravel pit. Besides, math and science were easy, and in Alaska women do the same work as men, so I never got the 'girls aren't engineers' message".

"If I was not digging in the dirt growing up, I was at ballet class instead, every spare waking hour. I have always had very high energy, and I figured out at a young age that ballet was the discipline my mind needed to stop the monkeys

from jumping around in there. Even though school was easy, I am not sure I would have ever become *an engineer without learning the discipline behind ballet*. I also played a bunch of woodwind instruments.

My cousin taught me how to play the clarinet, and when I was six, I wrote a letter to the band director, demanding to let me join the band, even though the rules said I needed to be nine. He did let me in, and from that point on, I pretty much decided I could do anything. I have been that same person ever since.



This is also about the time, that my parents said I started to raise myself."

"My dad, Andy, was a gold miner and my mom, Pam, was a counselor, although she did not go back to school to get her master's degree until I was a teenager. My dad was in the Army, that is how he ended up in Alaska, as he was stationed at Fort Wainwright and met my mom there. He went to Vietnam, during the Tet Offensive, was very badly wounded, earned a Silver Star, and returned to Fairbanks."

"After that, he was handicapped, missing fingers on his left hand amongst other injuries, and my mother took care of him during the 19 surgeries that followed. She said she did not know who he was when he came back (due to the war), but that there was no one else to take care of him. He was originally from upstate New York and lived on a working farm; he was always poor and hungry as a kid and Alaska seemed so much better."

Parents Influence as Entrepreneurs

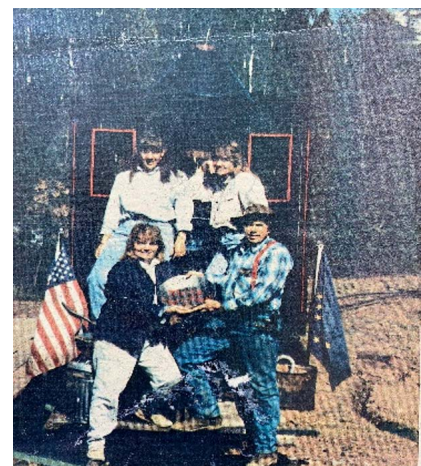
"My parents were entrepreneurs from a young age. They had a laundry that serviced the North Slope (it burned down shortly after I was born), an oil trucking business (Shell put them out of business), built a few houses (I am great at drywall tape), had a salmon farm (they were shut down by the state), and then finally the goldmine (that they lost in a hostile takeover from a financial partner). Seeing their struggles made me realize I wanted to work for a big safe corporate company. My uncle worked as a welder for Alyeska Pipeline, and he always had money. As a teenager, I

wanted to be a big corporate honcho (like all those silly 80s movies about making it to the top with Michael J Fox), in a big company. That seemed safe."

"Although my mom said we had it tough financially tough growing up, I never knew that, and I always thought everything was fabulous. My Mom was great at budgeting and would teach me about managing money. She made a game out of scrounging change together to go get a McDonald's egg McMuffin which was a big treat. When I was a teenager, the goldmine started to do well because my parents turned it into a tourist attraction. Busloads of tourists would visit the mine to pan for gold, and I remember counting stacks of money on the dining room table. My parents took on a financial partner to expand the operation, so they could bring in more people, and a few years later, in a lengthy battle, they lost it all to the partners. I loved the mine and often thought I would run it one day. They built the mine on their backs but did not have the business savvy to keep it. That was a huge motivator for me to get my MBA. I often think that if I knew then what I know now, I could have saved the mine and them."

Impact of Newsworthy Events

Asked what life newsworthy events impacted her, Andrea said she remembered waking up early in the morning, it was still pitch black out, to watch the launch of the Challenger space shuttle. "I was 11 and I loved the shuttle take-offs. My mom and I sat there in silence for a long time after the explosion. I knew all the astronauts had died, and it still makes me sad to this day. It was an engineering flaw, one little O-ring, that led to their deaths. I deal with similar engineering challenges on a daily basis in oil and gas. Every time I go to the drilling rig, I am reminded of how important engineering and quality control are in keeping us safe. Just like the space program, little mistakes in oil and gas can get people killed. I have been fortunate not to have any one die on my watch because I care about their safety and the integrity of our engineering discipline. I have used the Challenger story as an example countless times to remind people of those dangers. *There is nothing more*



important in my job as COO of an oil and gas company, to make sure everyone goes home safe every day."

Andrea, who is now divorced, attended the Colorado School of Mines because it was the top petroleum engineering school in the country and CSM offered her a "nice" scholarship. She also earned an Executive MBA from the University of Denver and has taken advanced coursework in finance from Harvard and big data analytics from Carnegie Mellon University.

At age 31, Andrea's (she is currently 45) answer to being a "little rudderless in her career", was to pursue the DU EMBA. "My career was going well but I wanted to make a step change. I also wanted the business knowledge to make the right calls in my life. As I mentioned before, seeing my family lose their business was a big driver. I never wanted to be in that position. I initially sought out the EMBA for finance but learned so much more about myself and how I wanted to lead. The EMBA jumped started my career ten years over night."

In addition to formal education, Andrea learned a lot from role models in her life—especially her parents and grandfather for their focus on entrepreneurship. "My dad was a great leader at the goldmine; everyone loved him because he cared about them, had fun at work, and he promoted their ideas. My mom was the backbone, the rock. She made sure the train stayed on the track. I try to channel all of them in my career. Every time I go to the field, I am interacting with people that are just like my dad, grandpa, and mom, hard-working people that use their hands and backs to make this company money. They deserve my respect and admiration. Today I have more of a personal brand of advisors versus role models. I call them my professional friends. They are people I have collected throughout my career that I call for advice and they are all friends – we can share a meal together too."

"The idea of being an engineer really started sticking with me around 14 years old. At that time, it was between environmental or biomechanical. I chose petroleum engineering in the final hour because environmental engineers didn't seem to make any money, even though I am still very pro-environment, and Johns Hopkins had accepted me for biomechanical engineering but a school in Baltimore just seemed overwhelming."

Asked what motivates her, Andrea said: "I just like to have a good time and I want everyone else to have a good time too. Growing up in the goldmine was fun. My family made it fun and the people who worked there had fun. You wanted to be there, and work was play. When I think of my core values: transparency, authenticity, learning, passion and fun; I am trying to live those most days."



In her current role as COO Andrea is responsible for the operations of "our" \$1.5 billion private company. "It is my job to ensure we deliver gas profitably and I have responsibility for engineering, operations, geology, safety, and environmental. We drill, frac, and have pipelines across 600,000 acres with 6000 wells. It is extremely satisfying to know that

we are delivery energy, it is tangible. And the team is fabulous. I work with wonderful people, especially the salt of the earth people in the field, who deeply care for each other, and where we work. What can be unsatisfying are the calls in the middle of the night, which are never good, and the constant grind on our industry. I often feel like a constant cheerleader for our industry, but I am also rooted in reality which can be polarizing too. I am not naïve that the world is changing, or in denial, and we work very hard to comply with environmental regulations, keep people safe, and keep producing. I have seen countless friends get laid off in the last year, and the battle can be exhausting."

Thriving In a “Man’s World”

Early in her career, Andrea had a someone, “a company man who taught me how to hold my own amongst men in oil and gas. Very early on he told me to know where my line was in the sand, and never let anyone cross it. That has served me well. Although that was over twenty years ago, he was talking about sticking to my values.”

Andrea says she likes to try to bring play to work while empowering people and “loves the idea of making a bunch of mini-CEOs in the company, like they all run their own businesses. I am hard charging, the bar is very high, and I am also big on singing successes from the top of the trees and failing fast. I am a good listener, which I learned how to do during my EMBA (previously I was just waiting my turn to speak).”



“When I was younger, it was a huge goal of mine to be VP of Engineering at a public company, and then when I got there, I was like, “where’s my ticker tape parade?” All the milestones were great accomplishments, but honestly, they do not mean much to me. I am happiest with friends and family having a great dinner, that I cooked, and we are solving the world’s problems around the dinner table with fabulous wine. Bringing joy to them is my greatest accomplishment.”

Working for an employer that engages in sustainable practices is extremely important to Andrea. “What I love about Caerus is that even though we are one of the smaller guys we are trying to do our part and I am driving it. We are lucky in that we have one of the most beautiful oil and gas fields in the world, in the Rockies. Where we operate is stunning. We want to continue to operate there for many years. We are beating emissions standards and are proactively reducing our methane and spills. We do not want to mess-up the land in which we work and live on. I learned this growing up in Alaska. We use a ton of solar to power our field automation, are actively pursuing building a solar fed electric plant, run natural gas driven equipment, and just moved to hybrid pick-up trucks on the field. The little oil and gas company has an impact to make on energy alternatives as well.”

She believes that the purpose of business is to provide services for the betterment of life.

Professional Hard Knocks

“I was working overseas quite a bit when my marriage fell apart. The job was thrilling, very jet set, but it was impossible to maintain a marriage living in different time zones. After the divorce, I took a job in Pittsburgh, which I am not sure I would have ever done. And then I cried for two years. But I met my new partner (Steve) and a best friend in Pittsburgh. Now I focus more on my partner and friends and maintaining those relationships.”

“A few years ago, I was shockingly fired from a company that I thought I was going to run one day. I was loved by the board, on the succession plan for CEO, I had nothing but stellar achievements, was the only female officer, and it devastated me when it happened. I thought I was ‘unfireable’ and boy was I wrong. I could not sleep for a month afterwards, lost a ton of weight, and spent way too much time with lawyers. I knew my values did not align with the CEO’s years before. I had sought out a coach at that time, a Harvard psychoanalyst, who told me, “Andrea you have three choices. You can stay and keep your head down and mouth shut, which is not you. You can dig in and play the game of politics, which you have the ability to do, but you will lose a piece of your soul. Or you can continue to do what you do - trying to drive your change, and eventually you will be fired.” He was

right, two years after that conversation, I was fired. It was a powerful lesson and now I know I must make sure my values align with the company's. I am in a company now that aligns with my values every day and the board wants what I bring to the table."

Paying It Forward for Other Women Engineers

One of Andrea's favorite parts about being in the oil and gas industry is "being unique as a woman". "When I went to Mines, there was one other woman in my petroleum engineering classes. She works for BP and we still stay in touch. When I worked offshore, I used to have to drag a mattress into the electronics room to sleep, it was air conditioned in there and it was over 100 degrees in the Gulf, because there were no quarters for women. But times like that, seemed like an adventure to me. Today, there are a lot more women in the field, but people are still surprised to see a female COO. Only one per cent of execs in oil and gas are women. Just the other day one of our drillers said to me, 'I told my teenage daughter about you and she said that is so cool.' I hope one day she will go into energy, which now has a 15% female workforce."

"The great part," says Andrea, "has been paying it forward for other women she mentors two mid-level female managers, both in construction, and both engineers from Mines. "Working with them feeds my soul. They are amazing and paving the way for other women as well."

Coping with COVID

"The pandemic started with my partner's dad dying from COVID in March of 2020. He was in one of the ill-fated nursing homes in New Jersey and died alone in the hospital. It was so sad. So right away, the seriousness of the pandemic was real and so was the fear. Since there was nowhere to go, and I was too scared to anyway, I doubled down on work."

Because she threw herself into her job, "The pandemic ended up being a boom for my career. We had a wildly successful year at Caerus when there were \$198 billion in write-downs in oil and gas last year. We asked ourselves, how can the pandemic accelerate our transformation? I had only been with the company six months when it hit and was just getting my plan to transform operations, as the

company was near bankruptcy when I joined. So, we just super-charged everything and shortened the timelines. We had a plan to go digital over the course of the year, and the pandemic forced us to get there almost immediately, all hands-on deck. The field kept operating, you must in oil and gas, but the pandemic was a lightning rod, an excuse even, to make massive sweeping changes to our business, for the better. It was the most profitable year in the company's history. I made a plea to the field: We have two choices. We can take the blue pill, and continue to do what we have always done, and go bankrupt like so many other oil and gas companies. Or we can take the red pill, change the way we work for this new world, and get out of this mess. Half of them had to look up my reference to The Matrix, but the point was made. We took the red pill."

"During this time, I made a conscientious effort to get out to the field more often, mediate daily, exercise a lot, quit drinking, eat healthier, take more hikes, reconnect with friends, and started a degree online in design."

What's Left?

Asked what she yet wants to accomplish, Andrea responded: "I think I have accomplished it. It would be great to be CEO, and sit on some boards, but if this is it, I feel good about what I have achieved. And personally, I feel pretty good about that part too. I am a pretty good partner, friend, sister, and daughter. I am beginning to think about a 'second act' and starting to formulate ideas such as to: write a to go live in Bordeaux or Burgundy for a year, learn to speak French better (or again in my case), drink great wine, cook a lot of fabulous French food, and find the best bread in whatever little village we land in."

Her advice to younger people today: "I think I have said it a few times, figure out your values and live them. Success is what you feel when you look at your life and you like it. For me it is comfort and joy. *I wouldn't do a damn thing differently if I had it to do over again!"*



Kirsten Benefiel, EMBA Cohort 61

CEO HSS Security Co. & Founding Member,
Colorado Inclusive Economy
Industry: Security

[LinkedIn](#)

"There is real power in showing up as 'authentically you,'" says Kirsten Benefiel, CEO of HSS and Board Member of Urban Peak. The world needs diversity—people with a variety of perspectives, experiences and strategies to share. People need to be able to connect and see themselves in our leaders. The women who came before me, those who broke the glass ceiling, fought so hard to get there."

Kirsten has indeed "gotten there". She was among 2020's class of **Denver Business Journal Outstanding Women in Business**. Kirsten, 46, became the only female CEO at one of the top firms in the security industry when she took the reins at HSS in early 2020 after serving as COO.

"I was recently asked to discuss my career roadmap with a group of graduating MBA students, and I realized what fun I had really thinking about my career choices, challenges, influences and reflections. I chose a few stories to share here that I normally wouldn't. Why? Because I hope that something I said resonates and gives someone the spark they need to keep going. Fundamentally, I believe leadership is a verb and it is about empowering and listening. I keep a notebook full of the lessons I've learned over the course of my previous career stops at Accenture, ViaWest, Newmont Mining and other companies. This notebook has become a touchstone for me, giving me time to reflect and be more intentional with my words and actions.

Never Confuse Yourself with Your Role

One of my favorite lessons I revisit is to "never confuse yourself with the role. Your self-worth isn't tied to your job title, so how you treat people and how you show up is what's most important to demonstrate leadership."

"Showing up" has been demonstrated for me since, literally, birth. I would say that my older sister and brother were my earliest life influences—they were ten and eight years my senior and, for all intents and purposes, raised me. They were my ultimate example of how to "show up". I've shared recently that my dad was an alcoholic, who walked out on us, and I watched as my mom worked but we still hovered barely above the poverty line. We faced daily challenges—electricity was shut off, the constant threat of foreclosure and living every day feeling on the brink. My siblings took turns making sure I was taken care of until they left the house and then the torch passed to me to help raise my younger sister. My siblings each forged their own path in life and are still the people who provide guidance and set strong examples for me. They raised me with a strong work ethic; set high expectations and didn't allow much time to feel sorry for myself. Honestly, I was actually kind of clueless as a kid - I thought it was normal that my sister, as a high school senior, was my brownie troop leader, meal provider and homework checker and my brother, as a high school sophomore, coached my basketball team and drove me everywhere. Weren't everyone's siblings raising them? When I look back now, through my lens as a parent, I see how much they sacrificed as kids themselves to ensure my little sister and I were okay. It grounds me in how truly fortunate I was and am.

Community Helped Raise Her

Growing up, community is ‘who’ helped raised me — whether it was a local scholarship, a teacher mentor, or a mom who packed a few extra ‘cool snacks’ for me. I try never to forget that lesson. I measure myself on how well I show up for others. If anything, this pandemic just inspires me up to do more: Add one more mentee, make one more teammate call, have one more friend over for my kids. I am more invested than ever with the kids I serve (as a board member) at Urban Peak. I will

never underestimate the value of a small gesture and the impact it had in my life, and how I can pay that forward.

I started my professional career at Accenture, then Andersen Consulting, and I am so grateful for it. Besides the fact that

this small-town Jersey girl who had been on a plane exactly three times got to travel all over the world, I also got to do so while working at several Fortune 500 companies. My type A personality and collaborative “let’s just figure it out” approach played well there. Then, my three-year old started calling me “mommy plane” (let’s be clear – it was said as one word, no comma – and it stung) and I realized my values were out-of-whack. The adrenaline of solving complex business issues, the constant learning environment and on-demand lifestyle were addicting and that is exactly why I chose to step away. I was struggling to find work I loved and show up at home in a way that was meaningful to me. It proved to be harder than I could imagine, and I really had to be intentional about what I wanted from a career – I had operated for so long in a scarcity mindset – that there wasn’t enough to go around and I had to keep working harder and longer. That mindset kept me sharp and it made me exhausted.

After Accenture, I took a role at Newmont Mining. The CEO asked me to be his chief of staff which turned out to be a great way for me to leverage my consulting skills and to see how life worked inside of a company. The experience at Newmont gave me the courage to really identify what I

wanted. My time at Newmont was incredibly transformational—I had two young boys at home, I was making major career changes and I was supported beyond belief by the company and their leadership team. It was there that I started to think more about not just ‘climbing the ladder’ but actually thinking about where the ladder was taking me. I chose to become more intentional about building my career and adopting an “abundance (over scarcity) mindset.”

HSS, Kirsten’s current employer, HSS, specializes in physical and virtual managed security services in high-risk environments such as healthcare, aviation and government facilities, where safety and security are critical. Founded in 1967, the Denver-based company employs more than 3,500 teammates across the country and offers a new generation of technology-focused security services through its HSS Technology Services division. HSS Technology Services provides turnkey healthcare technology management and integrated security services solutions, with offerings such as Spotlight™ and AI-powered thermal cameras. These are designed to help companies combat two of the most dangerous threats they are currently facing: COVID-19 and cyberattacks.

Shifting my mindset did not come easily. I developed a personal platform to hold myself accountable on what I really wanted next in my career. I knew that if I didn’t define what I wanted, I would end up taking the next job offered to me...out of fear of not having a job. I articulated what I wanted: working for a Colorado-based company which aligned with my values, was team and community oriented, and the role had to be transformational in nature. This led me to ViaWest and then onto accepting the COO role at HSS.

My advice for emerging women leaders: Don’t focus on scarcity – don’t shrink, don’t conform — show up. Be authentically you and know there is more out there. Keep listening, keep learning, keep growing, keep asking questions. (Oh, and write it down and hold yourself accountable!)





Sarah Holtze Treadway, EMBA Cohort 51

President and Co-CEO, Stout Street Hospitality
Industry: Hospitality

[LinkedIn](#)

At age 41 and with four small children under the age of seven, Sarah Holtze Treadway is a busy woman. She is also Co-CEO and President of Stout Street Hospitality and Magnolia Hotels where she has worked for 15 years, starting as the head of sales.

"In about 2nd grade when asked what I wanted to be I answered, 'an office guy like my Dad.' My mom, questioned, 'why don't you want to be a College Professor like me?' to which I replied, 'because you come home and keep working and when Dad comes home, he watches TV.' I gleaned from that story, not that I want to watch TV at night but that I knew early on that I wanted to run my own business and be in charge of my own destiny."

She notes that her parents went to a small Liberal Arts school in Iowa for undergraduate studies and she was raised to believe that was the best choice for herself too. Her undergraduate degree is from Bucknell University in PA.

Sometimes life deals us some hard blows, like being cut from a sports team, which can teach us valuable lessons. According to Sarah, she played many sports and even lettered in Field Hockey and Lacrosse in High School. "It was clear that some up and coming younger teammates were more talented and frankly probably worked harder than I did, and in the fall of my Senior year I was cut from the Field Hockey team. It was a huge blow to my ego. I needed to be great and I thrive on competition, especially when I can win."

That experience caused her to change course and Sarah signed up for her first debate class and joined the Speech and Debate team. "In that one year I made new friends, found new talents, was awarded a letter in Speech, and was chosen to be one of the speakers at high school graduation. Before being cut from my sports I was unaware I had skills in public speaking."

Sarah's mother was an English Professor, with a focus on the classics at Metropolitan State College of Denver for 30 years. Her father was a developer born from a general contractor past. He founded Magnolia Hotels and developed Stout Street Hospitality.

Sarah chose to go to Bucknell University for her undergraduate degree because her older brother, Eric, was attending there and they would overlap for one year. "I majored in European History because I loved the stories and still enjoy reading Historical non-fiction but as I get older, Historical fiction is really fun also. I followed Eric to Bentley and then to NYC after college. This began our relationship as adults, having the same group of friends, trusting each other and then eventually as we both found our way back to Denver (for me via NYC, L.A., and San Francisco) developing a company together." With two older brothers, Sarah grew up feeling as though she needed to fight for her position in the family and within the family business.

Sarah enrolled in DU's EMBA program at the age of 27. "I had just begun working for my family business and felt as though I had a gap in knowledge of accounting and finance." Professors Mac Clouse and John Bazley

(now deceased) were her heroes at Daniels. Mac continues to teach Finance at DU while John Bazley was Sarah's Accounting Professor.

Sarah says she had wanted to run a hotel company for as long as she can remember. "My first boss at Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts was Anne Mansfield. She hired me as an assistant after we bonded over stories about Bucknell. It made me realize how important your reputation is in every aspect of your life and how that is reflected in your network. Anne was powerful, thoughtful and a mother. She made me feel that I could have it all."

An Award-Winning Hotel Management Company

An award-winning hotel management company, Stout Street Hospitality is said to offer a distinct contrast to the status quo by bringing its unique perspective to every project. "We make hotels that feel good. We make hotels that you want to own, people want to stay in, and we want to work in. We make hotels that are a favorite among a wide spectrum of guests and partners alike." Additionally, Stout Street's market and financial performance abilities exceed that of most competitors throughout the industry. "We consistently run 80% room margins at our hotels, and we can at your hotel also."

She says her dad risked everything professionally moving their family to Denver in the 80's. He revitalized many historic buildings and helped to bring cities back to life. "He was the family's adventurer. My parents are my role models as they have provided the road map and example for a happy, healthy partnership full of balance and joy. They will celebrate their 52nd anniversary this summer."

Sarah acknowledges that COVID has been the biggest challenge of her career.

After not being able to see her teams from March – May 2020, in June, Shea (Sarah's husband) and Sarah packed up their four kids in a 32-foot RV and headed toward Texas. "We spent the next eight weeks driving 5,300 miles to visit all six Magnolia

Hotels, located in Dallas, Houston, Omaha, St. Louis, New Orleans, and Denver."

"The trip," she says, "began right after George Floyd's murder. My intent was to visit team members and talk about pay cuts, sickness, fear and all things COVID. This morphed into a visit to talk about race, fear, equality and what we/I can do to make sure our company was a safe place. I got to hear firsthand how the events of the year were impacting their lives directly."



Restored to reflect its original appearance, this landmark edifice built in 1910 includes original architectural masonry details and an exterior clock reminiscent of 17th Street's past as the "wall street of the west." Where historic details add interest to the chic design of our thoughtfully appointed rooms, pure hospitality awaits in the center of downtown at Magnolia Denver, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel.

As with many other professions, Sarah traditionally finds herself the only woman in the room. "We develop historic buildings, reposition them, add value and operate the management of the hotels. The best thing about what we have done however, is create an environment that empowers our employees. We value Family first and that family has extended to our Magnolia Family. That's why COVID has been particularly hard."

COVID Challenges to the Industry

"COVID has added new and different challenges for all of us this past year by putting a stop to business travel a year ago and because the company had to let go of 85% of its employees. We negotiated deals with our lenders to survive another day and we have leveraged every line of credit available to continue to pay payroll." She notes that she has started to call the future 'Sarah 2.0' because as we get to the other side of COVID, my company will be forever changed and in some ways we can be better, more efficient and more profitable after this."

Despite the challenges at work, and being the mother of four small children, Sarah currently serves on the Community Advisory Board of PSL / Rocky Mountain Children's Hospital and also the Rocky Mountain Children's Health Foundation. In the past she has been on the boards of Historic Denver and also Jr. League of Denver.

Asked about her greatest accomplishments to date Sarah acknowledges, "Marrying my amazing husband, Shea. He is my better half, my calm presence, my forest through the trees and the support that has allowed me to tackle bigger career goals. Professionally, we repositioned a boutique hotel in New Orleans in 2019, opened an award-winning restaurant that we conceptualized with one of my friends. The hotel opened in early 2020 and has been struggling due to COVID but I still consider the hotel a major accomplishment which has just not completed its cycle yet."

She is most proud of her four "ridiculous and smart kids and the livelihood that we have created for the 600+ employees in the Magnolia Family." If she had it to do all over again, Sarah says she really wishes that she had gone abroad in college. "My husband played sports in school, so he didn't go either. We have made it a goal to move abroad with our kids for a year. The plan is one year before the kids are in High School, suggestions on location are welcome!"





Stacy as a very successful entrepreneur

Stacy Cason, EMBA Cohort 62

Founder & CEO Planetarie Hemp Processing & Commercial Real Estate Developer
Industry: Cannabis and Real Estate

[LinkedIn](#)

Raised in rural north Louisiana, on a ranch in a very patriarchal community where women were expected to be quiet and take care of babies, “for a career, girls had two choices: becoming a nurse or teacher.” Now at age 40, Stacy Cason takes pride in shattering those expectations. She is leading a successful career as CEO and founder of Planetarie, a water extraction and consumer CBD company in the Cannabis Technology industry. She is also Principal at Endurance Real Estate Partners, a diversified regional real estate company, that focuses upon the creation, development, and management of quality real estate projects for the tenants and investors alike.

Initially however, Stacy followed a more traditional career path, but shed it soon after obtaining her Executive MBA degree. “I was good at math and science, and also writing” says the highly energized business executive. “I was awarded a full scholarship for undergraduate school, so I majored in nursing and graduated in three years with honors. My Mom’s aspiration for me was to win a beauty pageant, marry well and have several kids. My father, on the other hand, wanted me to be tough, stay in Louisiana and have a big family. I was always self-motivated and somehow kept myself on target with high goals...yet still, where I am today is NOTHING like I imagined.”

Stacy, whose father was a logger and cattle rancher, still works 12 hours a day on the land. Her mom has a bachelor’s degree in social studies with a minor in English and taught high school before becoming a stay at home mother.

Growing Up Poor

“Growing up we were poor and in a rural area where everyone else was too. My mom made most of my dresses; we grew our own food and had a small wooden house that my father built with wood he cut. In fourth grade, I went to a new school in the ‘city’ where they had a gifted and talented program which I loved, but I was bullied for being the poor country kid. In high school I wanted the popular clothes but was denied for the most part due to money. My Mom told me I ‘better marry a man with money to buy you nice clothes.’” Instead, Stacy has made her own money and is buying herself designer brands clothing!

Asked what newsworthy events may have shaped her life, Stacy admits she really doesn’t remember many such events because they did not have the internet until she went away to college, had no TV and was “fairly removed from the world”.

Stacy, who earned her first Master’s degree in Anesthesiology and attended Harvard’s Graduate School of Design



Stacy as a young girl

for Real Estate after completion of her MBA, describes her aunt as a role model: "She was the only female from our family to earn a Master's degree and is very strong, smart and independent." Stacy also adds Tribby Warfield, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer at APC automotive Technologies, to the list of role models and describes Tribby as a "strong, successful, world-traveling businesswoman who is also a kind and a wonderful human being." Stacy met Tribby through the EMBA program at Daniels where Tribby often guest lectures.

Continuing to make pivots and accomplishing major feats are what drive Stacy. She now has two master's degrees, has completed more than one ironman, competes in body building events, and has created "something out of nothing", her company, Planetarie which has a patent pending for hemp extraction.

In many ways Stacy has combined her talents, educational background, interests, energy, and enthusiasm into her philosophy of turning life's lemons into successes and creating something amazing out of it. "I have been asked if I was the wife while being the only female on a job site and I have felt like I continually have to prove myself as the underdog. These perceptions have fueled me to prove others wrong and that can be exhausting. I am probably too hard on myself, so very determined and driven to do what 'they' say cannot be done."



An illustration on a blue background shows a hand in a black suit sleeve holding a dark grey watering can. The can is tilted, and a stream of white dots representing water is being poured onto a green plant in an orange pot. Two green dollar bills are shown floating in the air near the plant, as if they are being used as fertilizer or are being watered.

Angel Investing Opportunities



DU Angels' Managing Director, Caroline Gash and Director of Investor Relations, Sarah Laughlin, launched DU Angels in late 2020. The goal is to help startup companies gain access to seed and Series A capital. This early-stage capital helps businesses grow and scale their operations and marketing to gain market traction. The capital required goes beyond dollars and cents and includes human capital, defined as DU Angels investors' time, talent, expertise, and networks.

Sarah Laughlin is a passionate, serial entrepreneur and start-up community builder. She most recently co-founded the DU Angels, an alumni-run Angel Investment Network. Prior to launching DU Angels, she co-founded a SaaS company called Vox Insights and launched Slope Threads, an e-commerce ski apparel company in 2018 while completing the PMBA program at Daniels. Her experience as a multiple-time startup

founder has led her to help establish the DU Angels Investment Network. She is driven by her desire to support founders within the DU community and beyond.

The goal of the group is ultimately to identify the most promising early-stage companies — high-growth, high-potential companies — and provide capital to them, both monetary and human, to unlock value and drive ROI for all of our stakeholders and the founders as well.

Startup businesses that receive angel investments are up to 25% more likely to survive after four years and up to 19% more likely to have grown to 75 employees in that time period, according to a 2016 study by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, a Kansas City, Mo.-based nonprofit organization that works with communities in education and entrepreneurship.

DU Angels is based in Denver, Colorado, but works with startup companies and DU alumni investors throughout the country. DU Angels currently has 20 members and plans to make their first investment as a group in March, 2021. The DU Angels managers and board members represent a collective 70 years of angel investing and entrepreneurship and have founded or invested in over 100 companies during that time. For more information about DU Angels, please contact sarah@duangels.com or [720-427-4806](tel:720-427-4806).

DU Angels is not officially sponsored by or endorsed by the University of Denver.

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Contact Us

Send information, story ideas, updates, etc. to Barb directly at BJKreisman@gmail.com and they will be published as space permits. If you do not want to receive monthly information in this format, you can unsubscribe from the newsletter.

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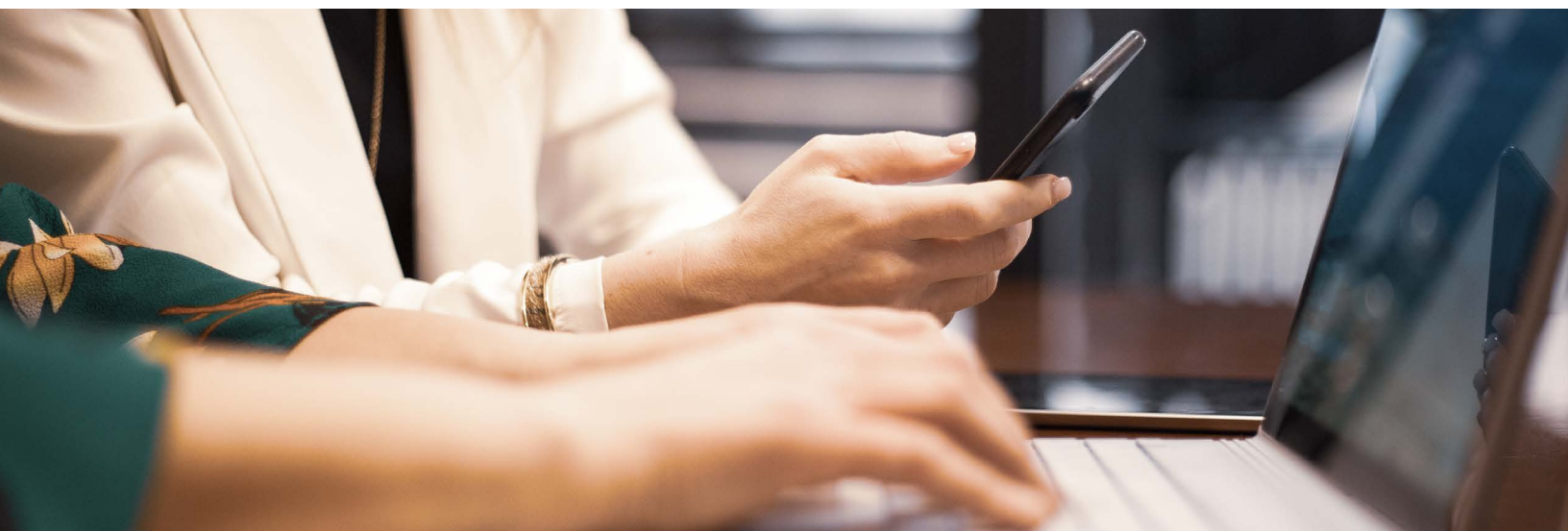
The acronym VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) was originally introduced in the US Army War College in the early 90's to describe the shift to asymmetrical and multilateral challenges for the military following the Cold War. Since then, it has been used more broadly to help describe the challenging context many organizations are facing today—one of accelerating change and disruption.

VUCAThrive.com

Intergistic Solutions

The word Intergistic is actually the combination three words—integration, synergy and energy. Our intent is to leverage our knowledge and experience to prompt conversations and provide meaningful solutions to issues facing individuals in both the private and public sectors, focusing on People, Profits and Purpose.

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