



CELEBRATING
WOMEN
OF THE UA TECH PARK



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
TECH PARKS
ARIZONA



MARCH 2020

#WomenOfTheUATechPark



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Women of The University of Arizona (UA) Tech Park are showcased in honor of National Women's Month. The Women of the UA Tech Park shared how they were inspired and how they inspire others through multiple channels including a panel discussion, social media and website profiles. These faces symbolize the diversity and strength that drive the business forward. Each woman's story is shared to help empower others and express the unique attributes that make one successful. The UA Tech Park aspires not only to create communities of innovation for businesses but also to be a supportive environment where people are empowered and thrive.

Throughout March we've highlighted these amazing women here at the UA Tech Park. The women of our campus exemplify the beauty of diversity and how coming together in unity makes them even more unstoppable. While society often lets their accomplishments go unnoticed, we simply can not ignore the great impact these fabulous ladies have in carrying out our mission to promote research and education, technology innovation and commercialization. We want nothing more than to support these women as they continue to create, lead, and innovate, for they too are at the forefront of everything we do. We aim to celebrate our campus' women not just during Women's History Month, but all year-long because their intelligence, contributions, diversity, and uniqueness radiate all 365 days of the year. Here's to you, ladies! Thank you for being so remarkable.



LEE WERNER

Cashier, Eurest - Café Zona

I am a fearless woman. I have had many challenges in my life, but I have always made through it. There are no negatives in life, only challenges that make you stronger. I want to remind women not to forget that you CAN achieve goals on your own! My goal is to bring a smile and sometimes a laugh to my customers, especially the non-morning people.

My wish for women is that your coffee, patience, and Wi-Fi are strong. May all your moments feel extraordinary. Laugh often, even if no one else knows why. Be true to yourself through your sense of humor, wonder, and uniqueness. Celebrate life and know that you are worthy of happiness.



MICA KINDER

CEO, Insulin Initiatives

I am a triumphant woman. I want to inspire other women by letting them know that your circumstances do not define you.

The supportive women that I have met recently really inspire me to show up and make miracles happen: Courtney, Katie, Jessica, Anita, Shari, Sonia, Rhonda, Liz, Dre, and many more. These smart, amazing, talented women accepted me and brought me into their tribe. I never really fit in before. I deeply thank them for telling me on a daily basis that I was one them until finally, I believed I was.

My biggest piece of advice to myself and other women - stop putting everyone else's wants and needs before mine. By taking care of yourself, you are better able to take care of everyone else.

I am not only inspired but empowered by my incredible family. My dad who has gone to work every day, consistently for the last 32 years, whether he was sick or hurt. He is always present for family who are sick or hurt, whether celebrating an event or even dying. He showed me that working for yourself isn't easy, but he kept showing up and made it possible for my mom to be present for everything. My mom empowers me by being present for everything, I couldn't have done it without you. My kids empower me too. I am so proud of the incredible adults they have become! They have overcome things that would make most adults give up and they inspire me every day to do better and be better. They make me who I am.



JENNIFER HARRINGTON

z/OS DFSMSHsm Development, IBM

I am a woman of empowerment. I hope to empower other women by being visible and present. We tell girls that they can be anything they want, but I think that showing them is more meaningful. Seeing other women constantly pushing boundaries and challenging the status quo is very empowering. I feel most empowered when other women choose to be themselves no matter what.

At a young age, I tended to be a bit disruptive at times and found school to be a bit boring. I hadn't yet been taught how to channel that energy into being productive. One of my teachers in grade school took the time to realize that I was a little too passionate so she invested her personal time into me, finding creative ways that I could learn in addition to our regular curriculum. This kept me (and her!) sane. That experience empowered me to find new ways to succeed through unconventional means no matter the circumstances. It helped me realize that everyone has potential even if they don't fit a certain mold. As I am given more opportunities to lead, I always look at how I can empower others to succeed.



TINA VINDIOLA

Executive Assistant, Raytheon

I am a woman of change. I've been inspired by all the women in my life, my close friends, my family members, the women I have supported and the women I have worked with. My mother is my mentor, she took disability and turned it into an opportunity. She was born with power, the power to succeed and the power to do whatever she wanted to do. I learned from her at a young age by watching her. She empowered me to tap into my confidence which comes from within. Nobody can give you confidence. Confidence comes from within our souls. I want to empower women by being honest, present, approachable. We should celebrate each other and be the kind of person that always adds value to those we are around. After all, we all shine brighter together. Be the change you want to see!



NATALIE MCENTAFFER

Manager of Client Services, Ascensus

I am a woman of action. I want women to know they can do anything. There is never a task that cannot be accomplished regardless of perceived fears or hesitations. I have watched people in my life complete things I never thought were possible. It's inspiring. It gave me the courage to stop saying I can't and finding a way to get done what I want to get done.

I want to inspire other women with my actions to prove that the impossible is achievable.



KIM ALEGRIA

Senior Optical Engineer, Coherent

I am a woman of focus. There is no challenge that I cannot overcome.

I come from a long line of engineers. I first realized I wanted to pursue a technical career when taking an aptitude test in middle school. My father, an engineer at Raytheon, suggested I pursue a career in the Optical Engineering field because of the numerous opportunities. I made this career goal my focus. Although there were not many women in this technical field, I didn't let that keep me from succeeding.

I was very fortunate to have parents who were supportive of my career decisions, whatever the choice may have been. My father was very proud of my choice, my grandfather (an electrical engineer) was extremely excited to have an engineer grandchild and my mom was my biggest cheerleader.

The most important thing I've learned is that you must believe in yourself. You can't grow if you don't take risks. In order to get through tough times, you have to believe you can overcome and take the necessary proper steps. Support from the important people in your life can help keep you from falling down, but only you can take the first step forward.



SHARI KAHN

Administrative Assistant, University of Arizona Center for Innovation

I am a grateful woman. It is important to know your worth and not to be afraid to be proud of who you are and all that you have accomplished.

I like to empower women by helping boost other woman's self-esteem. This is very rewarding, not only making them feel great but myself as well. One of my favorite sayings is: "Be the woman who fixes another woman's crown without telling the world it was crooked". That is what I aspire to do every day!

I am so fortunate and have been surrounded by incredibly strong women in my life. My mother and sister have been my inspiration. They taught me to love unconditionally; to be open-minded and compassionate to other people and their feelings. Strength not only comes from within but from those whom we surround ourselves with.



CYNTHIA DAVIS

Customer Service, Optum Rx

I am a woman of strength. My role as a Latina woman is to never lose my identity and to be as fierce and fiery as my abuela. Raising my own 3 daughters, I want to empower them to be strong and encourage them to be amazing Latina women leaders. I want to nurture and foster their skills. I want their voices to be heard, whenever possible. I want to encourage them to solve their issues and develop their coping skills. I want to inspire them to take a risk so they build their self-esteem. I am raising powerful women, that have the freedom to disagree with me but, it doesn't mean they will win. Overall, I make sure to listen and remind them how much I love them. I acknowledge their struggles and support them as their strong Latina mother.



JACINTA ESQUER

Service and Sales Senior Supervisor, Citi

I am a woman of transformation. I'm personally inspired by the strength and perseverance of all women. When I think of the women who have had a profound impact on me, there are three that come to mind: My mom, a single parent who raised me while tirelessly working and pursuing her education simultaneously; she persevered despite the odds. My aunt, who has endured so much grief yet manages to be the hardest working person I've ever met, bar none. My "mother in spirit," who always gives selflessly, without fail, to others in need.

I've come to embrace the philosophy that by showing up as ourselves, we permit others to do the same. Therefore, I seek to both inspire and uplift other women by being brave and living authentically on my terms. I have reinvented my identity and life more than once and I've done it despite the proverbial sideways glance. We all have a choice in how we live our lives, and no one is ultimately accountable to that choice, except you.



SARA CORONADO

Performance Analyst, IBM

I am a woman of inspiration. I am inspired by women who take an active role in the personal and professional development of those around them. We all make mistakes, but the great leaders see those missteps as opportunities for growth and the chance to build personal connections. When we come alongside one another with constructive feedback and encouragement, we have the power to shape the next generation. I want to inspire women to make that investment in their peers!



SRUTHI NATT

Biomedical Engineer, NANOPEC

I am a woman of ambition. Being awestruck by how airplanes could fly was one of my earliest memories, and ever since then, I knew engineering was my calling. I moved to the United States as a graduate student from India to pursue my dreams of becoming a biomedical engineer. To me, science has presented a world full of opportunities and I believe anyone can be involved, regardless of their gender and affinities. My favorite quote is: "the harder you work, the luckier you get!"



VICKIE PALMER

Director of Operations and Events, Association of University Research Parks

I am a woman of impact. A woman, alone, has power; collectively we have an impact. I truly believe empowered women empower women. Inspiring, encouraging, and bolstering the women around you, sparks a fire within our hearts and minds. Strengthening the bonds among women of all generations, respecting the value of the voices among diverse communities, emboldens women to share their opinions and increasing our overall worth – making an impact through strength in numbers.

As a mother of two young women, I celebrate their self-expression and encourage them to be their authentic selves. Loving yourself, respecting your body, mind, and soul is the greatest gift you can share with others. Being genuine and appreciating your quirky self, empowers you to embrace the life and circumstances you live, assisting you to overcome challenges and reminds us that we are stronger when acting together.



JADE OWENSBY

Client Services Manager, Ascensus

I am a woman of encouragement. My mother worked in a GM factory, raised her children and still managed every day of life. She taught me perseverance. She taught me strength. She taught me to be the woman I am today.

I want to be an invaluable woman. A woman that works hard every day, takes care of her family and still encourages other women to stand strong. Life isn't easy. Life as a woman isn't easy. But if we all pitch in to revive each other, empower each other, then we will champion each other. We should empower the women around us to succeed and excel in every aspect of their lives. We are currently entering a new era where women are being celebrated and are given opportunities more than ever before. Let's not throw these opportunities away in the quest to get ahead of one another. Let's stop mistreating each other and making everything a competition. Next time you see a woman working towards success and her goals, empower her! Give her support. Be her 'hype' woman. Give her advice. Give her encouragement. Give her every ounce of effort you would want someone to give you if you were in her shoes. I promise you she will never forget it. And you never know, it could pay off in the future for you and the many other women around you.



JOHANA GUZMAN

Officer - Costco Cards, Citi

I am a woman of PODER! My parents are both from Mexico. Machismo isn't present in my parent's household! My parents have always worked hard together in everything they do. They never expected one to cook dinner, or the other to clean, wash clothes or fold it! They worked together, to show us they were in it to win.

My parents took the "traditional" Latino culture and turned it on its head. They taught me how to be like them. Strong. Independent. Someone who doesn't need anyone for anything. A person who can get by on their own steam and if things became difficult, keep pressing forward. My determination came straight from them.

The biggest challenge has been working towards changing the perception of how Latinos contribute to this country. Breaking barriers has been both the greatest challenge and the greatest opportunity in my career. The lack of Latino representation in my industry has been my greatest motivation. Figuring out how to overcome that and how to be authentic to myself and my background was an incredible learning experience and development opportunity. When I joined Citi, the company invested in my leadership skills, matching me with mentors and surrounding me with amazing talent. I've learned to break barriers and I have the confidence to be myself and to celebrate diversity. And that has made all the difference.



KERRY GONZALES

Technical Project Manager, Steward Observatory

I am a woman of confidence. Being a woman in a male-dominated industry, you are very aware of other people's misconceptions about gender and weakness. Having to create your own identity and become known and respected in a male-dominated field, requires strength and determination.

My mother helped shape me into who I am today. She was a single, working mother of two young girls. My sister and I grew up believing that we could do and be anything we wanted. As I gained confidence in my teens and beyond, I started to see the real possibilities of what I could accomplish. And the older I got, the more I knew I could do anything. Now, not only do I have a career in engineering, but I also drive a racecar in autocross competitions in my free time. I love the challenge of racing and building my car from the bottom up. Challenge yourself to show others you have no limits on what you can be.



SARA ENRIGHT

Director, Client Services, Ascensus

I am a woman of progress. I'm not sure that I've broken any barriers on my own, but I think enlisting in the military 30+ years ago was not something many women did. Women were not always valued in the military, but rather tolerated in many instances. At my first station, I was told by my leader upon arrival that women did not belong in the military and to stay out of the way. My determination to do well regardless of the support I received was a result of how my parents raised me and perhaps my own stubbornness. However, I hope that each of us focuses on making the world a better place where everyone is valued for their contributions. Let us remember that when we have two good choices, always go with the one that scares you the most, because that's the one that's going to help you grow.



KIMBERLEE AVANT

Senior Manager, Human Resources Business Partner, Raytheon



I am a woman of innovation. I enjoy executing innovation. I am fulfilled by the ability to be creative in everything I do. It is part of my nature.

I am a woman who is not afraid to push the status quo and embrace change. Even at the top, you can always improve and achieve more. I am the product of many college graduates in my family. My parents always communicated to “get your paper, as it is something no one can take from you, and something you will earn on your own.” I still live by those words of wisdom today. No one can do the work for you. You must persevere, work hard, be true to yourself, embrace the failures, and enjoy the wins. The saying “people are in your life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime” rings true. You will experience many lessons throughout your journey here on earth, and it is what you make of it. Throughout my work/life journey, I have always tried to learn from what is around me, why I am placed here, what do I need to learn, and then how will I pay it forward. Relationships are key to execution and being able to expand your network. I learned that life is short when I was in a car accident back in high school. At that moment, I learned that everything I knew could be gone, including myself. Live in the moment, and although life might be tough, realize that you are learning a lesson that will make you stronger. I have tried to keep that drive and innovation throughout my work



SHANNON GALLAHER

Senior Software Engineer, IBM



I am a woman of courage. I am inspired by those who lead by example, listen well, make thoughtful decisions, and bring out the best in others. I strive to be this type of person and am immensely grateful for God and my wonderful family, friends, and colleagues who support me as I learn and grow from both successes and challenges in life. I empower other women by recognizing and affirming their unique and beautiful strengths and contributions. I hope to encourage working moms as they build successful, fulfilling careers while pouring time, love and energy into raising thriving children. Both of my wonderful children have special needs and have worked extremely hard to achieve things that come naturally to most people. More than anyone, they have taught me that hard work, determination, and a positive attitude lead to incredible outcomes.



DIANA HORN

Executive Administrator, Association of University Research Parks

I am a woman of promise. I come from a world where culture can pressure you to be a wife, a mother and to focus only on your loved ones. But with my family and especially my mom, I was always encouraged to continue the path of MY success and to progress MY career. It's because of her that I am enthralled to encourage other women of their capabilities, reminding them to never hinder themselves to be who they are and all they can be. It is now our time to fulfill the promise—to create a world where every little girl from every corner of the world can fulfill their potential without roadblocks and prejudice. No longer should anyone doubt that a woman could be a top surgeon, a software engineer, an astronaut or indeed a leader in any field that she might choose.



MILANA MARSHALL

Senior at Vail Academy and High School

I am a woman for the future. I have had the privilege of working with amazing women that have inspired me to act courageously, push myself beyond my perceived limits, and make the impossible happen. I am humbled by the thought that at times I may inspire others to believe in themselves and make magic happen.



NEDLAYA FRANCISCO

DS8k Copy Services Development Software Engineer, IBM

I am a woman of encouragement. I am a Navajo woman, enthusiastic, independent and hard-working engineer. I enjoy being a software engineer because it challenges me, and I get to work with a diverse group of people. I want to encourage other Native American kids to never give up on their dreams, they can overcome any obstacles and continue to work toward their goals. I want to inspire future generations of scientists and engineers from different backgrounds and support their interest in math and science.

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THANK YOU

A big thank you to all the women who shared their stories!

Thank you to all the people that supported the women by reading and sharing all the stories!

Thank you to our photographer - Caroline King from Caroline King Photography - for her passion and energy that made capturing these great photos possible.

And a very special thank you to Peter Loya, Director of Community and Government Relations for Tech Parks Arizona, for your vision and execution of this inspirational and empowering campaign.



WOMEN EMPOWERING WOMEN



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