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Best of the WWEST, Episode 111: Marg Lathan P.Eng, WinSETT Chair and President of Aqua Libra Consulting

Intro

This is the Best of the WWEST, inspiring women with real stories. Hosted by Westcoast Women in Engineering, Science and Technology.

VANESSA HENNESSEY

Hello, and welcome to Best of the WWEST. I'm your host Vanessa and today I'm speaking with Marg

project management first and leadership. And I would, give him a lot of credit for the opportunities that I've had being a leader.

VANESSA

Nice. I think that I'm learning more about sponsorship, you mentioned him being a sponsor, and I'm learning more about sponsorship versus mentorship. And how they're both very valid, and they just are a little bit different from each other. So I love that you brought up sponsorship, I think that's something that we're starting to talk about more. And like you said, some people wouldn't be where they are today without a sponsor. So that's wonderful.

MARG

If I could put in a little bit of a plug. As you know, I'm chair of WinSETT Centre. And WinSETT Centre offers professional development for women, at WinSETT one of our skill builders is on mentors and sponsors, we used to do a whole day workshop of it. And it just it helped women understand what the differences are, and determine you know, kind of identify where people are that they could, you know, approach to be in those roles for them or to work with mentors and sponsors. So I highly recommend finding ways to get both, you know, one or both of them in your career, it makes such a difference.

VANESSA

Is that something that WinSETT is still offering?

MARG

It is we aren't offering the in person ones yet. I don't know when we'll be back to offering our day long workshops or whole series of six, but the skill builders that we offer the 90 minute online, as much engagement as we can get in a virtual world. We try to have in those sessions, but they cover all the topics pretty much that we would have covered in our in person workshops, but still not quite that, you know, ability to be in the room with people that those offered.

VANESSA

Yeah, well, we'll still put a link to those in the show notes. It's great that you're still offering them even in this COVID world. So we'll put a link in the show notes and then our listeners can check them out. So this might be a little hard to answer because I imagine you've had many memorable moments in your career and your education but are there I need that stick out to you?

MARG

Well, I'm gonna start at the more recent times, because I was really I was, I was surprised to win the R. A. McLachlan award.

VANESSA

I'm glad you brought that up because I wanted to ask you about it as well. So please tell me.

MARG

I was really excited about winning it. And there's so many amazing engineers in the province. And so you're kind of like wow, I won this award. So that to me was, it's been a fun time. It's connected me, reconnected me with a lot of my former colleagues who have come out in support of it. And it's just been it's been a wonderful few weeks of going through the process would have been neater had there been a an in person conference for EGBC where there was a presentation. But they made it as much of it as they could in a virtual world. And it was a lot of fun, exciting, and I'm very proud of winning it.



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improve professional practice in our profession. I'm also excited you know about the opportunity to work as a volunteer and to foster the opportunity for more women to enter, stay, grow, become leaders in our professions. So I get to work in and volunteer into areas of passion, outside of work, I've got a, you know, wonderful partner, a spouse that, you know, we've been married over 30 years, we enjoy our time together, and it's a good thing and the pandemic, because there's a lot of that, you know, we have a sailboat and love to sail, we've done some traveling. But you know, I mean, I'm certainly cautious about whether there's going to be any of that in the future. I'm more, I have more of an interest in that, than he does. But it does, having a career lends itself to that. And maybe they're, you know, I love to ski. But, again, the pandemic has kind of hampered down a little bit. So whether there'll be skiing this year or not, I don't know. And so there's all those, and I'm an avid walker, I mean, in love to walk and so all those things kind of come into play. And I find that when you're working for yourself, and you're working from home, you can mix all those together, and it you know, like a day can be made up of everything, it isn't going to work like it was when I was with UMA, you're doing a 10 hour day, five days a week. You know, you can balance that a lot better. And, you know, part of that comes with, you know, being in my own business and being able to manage well. And that work I take pride in what I do.

VANESSA

I was actually going to ask you about work life balance, and whether or not you feel like you have it or whether it even exists. And it sounds like you do think it exists?

MARG

When I was back working as a leader at UMA I'm not sure I knew work life balance, but I you know, those were long days, and there was a lot of travel, probably a day a month being out of town. And so, you know, I guess that wears on people. And so I can say now I have balance of life, although my husband might not agree with all of that all the time. But I like to think that's true. But I think for those that are working, you know, especially if they're aspiring to leadership roles, finding that balance of life is tough. And on top of that, having a family. I mean, I never had a family. And so I didn't have that challenge of you know, kind of balancing all those different roles. I give a lot of credit to some of the women that I know who, you know, have built companies, they've had families, they've accomplished things in their careers, and they've been involved in encouraging more women to enter the professions. It's just, you know, pretty amazing.

VANESSA

Yeah, it really is. I absolutely admire them. I think there is more of a conversation and realization happening, that we need to have support for women who are going to be mothers or who are mothers, or people who are our parents, I should say, actually, because we're talking about it with all genders really.



VANESSA

Great. And that's actually how we connected to have you on the podcast. So that's great. Well, thank you again so much for your time and thanks everybody for listening.

MARG

Thank you.

VANESSA

We acknowledge that Best of the WWest is hosted and produced on the unceded territories of the ḱwákwwam (Musqueam), S w'wú7mesh (Squamish), and Se'í'witulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. Best of the WWest is also produced on Treaty 6 territory. Best of the WWest has featured many guests and has been hosted and produced by people of different lands