

## **The STEAM Internship Program for Leaders – Week 3**

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Time really does fly when you're having fun, I can't believe we are already in week 3! On Monday 7/6 the EDsnaps STEAM Internship Program for Leaders welcomed Susanne Mueller, aka The Iron Woman. Why is she called The Iron Woman? Well, she speaks five languages and she completed the Ironman Triathlon 5 years ago, which we learned consists of a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bicycle ride, and a marathon of a 26.22-mile run, all in one day! Susanne feels strong about women's empowerment and leadership which is why she titled her book "Take it from the Iron Woman". We started the morning off with Grace, one of our students, interviewing Susanne and from that interview, we learned that preparation is key, and "if you are early you're on time, if you're on time you are late." What a powerful quote, right? During the workshop, we split into groups and participated in the Game of Cones; no, not ice cream cones, traffic/training cones. The Game of Cones is all about strategy, team building, and STEPS (Training, Evaluation, Planning and Execution, and Success). Working as a team has never been more enjoyable.

Then, on Tuesday we met Angela Santillo, a storyteller, researcher, and writer. Angela demonstrated how to tell a dramatic story by using a five-step division: a character, an incident, action, an obstacle, and a conflict. Letting your research "talk" to you is important because it will lead you to more questions. We also learned about the simplicity of the rule of 3: our brain loves the number three because we remember information better that way. Finding your voice and being bold was perhaps my favorite takeaway. We are all part of a story. Who we chose to be in that story is completely up to us. After the workshop, Dr. C opened up the floor for anyone to ask questions and we heard a lot of wonderful answers and advice from Angela including her saying that "math is the ultimate poetry", a saying that I have never heard before in my life and will always remember now because it's so true! Even though I am not a math person.

On Wednesday we welcomed Hedwig van der Laan and Dorinda Walker. I've met both Ms. Hedwig and Ms. Dorinda previously, so it was great seeing and hearing them again. Ms. Hedwig is currently a small business owner. Her business, StudioHedwig, is all about creating beautiful crochet blankets, pillows, and other home accessories. Her yarns are unbleached, not painted, and made out of recycled material which makes her products very unique. For the past 2 years, Ms. Hedwig gave in person workshops to the EDsnaps students. In the first year, she showed us how to crochet a small handbag. In the beginning, I felt that I would never get that done because I had no experience in crocheting, but with her patience, kindness, and determination, Ms. Hedwig taught us how to make a handbag out of recycled cotton using a bamboo needle. She brought out a creative side that many students didn't even realize they had. Due to the COVID-19 situation this year, Ms. Hedwig joined us online so we couldn't try crocheting hands-on, but it was amazing to hear about her products and how she started as a teacher in Biology & Chemistry and uses that background knowledge to create crocheted home accessories. Around 11 am, Ms. Dorinda Walker joined us. The first time I met her, I was inspired by her intense life-story and ever since then,

I've been following her on LinkedIn as my motivation to keep moving forward. One of our e-counselors, Magnan, started us off with her interview with Ms. Dorinda and we heard so many amazing pieces of advice and quotes that it's impossible to list them all. Some of my favorite ones are “when you are passionate about what you do, stress takes a back seat” and “life doesn't happen to us, it happens for us”. Later on, when the meeting got a little emotional, she also said that “sharing vulnerability makes you able to connect with people.” These messages made me realize that I have a connection with Ms. Dorinda because I can relate to almost everything she is saying and seeing her standing tall and unbreakable is proof that our past does not define who we are as a person.

The next day, we met Dr. Eva Cramer. Felicity started the interview with Dr. Cramer in which we learned that Dr. Cramer spent most of her early academic time doing research, fellowships, and even set up a biotech incubator. Dr. Cramer now teaches medical student histology, a study of tissue and cells which the pandemic has not affected that much as it can be taught remotely. One of the best phrases I will always remember is “teaching people that want to learn is wonderful”. I like this quote because teaching someone is a powerful thing because that knowledge can always be passed down to generations. Afterward, we welcomed our second Woman of Impact, Elizabeth Patterson. Elizabeth is an executive director of Girls Education Initiative of Ghana (GEIG), an organization that provides support for girls in Ghana to better their education and leadership. Although I feel a strong connection with Ms. Dorinda, I felt an even stronger connection with Elizabeth. Her mission to aid and make a difference in girls' lives in Africa is what connects me to her immediately. Elizabeth also spoke about how motherhood has made a huge impact on her life because her son greatly inspires her. She talked about how amazing it is to see her son grow up and experience life in a different way that she did. Dr. C wrapped up the day by showing how the beauty of motherhood relates to everyone because we are all unique and we all grow at our own time.

To round out the week, on Friday we went on an e-Fieldtrip to Adaptive Design! Adaptive Design Association is a nonprofit organization which focuses on building custom adaptations, nurturing communities, and challenging assumptions. Before our trip to Adaptive Design, we were sent a link to watch a video called “Among the Giants”. In this video, I saw Tamara Morgan and was so inspired by her. Then we went on the e-trip and I met Tamara and it was as if I was meeting a celebrity! I was shocked because I didn't expect to see her there and I had to hold back my facial expressions before I made everything awkward. We started our trip by going around the workspace, hearing lots of incredible stories, and seeing many unbelievable creative inventions. The EDsnaps team also participated in a hands-on activity which was just amazing. Although the adaptive designs are made for children and individuals with disabilities, it's safe to say that everyone benefits from it, whether it's the people making the adaptive device, the people receiving it, or the people seeing and hearing about it. Knowing that there are companies and programs like Adaptive Design, EDsnaps, GEIG, and more that are making changes in people's lives is what keeps me going. I am motivated to learn more and now I will use this knowledge and these skills to make a difference in the world. That wraps up our third week, see you next week!