

Right. We're going to go ahead and get started, and good morning everyone, my name is Jan Gascoigne and I'm the Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and a faculty member in the Colorado School of Public Health. And what a joy it is to share this morning with all of you and really kick off the fifth year of the series. We started the series in 2019. It was a project that a colleague Karen Aarestad and I did as fellows in the Women in Leadership and Higher Ed Institute, that is, between the state of Colorado and Wyoming and our first speaker ever was Dr. Jean Kutner, who's a Chief Medical Officer from UC Health.

And from that day forward, we've just had amazing women leaders from our campus that have been willing to come and share their story. So also as we kick this off, yesterday, hopefully you got a chance to be at the Block Party. And also hopefully you saw the email from the Chancellor that we are starting a new campaign on campus. And the campaign is really intended to build community and build connection. And so the campaign's tag is "A Place To" and I want to share that I think Women in Leadership at CU Anschutz is a place to connect with dynamic and powerful women on our campus. So please check that campaign out and join some of the activities that are going to happen there.

I also want to take a moment to thank our sponsors. We have a number of offices on campus that collaborate to put this together...our Office of Student Affairs, our Office of Human Resources, Staff Council, Office of Advancement, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Health Promotions, and the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research. And not to get ahead of ourselves, but I do want you to mark your calendars for the next Women in Leadership talk which will be on November 5th, and our speaker will be Charlotte Russell, who is our Chief Information and Security Officer on campus, and our Assistant Vice Chancellor for Information Security and IT Compliance. And you may never have heard of her, but boy, she does a lot of amazing work for all of us. And so we'll move right into our talk today, which is called Making Ramen Soup. And I'm so thrilled to be able to introduce my colleague and my friend Adrienne Howarth-Moore.

Adrienne is our Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources and the Chief Human Resource Officer at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. She started with us in June of 2023, but prior to coming to CU Anschutz, she served most recently as the Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Human Resource Officer for the University of Texas at Austin. In that role, Adrienne oversaw 70 HR staff members, and programs serving over 20,000 employees, including Talent Management, Learning and Development, Benefits, Employee Assistance, and faculty and staff Occupational Health and Wellness programming.

Adrienne's experience includes a unique clinical background including nursing, health and welfare benefit plan design, retirement programs, workers compensation, diversity, equity and inclusion work, anti-discrimination practices, workplace safety and threat assessment expertise, and labor, employment and privacy laws. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Nursing from UT Austin, as well as an MBA from Texas Women's University.

She is a Licensed Registered Nurse and a former Certified Occupational Health Case Manager and a Certified Occupational Health Nurse Specialist. And boy, we are so lucky to have her on campus. So Adrienne, thanks for coming this morning. Thanks for being willing to share your leadership journey and I'll pass it off to you. Thank you so much, Jan. I am so excited to be here. But I'm not going to lie. My goodness, you guys are eager with this series. It's starting at 7:30. So yes, coffee is a requirement. So please everyone else, enjoy your coffee while we talk. It's like we're all having our little coffee thing.

It's one of the great things I love about actually living on campus is, if you ever need to find me, just go over to Lost Coffee. My apartment is directly above it. It was like one of the selling points of where am I going to live? And I'm like, I can live right above the Lost Coffee and smell the coffee roasting. So if you ever need to find me and I'm not in my office, I am likely at the Lost Coffee. Well, I'm excited to be here. I just want to keep this kind of, you know, informal and just really share my journey, and how did I arrive in higher education

and how did I arrive in my current role? A lot of people, when they find out that I'm a registered nurse, it kind of goes, hmm, why are you in HR?

So, hopefully by the end of my talk it will make sense and why I personally think, by the way, that nurses can do many things and that we should have nurses scattered all around, like just sprinkle like fairy dust nurses in all kinds of disciplines. because I just think that the nursing background, lends itself to such a variety of areas. So I'm going to go ahead and do a quick screen share and we'll see if we can we can get this done correctly. Right. This is always for three and a half years of using zoom or four years of the existing zoom, and you can still get it wrong. For those of you that are maybe of a certain younger generation, you might not recognize the man in the middle, but this is an actor that became famous on the Seinfeld episode. He played a character, George Costanza. But this is me hanging out with him, having a good time in New York City because I was a drama geek.

And so in high school, I had no inclination of doing anything related to science or math. I was a drama geek. This was my thing. I spent time in New York seeing Broadway shows, and I ran into this, at the time, young gentleman who was not famous at all. He was in a Off-Broadway production, but we just thought he was so amazingly talented. So me and my girlfriends waited outside the stage door to try to get his autograph, and he laughed because he was just like, again, he wasn't famous. No one was waiting for his autograph, and he said, you keep this. One day I'll be famous.

So years later, when he became George Costanza on the Seinfeld episodes, we all giggled and we were just like, look, we knew him when. But I share this just to say that sometimes in our life we have the plans for ourselves, and then we have the plans that just happen. And so for me, I, honestly, by the time I was a senior in high school, I still didn't know what I was going to be doing. All of my friends were preparing to go to New York, or LA. They were all going to pursue some type of career in, in the arts, either acting or doing crew and production work. And I'll be honest, I had so much fun, but I knew I wasn't talented enough.

I know that sounds maybe, but I just I knew that I had such a great time doing it, but I just thought to myself, after looking at some of my friends like, wow, I'm not that. So I might end up just serving tables in New York and I don't know if that's what I want to do either. And so it was just by happenstance that I worked at a movie theater working late, and there was an incident. After midnight, I was getting off and filling up my car, actually, with gas, and there was a car accident on the highway just adjacent to the gas station. And the car accident happened. Horrible sound. Dating myself, but we didn't have cell phones back then, and so you're just looking, and everything's kind of in slow motion, and I could see it tumbling, and it landed upside down, and I didn't know what to do other than look at the the garage attendant... the gas station attendant.

I could tell he was already on the phone calling 911 is what I had assumed. And I just ran over, and there was a gentleman who crawled out of the car, and he appeared to be in shock, and I just asked him if he was okay, and he didn't respond. And then he looked up and he just said, my wife. And he put his hands in his head. And so that's when I realized there's somebody else in the car. So again, the car's upside down. So I climbed through the broken window and she's hanging from the seatbelt. She's still alive. I could tell just the fact that her chest was going up and down, but I didn't, I had no training.

I didn't know what to do. She was bleeding. The windshield had caused significant damage to her face. So I think her husband thought she had died. And I think that that's why he was in such shock. But I just felt like I couldn't leave her. And so, not knowing anything, all I knew what to do was to hold her hand. So I held her hand until EMS arrived. They arrived. They did what they needed to do. Crawled out of the car and I went home. And so it was by this time, one, two in the morning. So, mom and dad were up. What? Where were you? You know what's going on? Again, no cell phones. And I just said to them, here's what happened. And I said, I think I can be a nurse. I don't know what nursing is about, but it didn't rattle me. Being in the car, again, what I most felt was a sense of I don't know what to

do and I didn't like that helpless feeling of not having any skills or training, but it didn't rattle me, and I just felt like I could be there when somebody was in their worst moment.

So, I applied for nursing school, got accepted, and went ahead and started nursing. Now I was one of those folks that, again, did things maybe a little bit different than my friends. None of my friends were serious with anybody at that point. I was 18 and I was engaged, so I was going to pursue college, get married, do some things like that. I remember at the time, one of the professors in school hadn't realized that I was married and I was not wearing my ring because it was nursing school and you didn't want to wear rings because back in that day, they actually did a hand check. Are your nails short enough and are they clean?

Because, you know, we were still wearing white back then. And she said to the group, oh, I'm so glad there's no one married in this group. I don't like it when nurses are married, because there was a time when both teachers and nurses, if you got married, you had to give up your profession. So, she was of that generation, and she just felt like you wouldn't be committed to the career if you were married. So, of course, I at that point was like, gosh, do I even share that I'm married with my friends who are in this class? What if my professor finds out? Will she hold it against me?

So, thankfully, in my cohort of 60 students that year, there was five of us that were married. Everybody else that was married, by the way, was in their 30s and early 40s, coming back to school to get their nursing education. So I was the young one in the group, and I swear it is those women, that group of 30 plus to 40 plus women who ensured that I passed, that I studied, because that became my cohort. So I did not have the typical college experience. I didn't hang out with a bunch of 18, 19 and 20 year olds. I was hanging out with 38 year olds that cooked me dinner and said, let's study together.

So that group of women I will be forever grateful for, because I think that it is because of them that I was able to continue my schooling while being married and working a full time

job. So, full time job. Again, all my friends were like, you're in nursing school. What are you supposed to do? Well, you're supposed to be a nurse's aide, a medical assistant. You need to be training for something that's going to lead to your nursing career. But those jobs at that time would not have paid my rent. And so I went ahead and applied for a job at a factory. And the factory paid better, and it had benefits. And so I went to work for a company at the time called Motorola, and it was a semiconductor factory.

You were completely covered in a bunny suit, and I worked making photolithography semiconductor chips. So, cell phones were starting to become the rage, and we made the chips that went into those cell phones. So if any of you were of an age that you remember the Razr, I was the one making the chip that went inside Motorola's Razr. And so I worked for Motorola for three years while I was going to nursing school. That is where I learned my love of coffee, because that's the only way that I could do it... working full time and going to school full time. And when I graduated, it was, again, a lovely mentor of mine who just took it upon himself to say, you know, a nursing degree is a Bachelor of Science.

What if I offered you a job as a supervisor at Motorola? And I really thought about it because I loved my job at Motorola. But I said, no, I want to be a nurse. But thank you. Well, unbeknownst to me, I go off, I get my nursing job, I'm working at a nursing home, and I get this phone call from a pretty fabulous woman, but at the time she was not too pleased with me, saying, are you Adrienne? I'm like, yes, who are you?

She told me her name was Maggie and she said, I don't know who you are or who you think you are, but I'm supposed to meet with you because you think that you're qualified to get a job as an occupational nurse for Motorola. And I was stunned. I had no idea what she was referencing. And it turns out that the kind mentor, Bill McKean, the one that had offered me the supervisor job when I said no and said no, I'm going to go into nursing, he went ahead and called the regional manager for Motorola at the time in Schomburg, Illinois, and said, I really think you need to talk to this student that just recently graduated because I think she

should be a nurse at Motorola, and I had no idea he had done that. And so she arranged a lunch for me. And again, I didn't have enough nursing experience. She thought I had asked him to do this.

I then explained that I had no idea he had done this. We actually hit it off and so I wasn't ready to be an occupational nurse at that point. I had not had enough nursing experience, but we kicked it off, we stayed in touch, and when she had a nurse position open up at Motorola, she offered it to me. And so I went to work there and started my occupational nursing career at Motorola. And boy, what a career it was. I spent 18 years in the semiconductor business, and for those of you who are unfamiliar with the private sector in the high tech space, they don't spend money unless they squeeze everything out of it. And so, nurse salaries were more costly than HR salaries at the time.

And so for us as occupational health nurses, the expectation was anything related to well-being, employee well-being, employee health. That was actually allocated to occupational nursing, not to HR. So through that open door that Bill McKean offered me, and then Maggie Matthies, my wonderful manager, who was not so friendly to me initially but turned out to be such an exceptional mentor, she taught me things that I would have never gleaned had I just gone the traditional HR route, because all of a sudden, as an occupational health nurse, I was trying to figure out benefit health plan design, what pharmaceuticals our pharmacy plan should carry. When the Family Medical Leave Act first rolled out, it was occupational health nurses that administered it because of course we had to read the paperwork, and back then, doctors were not filling out paperwork using a computer.

They were still doing handwritten signatures. And if you've ever seen doctor's handwriting, you know that that's a whole other second bilingual language that you learn. And it was only the nurses that could actually read the FMLA paperwork. The HR folks would come to us and say, what are they saying? and we would we would do the translation. So that is where I got so much experience in HR was actually through that nursing calling.

In that experience, I had an unfortunate and tragic event that I don't think any of us could have been prepared for, and that was when I became a supervisor, I had only been a supervisor for two weeks, and I was acclimating to changing shifts and for the first time, managing other professionals. And I got a phone call, actually a radio call. We carried radios and we were expected to do emergency response as well. And I got a call saying that there was someone down in the parking lot. And so our gut reaction was that someone had been hit by a car in the parking lot. We rushed to the scene. We did not even contemplate scene safety. We just rushed to the scene because, again, our assumption was, this is work, this is a safe place, and that someone had been hit by a car. But when we arrived, what we discovered was that one of our employees, a co-worker colleague, had been shot in the parking lot, and she had been shot by another co-worker who was her husband. And so we had to do a quick assessment.

On the radio was coming in that the individual with the gun was still on the loose. My friend and myself, both of us nurses, had to make assessments as to are we able to save her or are we now preserving a crime scene? And unfortunately, our decision was we were preserving a crime scene. Her injuries were unrecoverable. And so she did die that day. That fundamentally changed my career. It was a moment that I realized how vulnerable women, but all individuals can be, when it comes to domestic abuse. And when you look at the research in this area and the literature, you'll see that it is actually when individuals make the decision to exit those relationships that their risk is greatest, and that even when you make safety plans, often the one location where the violent partner knows to find you is your workplace.

You can make arrangements to be at a different house, you can stay with family or friends, but you need a paycheck and so they know where to find you. And so it was through that experience that I then asked, at the time, my head of HR, and I said, if I'm going to be responsible for responding to these events, I have to be trained to prevent them. And so we



endeavored in a process of training all of the occupational nursing staff, but also our HR community and our security community in threat assessment.

Now, this was in the 90s. There was not nearly the resources that there are today. But, that went down my path of becoming a threat assessment professional, and unfortunately, I've had to utilize those skills continuously in my career. I wish I could tell you that that incident was the only incident of a workplace homicide event, but it has not been, and domestic violence and intimate partner violence continues to be an area that is near and dear to my heart. And it's an area that, again, I always think about when doors open, being open to those experiences. That was a tragedy, but it opened a door for me into learning about a topic that I might not have otherwise learned about. And I think that it is an area of my career that I'm most proud of, because it's not things that people often know.

It's not necessarily what's on your resume, but it's the day-to-day interactions that I can have with someone where I believe that I've made a difference in either them feeling more safe, or that we've arranged resources where I know they are more safe. So that was that experience. And then life threw me another curveball. I was happily working in semiconductor

I spent 18 years at Motorola, but, the universe did have a different plan for me, and that was the plan of awarding me with a brain tumor. So I got a brain tumor in all of this, and I had young kids. I was doing my career thing, I was trying to figure out did I want to, you know, which ladder did I want to climb? And all of a sudden I end up with this brain tumor, and I go through that experience and it caused, oh my goodness, such an interruption in my plans, and when I came out on the other side of that brain tumor, I had to do a significant amount of rehab.

The tumor caused a bunch of secondary conditions, one of which was severe osteoporosis. It ate away at my bones. And so I used to be 5'10". I'm now 5'6". I lost four

inches of height. I had 13 fractures in my back, my pelvis was broken, my ribs were broken, all the bones in my feet, broken elbows, and so I was in traction. I was in a wheelchair and I spent a lot of time in a rehab hospital. And so one of the things that the amazing occupational therapist told me when I was so depressed and just thought, how am I going to make this work? She was just kind of like, buck up, buttercup, and you got to figure out how to feed yourself. And I was like, what? She was like, you gotta figure out how to feed yourself. You can't get out of this, this hospital, this rehab center 'til we're confident you can feed yourself.

So she was like, I'm going to let you think about this for a day, but by tomorrow, I'm coming back for our session, and you need to tell me what you want to learn how to make in a wheelchair wearing a back brace. And so that night I thought about it and thought about it, and I thought, okay, what's the easiest thing I can pick? Because I was tired. I mean, just getting up, taking a shower would exhaust me. And I just was like, I'm going to pull one over on her. I'm going to pick the easiest recipe I know, which is ramen noodle soup, the Manchurian ramen soup, that one that's 25 cents to buy. I thought, how hard is that? Right? That's going to be easy. I can show her I can do this and then I can get home.

Well, it took me two weeks to learn how to make ramen soup in a wheelchair wearing a back brace. The things we take for granted...turning on the tap of a sink when you're sitting in a wheelchair and you're not tall enough to reach it. And how do you need to use adaptive technology to figure that out? Figuring out how to use the stovetop burner without burning yourself when you're in a seated position. She made me get the pots and the pans. One of the great things about rehab hospitals is, if you've ever spent any time in one of them, they have fake, apartment setups and fake kitchen setups, and so that's where I was.

I was in a fake kitchen setup, and I would get so frustrated and get so tired and be brought to tears because we would go an entire hour and a half long session, and all I could accomplish was getting the pot, get it to the sink, fill it up with water, and then by that time,

I was too tired to go ahead and complete the process of making that doggone ramen noodle soup. So, by my quick recipe that I thought was going to be easy took me two weeks.

But I did do it. And I made my ramen soup and it was the best ramen soup I had ever had, that 25 cent packet. And I was able to go home. And then from there, I decided, you know, I did this, and as much as I loved Motorola and had a great experience there, it made me think about my career in a different way. I probably would have stayed at that job because it was comfortable, but the brain tumor put me in an uncomfortable place, and it made me realize that I could be uncomfortable and get through it. So I started looking for jobs that had a mission associated with them.

Not that Motorola wasn't amazing, but it was a very profit-driven environment. It was an environment where you lived by each fiscal quarter and employees were released if you didn't meet sales or quota demands, and I just decided that I would like to be with an organization that was mission-driven, non-profit, if possible, and just see what that experience would be like. So I also had to make the hard realization that I would never again be able to respond to medical emergencies with a 70 pound emergency pack on my back. That wasn't going to be in my future any longer, so I had to figure out a way to pivot my career where I could still use my skills, but I would no longer physically be able to do the kind of nursing that I had done. And so that is when I applied for the University of Texas at Austin.

They were opening an occupational health program. They didn't have one. They did not have a wellness program and I had done that at Motorola. And so I applied for the job, got the job and then started my journey at UT. And slowly but surely, HR folks started to go, oh, we have HR people doing Family Medical Leave Act in the ADA. You did that at Motorola and I said yes. And they were like, what do you think about taking that on? Oh, you did worker's comp at Motorola. What do you think about taking that on? And so slowly but surely, I just said yes. My dad had always told me about my career.

If it's not illegal and it's not immoral, say yes. You might not know how to do it, but you can learn. And so I started saying yes to things. Yes to things... then I'd come home and my husband was like, what have they given you now? Like, you don't know how to do that. And I would always just say, I know how to eat and I know how to talk. I would get invited to things and I would just talk, and I'd eat with folks and they would say, oh, I think that you've had some experience there.

What if you did this? I would volunteer for committees. Oh my gosh, I spent, out of my 14 years at UT, 12 of those years on the IACUC committee, which is the committee that reviews the institutional animal care and use. I took tests on how big cages needed to be for rats and how big you needed to allocate for rabbits. And my husband would come home. What are you taking now? And I'm like, honey, I'm like, this is fascinating. But through that experience, I was able to realize what the employees did in those areas and how could I make their work environment better and bring programing to those employees who did that type of research work with the animals?

And, again, I would have never known about that opportunity had I not said yes to volunteering and joining those committees. So, 14 years at UT, again, it was a wonderful experience, but then this thing happened called the pandemic. I had just accepted the CHRO role. So I, after saying yes to many things, I also said yes to interviewing for the Chief HR Officer position when my former leader had retired. It was a national search, so I competed for it with other candidates.

I was so honored to receive the opportunity, and very quickly thereafter, the pandemic hit, and all of a sudden, people were struggling to figure out how do we vaccinate people? And I was like, oh, I'm a nurse and I'm an occupational nurse. I know how to vaccinate people. I know how to handle people who want to sign a declination form because they don't want to be vaccinated. How do we teach people how to wear masks properly? Oh, I'm an

occupational health nurse. We had to teach new staff at the hospital how to don and doff their PPE. We can teach regular employees how to do that. So coming up with training classes for how to make those decisions. Oh, we need to teach employees how to socially distance, how to do infection control. I was like, oh, we teach custodial staff that all the time in hospital settings. We can teach faculty to do that too, because unlike a medical campus that's here, where faculty by-and-large do have medical backgrounds, at UT Austin, we had 18 colleges and schools.

And so teaching a bunch of faculty members who taught poetry for their living, how to do infection control precautions, that was, it was a bit of a challenge, but we did that. And through that experience, I really started to engage again more strongly with my medical background. And so as challenging as the pandemic was, it was also as challenging as the pandemic was, it was also one of the most professionally fulfilling time of my career. And so as the pandemic started to wane, and we were having less and less interaction with our medical colleagues across campus, I realized just how much I missed it. And so it was, again, another pivot moment in my career where I thought to myself, gosh, I love UT Austin, I love my job, I love my coworkers, but where is my next? What's my why? Why do I get excited about certain things? And I realized that I wanted to lend my talents to something that was still mission-driven, but that was going to be medically related. And since I had spent 14 years in higher education, could I find that in higher ed?

And so I just opened myself up to options. I didn't actively go look at first. I was just being open to options. And about that same time, my daughter moved to Boulder. So I started making more trips to Colorado. And then all of a sudden I started to on recruiting calls when recruiters would call, and I used to just ignore them and say, no, thank you, I'm not interested. If it was a recruiting call that came from Colorado, I, all of a sudden, was like, tell me more. So when the recruiter called me and it was a job for CU Anschutz, which was a medical campus higher education, I just thought I shouldn't say no to this. I should say yes and at least explore the opportunity. And so I started the interview process not knowing

what this campus was looking for. But, I shared my background in my story and was so fortunate when this university embraced me, offered me the position, and I started last year and it has been a wonderful first year. I have so enjoyed this state.

I have so enjoyed the freedom to be able to talk about diversity, equity, and inclusion here at CU Anschutz, and really, I think, do some impactful work. Whereas at my former university, because of the political climate, 80 of my colleagues in the DEI space were losing their jobs. That was something that I knew was on the horizon from legislative sessions, but I didn't realize how much of an adverse impact that would have on the community that I left behind, and so it's just another one of those areas where I think back and go, being open to these opportunities, I would never have opened myself had the pandemic not happened. And had that not happened, I don't know if I would be able to continue to be where I was at UT.

So it's just being open and being willing. So, that's a little bit about my story. I will just throw in there that during the pandemic, I was also diagnosed with MS. And, you know, it's just these are the kickers, right? So, I will tell you that for me, I am passionate about DEI for so many reasons, but not the least of which is selfish reasons. I am a woman, so I have a passion for it because I understand that from a gender perspective, we still have challenges that we face. I am passionate because I am an individual with disabilities. I constantly am thinking about the fact that today I don't need a walker, but next week I may. And I want to make sure that our campus is accepting and welcoming and accessible for individuals with disabilities. I have suffered as a result of my brain tumors, from paralyzing panic attacks, so I understand what it's like to have mental health components come in and out of your career at different times. The people who cared for me most in the hospitals were, by and large immigrants or first-generation Americans.

So I recognize that we are not weaker by having more diverse individuals in our community... we are stronger. And so it's through all of those experiences that I think that

when I think about what has been most impactful for me as a leader, you'll hear about grit and, you know, toughness and all of those things, but I would just like to share with you that for me, in my path. in my journey, it's been kindness. Being kind and accepting kindness yourself. Giving grace.

Throughout my career, I have really tried to understand the perspective of another employee that may be approaching something differently than myself and give grace and recognize that behind the scenes there may be something going on in their life that I am unaware of, and that if I give grace, that I will receive grace back because I have needed that throughout my career. Accept help. Sometimes we can think that leaders are strong and tough and that they just seem like from afar that they're handling it all. I could share with you. I would not be here today were it not for those amazing older women when I was in college.

If it weren't for some amazing mentors who took a chance on me and out of their own kindness, offered help even when I didn't know it, and they were behind the scenes finagling opportunities and networking opportunities for me. I've accepted help from my husband. My husband was a stay-at-home husband. A little bit different scenario, but we made that decision early on. That meant that we didn't have new cars. It meant that we didn't have cable TV. It meant that we didn't have vacations at Disneyland. Instead, we went camping. That's the kind of vacations my kids grew up with. But we did that because for us, for our family, we felt it made the most sense. And for my career, I do not at all take for granted the privilege that I have, that I was able when my kids were sick, to call my husband and say Lindsey needs to be picked up from school.

The school nurse has called and I didn't have to give up at work to do that. So I really try to understand when there are dual-career families, the challenge that there is navigating that, because I know, especially every woman at work especially, does not have that same option that I had with my husband staying home. So accept help. ask for help and accept it.

Be open. Be open to opportunities. You don't know where it's going to come from next. Do the silly things. Join a committee. Do something fun. Knitting. Who knows? You could go join a knitting group. And the person that you're knitting with could turn out to be the next best thing for your career. So, do the fun things. Again, volunteer. I really believe that that's so important in terms of your network and how you network and the people that you meet. And then lastly, I will tell you to continuously learn. Be really invested in continuously learning.

Learning about for me it was threat assessment which took me down a whole new path. Learning about benefits...that took me down a whole new path. Reading books. By the way, I am not that leader that reads a bunch of leadership books. I mean, I've read some. Yes, I've done that, but I read fiction, I love fiction, and I read fiction for a reason that isn't just for entertainment. I read fiction because I fundamentally believe that leaders need to be empathetic, and that in our lifetime, we can't always have all the experiences. But when you read fiction, you can put yourself in the shoes of that character.

And you can experience something like addiction, like abuse, like a disability, like being in a minority. And you can read and be in their story for that moment in time so that when, as a leader, you're faced with a situation with an employee or with a coworker that you've personally not experienced, you can maybe recall from that book something that gives you a perspective to be supportive and to be encouraging of that coworker or that employee.

So, continuously learn always and continuous learning doesn't always have to be the leadership books. Go out, read the books about fairies, read the books about crime drama, read all of it. Read books that are international that have been translated. I'm right now really in this kick of reading books that... I watched the Korean soap operas, right, on Netflix. If you guys haven't watched those. Oh my gosh, so much fun. And so now I'm



starting to read books that Korean authors have written and they've been translated and it's just such a fun thing to do. So continuously learn.

And I just want to close out and just say my why. My why is helping people. My why is trying to make the workplace just a little bit better than I found it. And my why is my family and so family can be so many things. Family can be blood, family can be friends. Family can be who you've chosen and who has chosen you. For me, this is my family. This is my husband, my daughter, my son-in-law, and my son, and my sister-in-law. This is me on a bicycle with MS, and I accepted help. My husband got me the pedal-assist so that I could keep up with his sister and him when they would do their 40 mile bike treks. And I was struggling to do two miles, and all of a sudden, with the help of pedal-assist, I can now ride a bike for 30 miles right alongside them. So accepting help. My daughter taking me on a hike, knowing that it's a challenge for me, and making sure that she picked out the right path and accepting that and knowing that I'll never probably hike a 14-er with her, but she can scope out the trails and we can still have an amazing day in the mountains, even with a disability.

My son, who's planning to move here in just a few months. He's going to transfer from UT and he's going to join CSU. Shh, don't tell anyone it's not at CU. It's at CSU. But, he's going to join us. And then, my husband, who still remains in Austin, he cares for my father, just like he cared for me. He has stayed behind, and I commute to Austin on weekends because my father's elderly and my husband takes care of my dad during the week so that I can have my career here. So again, accept help, give grace, be kind.

And I'm going to stop my screen share. Adrienne, thank you so much. What generosity this morning in sharing your story, and as you can see in the chat, there's, you know, a lot of folks that you've touched. What we're going to do now is we open up this time for questions, and so if you have a question, please put that in the chat and then we'll call on you and we will allow you to speak directly with Adrienne and ask your question so that we can have a shared dialogue with everyone. So, friends in the audience, please feel free to

put questions in the chat, and we will... I will call on you and we'll continue this great morning dialogue.

And Adrienne, if you have a minute to open the chat, lots of love is pouring in and lots of appreciation for other stories you shared this morning. And that's lovely. And I'm going to also admit something. See, look, the tears like, this is so lovely. That's why I had a Kleenex box right by me. Because, yeah, I'm that person that when you watch the Olympics and the Olympic theme song comes on and you see the young athletes, I don't care what country they're from, I'm crying. I'm crying at the Hallmark commercials. So thank you so much. Anybody have questions? Please feel free. We're seeing a lot of celebration, I love it. And another beautiful thing, women supporting women here today. Okay, I have a question, that I'm going to ask on behalf of a colleague. The question is, I'm in a situation where I've witnessed workplace bullying.

Do you have any insights or advice for how to navigate it? And also, thank you so much for sharing your story and your vulnerability as a survivor. This has been really impactful and inspiring. Yes, bullying is a tough one. and I'll be, I'm going to be as trans...I mean, transparency is something I really try to do all the time, so I'm going to be transparent with this. Bullying is such a challenge because it doesn't violate what we traditionally think about when we think about certain policies. Right? Like there's policies that should and do protect us from certain behaviors that are illegal.

But there's other behaviors that don't violate a law or policy per se, but they can nonetheless be so impactful to our work experience and work environment, and the bullying behavior that we experienced, you know, in elementary school, it doesn't go away, right? We we had it in middle school. We had it in high school. It was there in college. And guess what? It's here in the workplace too. So I always think about approaching the person first and really trying to, you know, in a way that just expresses, in private, you know, hey, when you say this comment, it doesn't sit right with me. Can we just talk about this?

Again, I'm a fan of coffee, whether it's coffee or tea, but sometimes having those dialogues over a cup of coffee, over a cup of tea in a setting that's neutral, because oftentimes bullies, they themselves are bullying because it's an issue of their own self-worth or their own confidence level. And so if you can take something to a neutral location and have that dialogue directly with the person, I have found that, in so many ways it has, it doesn't necessarily mean you're going to walk away and you're going to be best friends and that this is going to be your best coworker relationship, but that you can get to a place of mutual understanding and respect and to do it in that way, I think is the best way.

Now, if it just continues and continues and continues, I think it is important to then highlight that to your manager and to talk about, again, opportunities for where you can think about making sure your manager's aware, because there's some coaching that the manager can do with that employee, but then also thinking about just how is overall the work aligned? Because sometimes, there's just a scenario where you just don't get along with someone and the chemistry's not there, and if there's just a way where, again, you can figure out a way to be professional but not have to spend so much time with someone, that's an option too.

And then the final option, you know, if, coaching by the supervisor to the employee hasn't worked, if your own dialogue with the employee hasn't worked, and if maybe rethinking how work might be accomplished in the workplace hasn't worked, I also say empower yourself to think about is this the right place for you? And I say that because I have been blessed with amazing leaders myself. Every manager that I've had, I have enjoyed. We all have our faults. I know I have mine, but I just enjoyed them and I've learned from them. But I did have that one, right? I had that one, and I could not crack the code. I just could not make a connection with that one. And I didn't feel, I don't even want to say if I felt bullied, but I definitely felt belittled. I was the only woman on the leadership team at that time. It was in a facilities organization. And it was for a period of time where they had relocated our

occupational health nursing group under a facilities organization for a temporary period of time.

And I just felt belittled. I felt I didn't feel included. So, again, it wasn't a policy thing, but it was like everybody got invited to the happy hour at Hooters, and I wasn't invited. Well, by the way, I didn't, you know, kind of glad. But at the same time, I knew conversations were happening at that meeting that were helpful to career that I was excluded from. They all would go on their golf excursions on Thursday afternoons. I wasn't included in those. So it was, and so I just had to realize, how do I learn what I can learn from this experience and then how do I prepare to move to a new area? And that's what I did. I found an opportunity still within the same company, same organization, but out of that location.

That manager went on his way, and, you know, I went on my way and it just sometimes you have to make those decisions. So I would say seek first to speak with someone, try to come to an understanding, then see if some coaching with their supervisor can help. But at the end of the day, we spend too much time at work to not feel fulfilled, and if somebody is there that's just preventing you from doing that, think about how you can learn while you're there, while exploring another option.

Thank you, Adrienne. Other questions? I have one more. So folks are asking me to ask the question, so, happy to do that. This question is, is it ever too soon to seek a new opportunity in the same organization when you don't feel valued after speaking with the manager? Again, tough one. I just think, again, being open and always looking for opportunities.

Now they're...and again, this is I'm not going to pretend that this is advice. This is just because all of us are so different and have different things that are happening in our lives. I do think, one, think about, again, what's your why? Is your why being fulfilled? If your why

isn't being fulfilled and you talk with your manager and you don't ever see where it's possible, then I don't think it is ever too early to start looking and exploring.

I think start doing that. But if you notice that there's never a good spot. You've done maybe multiple transitions and there's never a good spot, then I think it's also a time to look inward and maybe think about what is it about you that's happening that you're not feeling fulfilled because is it your career that is lacking or is there some other place of fulfillment that needs to be developed? And so that's a hard one.

And so I say always be open to explore. Never too early if you're not feeling valued and you're not seeing a career path where you're at. But again, be reflective, self-reflective. If you've done that multiple times and you're still not feeling it, is there something else that could fulfill you in a way that your career doesn't have to be that total fulfillment? Right. Thank you.

We have two more questions I see in the chat. Hannah, would you like to ask your question? I am sick, so excuse my voice right now, but, I just asked, how do you deal with feelings of imposter syndrome, especially when you're in male-dominated spaces? I believe in developing connections. Jan started this with kind of one of our new things for CU Anschutz is A Place To, and that this forum in particular is a place to connect. I think that it can be very challenging. I mentioned I worked in high tech in the semiconductor space. Very much a male dominated field in high tech, and yet I was within occupational health, which tends to be female dominated. And so I think finding your connection wherever you're at in your community, whether it's plugging in with an affinity group, whether it's through an organization that interests you. So again, even a hobby.

Connecting. If you are not connecting, you know, finding that space where you're not alone, where you're not the only one. And so, and that can be at work, plug in at work if it's an affinity group at work, but if it's not at work, if it's just not accessible at work, find it in your

community where you can have that network of individuals who cheers you on, who supports you, who lets you know all the great things that you are and that you're being fed those comments.

There's a saying that says that you can hear 20 great things about yourself, but you'll focus on the one criticism. So I really think that all of us need to surround ourselves in opportunities where we hear over and over again the good things that we do. And so again, find that at work through an affinity program. But if you don't find it at work, find it outside of work. Again, promoting book clubs, knitting groups, cooking clubs, hiking groups, all the things. But surround yourself with people who shine a light on you and support you in all of that you do. And I think that that's kind of the only way that you can help combat imposter syndrome, because you're not an imposter.

No matter where you are, you're there because you were selected. You're there because you earned it. But you need to be reminded. Thanks, Adrienne.

And we have one last question, and, Bridget, would you like to unmute and ask your question please? Yeah. So I was just wondering if you found anything in particular to be helpful as you're transitioning into a new leadership role? Take your time. Meet with people. Again, I'm such a fan of meeting with people informally and getting to know people. I know sometimes there can be pressure when you're in a new leadership role, whether it's a new leadership role, you've already been a leader, and you're just moving to a new leadership location, or if you've never been a leader and you're going from an individual contributor role to a leadership role.

Sometimes we can feel that pressure that you need to make that impact in the first 30 days, you know, oh, they're watching me. Oh, they gave me this opportunity and I want to prove that they didn't make the wrong choice. But I say, give yourself the hundred days, not 30, and really get out there and meet with people on a one-on-one basis and learn who they

are. Let them know who you are before you make drastic changes. I think that that is just something that will bode well for you, and when you make then, leadership decisions, your decisions are more informed, you understand your colleagues better, you understand your employees better, and so when you make those decisions, because some decisions as leaders are not always the fun decisions, right?

As a leader, you're gonna have to make some tough decisions. And you might have to make decisions around budget or workload redesign or staffing choices. But if you know your team better, you can approach it in a way that I think is more respectful of your team and more empathetic of your team's needs, and at the end of the day, more strategic for your team as a leader. So that's my big advice when you're stepping into a new role. Take your time and meet with people and learn who they are first. Adrienne, on behalf of everyone who joined today, thank you so much for sharing your journey and generosity in sharing stories of how you got here. I know by just seeing in the chat, you'll get a chance to see that too, how impactful this morning has been.

I know I'm completely inspired and super excited also, for the kickoff of this year's Women in Leadership, and just so grateful and appreciative for you spending time this morning with us, but also, everybody, we're so lucky because she leads our Human Resources here and leads from the heart in ways that really are impactful to every one of us as an employee at CU Anschutz. You make this an amazing place to work and learn, and we're so grateful to have you here. So, thanks to everyone who joined us. Remember to mark November 5th, please, on your calendar for the next Women in Leadership session, and we will hopefully see you around campus and for sure on the fifth. Everybody have a great morning. Have a great morning everyone. Take care.