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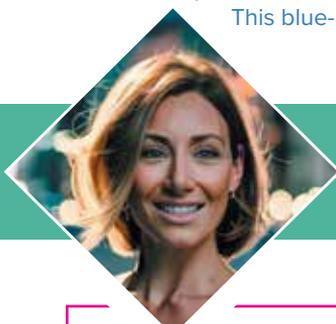
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Oil and Gas Investor and Hart Energy proudly honor the “Influential Women in Energy” honorees for 2024. These distinguished executives and their accomplishments will be celebrated at the seventh annual Women in Energy luncheon on International Women’s Day, March 8, 2024, at the Hilton Americas-Houston in downtown Houston.

Now in its seventh year, and expanded to include 36 honorees, the Influential Women in Energy program honors professional women who have excelled in every sector of the energy industry, including exploration and production, acquisitions and divestitures, oilfield services, midstream, finance, ESG and the energy transition. This blue-ribbon award program has honored more than 125 of the top female executives and leaders in the industry since its inception.



The keynote speaker is legendary leadership coach **Lara Jones**, an award-winning leadership performance expert, creator of the global G.R.I.T. System™, founder of Be A Legend, and G.R.I.T. Global™, author, athlete, and executive coach.

2024 WOMEN IN ENERGY HONOREES

Katja Akentieva, Vice President of New Energy Solutions, Western Hemisphere, **TGS**

Ana Amicarella, CEO, **EthosEnergy**

Kayce Bartlett, Manager of Geoscience, Permian Development, **Ovintiv**

Nooshin Behroyan, Founder and CEO, **Paxon Energy & Infrastructure**

Carolyn Benton Aiman, Senior Vice President and Chief Legal Officer, Chief Compliance Officer, **Sempra Infrastructure**

Sushma Bhan, Non-Executive Director - **Ikon Science**, Technical Director, Data Science and Engineering - **SPE**

Adrienne Randle Bond, Partner, **Frost Brown Todd**

Rebecca Boudreaux, President and CEO, **Oberon Fuels**

Courtney Brownie, Vice President - Commercial and Finance, Power Solutions, **NexTier Completion Solutions**

Lyndal Cissell, President, Americas Land, **SLB**

Carrie Clark, Senior Vice President, Chief Commercial Officer, **Black Stone Minerals**

Rachel Collins, CEO, **W Energy**

Courtney Diezi, Chief Operating Officer, **Corva**

Jeannie Gardner, Global Leader, Digital and Asset Transformation, **KBC Advanced Technologies**, a **Yokogawa Company**

Beth Good, CEO and Partner, **Resource Royalty**

Kajsa Greenhoward, Vice President, Corporate and Strategic Planning, **Chesapeake Energy**

Barbara Harrison, Vice President, Offsets and Emerging at Chevron New Energies, **Chevron**

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Diversify or Die

DEON DAUGHERTY | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The pink hard hat and high heels that Irene Wischer donned as CEO of Panhandle Resources back in the 1970s would still stand out on a rig today.

But you need not look further than the following pages to find role models of women succeeding in oil and gas business boardrooms, C-suites, leases and laboratories.

Indeed, women filled slightly more than half of the energy jobs added in 2022—50.3% for a total of 149,732 positions, according to the U.S. Energy and Employment 2023 report. That's a 7.8% increase from the previous year.

And women led job growth in the electric power generation (EPG) sector, accounting for 65% of the gains in 2022. The clean EPG workforce grew by 3.6%, which was 16% faster than overall domestic economic growth.

Nevertheless, the hard work isn't done. A woman executive with whom I occasionally split a bottle of wine told me last week that she's looking for a new job. Despite a promotion three years ago to lead personnel at an offshore drilling firm, she still brings home almost 30% less each year than the man she replaced when he was fired.

She's now doing what any smart professional would do in that spot: she's looking for opportunities elsewhere—and that includes outside of oil and gas. When she inevitably lands a job that pays her what she's worth, it'll be a loss for that company and the industry.

This isn't about giving anyone an advantage based on a warm and fuzzy social and/or government diversity mandate; it's about doing what's right from a business—and yes, moral—perspective.

And other industries with a better perceived culture of diversity are taking note. Oil and gas skills are in demand by those outside of the sector. Some 40% of the 87% of workers surveyed who said they would consider switching jobs said they would be open to leaving the energy space, according to the 2024 Global Energy Talent Index Report (GETI).



Of the workers who were headhunted in 2023, 12% said they were approached more than 16 times; 9% of engineers within this category said they were approached 21 times. Up to half of the inquiries came from outside the industry, the report said.

In 2022, the GETI report indicated 70% of all oil and gas workers were considering a departure from the industry within three years.

Oil and gas is in the risk management business, and taking risks is in the DNA of energy leaders. To accelerate much-needed innovation, the industry must “widen its talent pipeline and take risks on employees with new skills and perspective,” according to Bain & Company’s “Creating the Workforce for an Oil and Gas Industry in Transition” report.

“Maximizing the potential of this workforce will be an all-hands effort, requiring new talent pipelines from a more demographically diverse pool of prospects,” the report said.

Some companies within oil and gas have embraced this approach in recent years, Bain said. In 2021, 70% of large oil and gas companies surveyed fully disclosed employment diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) data in the U.S.—a dramatic increase from 4% in 2019. Slightly more than half—55%—of the overall S&P 500 was reporting the data.

But while those companies are reporting the numbers, few are doing much else, Bain reported. About 60% of the largest global oil and gas firms don't report gender pay equity.

It's smart to chase the best and the brightest. The oil and gas industry may be at risk of losing the race if women remain sidelined. ■

DEON DAUGHERTY
 EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

MEET THE 2024 HONOREES



Katja Akentieva



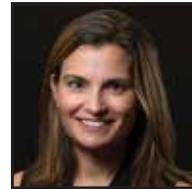
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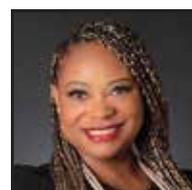
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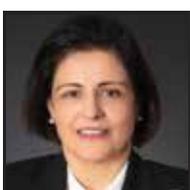
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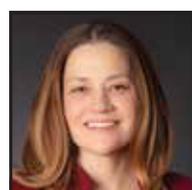
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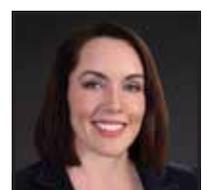
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Cindy Taylor



Myra Dria



Nancy Jo House



Beth McDonald



Tiffany (TJ) Thom Cepak



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Chesapeake Energy

The Importance of Diversification: How a Strategic Portfolio Maximizes Value and Meets Demand Needs



Chris Wright, Chairman and CEO,
Liberty Energy

“Energy, Climate, Poverty and Prosperity”



Craig Jarchow, CEO,
TG Natural Resources

Economic Resiliency With a Growth Mindset



Frank Tsuru, CEO, **Momentum Midstream**

The Seller’s Perspective: Insight from Those on the Inside of the Deal
(panel includes: Alan Smith, Co-Founder, President & CEO, Rockcliff Energy
and Dick Stoneburner, Owner, Stoneburner Consulting Services)

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A YEAR AGO

Hart Energy's annual Influential Women in Energy program honors those who have distinguished themselves in their careers at positions representing all aspects of the energy industry. The 2023 event at the Hilton Americas-Houston featured keynote speaker Melissa Arnot, the first American woman to scale Mount Everest without the use of supplemental oxygen.





Source: Hart Energy

A Woman of G.R.I.T.

When Lara Jones was at her lowest point, she developed a system to transform her fears into action. Now, her mission is to share what she learned.

JENNIFER MARTINEZ
ASSOCIATE DEVELOPMENT EDITOR

Lara Jones, CEO of Be a Legend and G.R.I.T. Global, author of “Hunt or be Hunted” and inspiration to thousands every year started off in the U.S. with nothing more than a laptop and her brain.

“There was a time when I couldn’t even eat for three days because it was a choice between rent and food,” she said.

But the Influential Women in Energy keynote speaker made a choice: She was going to make an impact on the world, tell her story and guide others using the tools that had helped her in her time of need.

Jones developed a system called G.R.I.T., a tailored framework to transform fears into action with meaningful impact and the ability to grow.

She left a successful career in the U.K. to come to the U.S. and begin working on her dream. It was frightening, but Jones, who likens herself to a lion, did not let fear define her.

“Be afraid, but do it anyways,” she said. “The worst that happens is a setback, and every setback is just a setup for a comeback.”

Now, Jones travels all over the world,

a far cry from her humble beginnings. She teaches her system at Fortune 500 companies, to the U.S. military, celebrities, executives and anyone who makes the mistake of letting her have a white board.

“Every time I speak, it’s related to the audience,” she said. “When you come

and speak at an event, it’s not about you, it’s about others. The stage is a platform for you to impact so many people and for them to walk away feeling not just inspired or motivated, but they’ve got to feel equipped with the tools necessary to go out and do what they need to do.”



Lara Jones

A professional executive coach, Lara Jones aims to leave a positive impact on her audiences and her students. She is determined to have a positive impact on at least one person every day.



Lara Jones
Keynote Speaker

Lara Jones

“Be afraid, but do it anyways. The worst that happens is a setback, and every setback is just a setup for a comeback.”



THE FOUR PILLARS

G: Get it done

“You have to start with ‘G’,” Jones said. “You adopt the process, you adopt the Global G.R.I.T. system or you can adopt whatever other teachings or start all over again with a new challenge...”

The other aspects of the program—the “R,” “I” and “T”—don’t come into play until the ‘G’ is mastered.

“I’m naturally a go-getter,” Jones said. “I’m a ‘get it done’ girl. I take action. I don’t hesitate.”

But sometimes the “Get it done” aspect of G.R.I.T. isn’t the best choice.

In 2022, Jones tragically lost her youngest son and almost died the same night.

“I came home from the hospital with my son’s ashes instead of him alive,” she said. “How do you get through such a devastating time and tragedy in your life?”

It took four months for the naturally outgoing and energetic entrepreneur to get herself moving again.

“I started to reverse engineer how I got through many, what I call, ‘gritty’ situations in the past and I knew I’d have to amplify that times 1,000, if not more, to get through this.”

But Jones knew that her typical coping tools wouldn’t work this time.

“I realized that if I had utilized the ‘Get it done’ approach, I would not be sitting here speaking today,” she said. “I would not be up on stages impacting millions of people across the world. It just wouldn’t have happened. It would have put me either into an early grave or I would be a shadow of who I really was because I wouldn’t be able to cope with all the stresses and the anxiety and the PTSD that I was diagnosed with.”

G.R.I.T. isn’t always straightforward, she explained.

“Sometimes you have to adopt the ‘R’ before you can start the ‘G’,” she said.

R: Reframe your thinking

Most people, when faced with a new situation, a new life or professional challenge, start in a “comfort zone.” Not necessarily a place of physical, mental or emotional comfort, Jones explained, but one of static beliefs that are “easy” to stay in and can hold them back.

The trick is to decide to challenge that belief, change the perspective and move on from there.

“I wouldn’t have been able to cope with losing my son,” Jones said.

“I would’ve tried to bury it and, at some point, it would’ve come back to bite me. I realized I had to reframe everything that had happened to me.”

Four months after her son died, Jones had made her decision.

“I woke up and I looked at myself

in the mirror and I said, ‘You got to wake up today; your son did not. You got to feel the sun on your skin today; your son did not. Stop making this about you. It’s not about you anymore; it’s about others.’”

Jones decided that her new goal was to use her trauma, grief and adversity as fuel to enable her to impact others, rather than let it continue to consume her.

“I realized that was the ‘R’ in my G.R.I.T., ‘Reframe thinking,’” she said. “I started thinking about things differently. Instead of thinking, ‘Look what’s been taken away from me,’ I started thinking, ‘Look what was given to me.’”

I: Impact others

When Jones did look at what she was given, and what she already had, she realized that she could make a difference every day.

“From that moment, I just said, ‘My main mission in life is to impact at least one person for every day I am breathing,’” Jones said. “And I’ve never looked back.”

The ‘I’ in G.R.I.T is especially important for those in leadership positions, Jones said.

“Remember that it’s not about you,” she said. “No matter whether you’re speaking on a stage, no matter whether you are working on a team, whether you’re at home with your family ... It’s not about you, it’s about others, because people won’t remember exactly what you said, but they’ll remember how you made them feel.”

When a leader makes a positive impact on members of her team, it empowers and motivates them to change their beliefs and open themselves up to a growth mindset.



Lara Jones

Lara Jones has won nine Stevie Awards, including “Woman of the Year,” “Female Entrepreneur of the Year,” “Female Executive of the Year” and “Best Female Thought Leader of the Year” for her creation of the Global G.R.I.T. System.

T: Take responsibility

“It’s at this point that you have to take ownership of not just your actions but your inactions,” Jones said.

A possibly counterintuitive way to do so, she said, is by embracing vulnerability.

For many women in male-dominated industries, one of the biggest “comfort zone” beliefs is that they are not allowed to express vulnerability lest they be seen as weak and unfit.

“After my son passed away, I was very quiet for four months,” Jones said. “All the businesses I served with, my other company, all of them, every single one of them were male leaders. All the C-suite were male. And I had this fear of, ‘wait a minute, if I tell them that I just lost my son and nearly my life and show vulnerability, are they going to see me as weak because I’m female, too? Are they going to see me as someone that’s too vulnerable to be in this position to be able to help their organizations?’ Oh, I had that fear.”

She decided to reframe that belief.

“I turned around and said, ‘You know what? If I come out with this and I show my vulnerability and it’s accepted, think what that could do to change industries.’”

She took the risk, taking full responsibility and ownership over her decision to share her grief publicly, despite her fears. Rather than call her weak, many of the people she was worried about told her how they admired her strength.

Sometimes learning to believe in yourself needs practice and a little bit of courage.

“I would question or challenge if someone came to me and said, ‘I have this fear and I don’t want to be seen as vulnerable, I don’t want to be seen as weak,’” Jones said. “I’m going to question that and say, ‘Why do you think you’re going to be seen as weak? I was not seen as weak. I was seen as a very powerful woman because I came out with my story and I’ve continued to make myself vulnerable.’” ■

“ I would question or challenge if someone came to me and said, ‘I have this fear and I don’t want to be seen as vulnerable, I don’t want to be seen as weak.’ I’m going to question that and say, ‘Why do you think you’re going to be seen as weak?’”

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Katja Akentieva

*Vice President New Energy Solutions,
Western Hemisphere, TGS
Houston*

To lead in the energy industry, an individual needs to be strategic, focused, agile and decisive, Katja Akentieva said.

By those standards, Akentieva was born to be a business leader. At 5, she was a chess champion (strategic, decisive) of her local school district in Gelendzhik, Russia, who dreamed of being a professional track and field athlete (agile). Then she followed her passion for geology from high school all the way to the elite Moscow State University (focused).

"My goal was to simply be able to support myself and earn a living in a country where democracy and equal opportunities were not habitual," she said. "Decades later, I find myself working with many amazing people from all over the world. Living and working in many countries and continents, holding various positions on the executive team of one of the leading energy data companies and then pivoting my career into completely new market like offshore wind, and being able to add value to this fascinating and fast-growing industry."

Becoming a leader in energy was not always a straightforward path.

"I feel very lucky throughout my career to be working for companies that value and practice gender diversity," she said. "Based on my own experiences, I strive to be a leader who supports other women in their growth and progression."

She advises young women in the industry to be flexible and ready to take risks.

"Women tend to rise differently than men; their path to success may look very different."

"Be prepared for the unexpected," Akentieva said. "If you are prepared

for those new career opportunities to take you to the new heights, then you will not be disappointed. Whether it is moving to a new country and uprooting your family or learning a new market or a completely new role."

The professional steppingstone that made the biggest difference in her career was the decision to combine her technical degree in geophysics with an MBA. This came when SLB moved her into a position in Canada that tasked her with managing technical teams and developing new technologies. Exposed to the commercial side of the industry, she realized that a business degree would expand her choice of career opportunities.

"I had to put my life on hold, with a full-time job and studying for three years, but it was worth it!" Akentieva said. "It gave me a real boost of knowledge, memorable experiences and a lifelong network. Most importantly, I was able to use real work scenarios for university assignments and then practice what I learned."

Her project thesis involved developing an innovative framework for evaluating investment risk when entering a new country. Since then, most of her career has been spent doing just that.

Akentieva's most memorable projects involve the New Energy Solutions portfolio at TGS.

Among them was an extensive evaluation of the offshore wind market that she led, and the subsequent acquisition of 4C Offshore, a market leader in offshore wind intelligence that is now a fast-growing product in the TGS portfolio.

Another was her leadership role in implementing a new business model in the offshore wind industry enabling access to critical data to

THREE MORE THINGS

1 My favorite way to recharge and mood boost is kayaking. There must be something unique about being on the water; it's fuel for the soul.

2 Two of my favorite quotes are:

"The capacity to learn is a gift; the ability to learn is a skill; the willingness to learn is a choice."
—Brian Herbert.

"Of all the books in the world, the best stories are found between the pages of a passport."
—Unknown.

3 My favorite toy as a child was a small prototype of a marine acoustic source, pneumatic air model which my father co-invented and a rare mineral called a ferromanganese nodule from the Pacific Ocean that my mum's research team extracted and studied. I still have both in my display cabinet. My own kids prefer Fortnite!

accurately predict energy estimates and reduce renewable projects financial uncertainty.

This U.S.-based data collection model has expanded globally and was honored with Oceanic Network's Ventus Award for Advancement in Project Siting & Development.

"Receiving this project award was the proudest and most fulfilling moment in my career," Akentieva said. "It was particularly rewarding to celebrate this achievement with my team, who have pioneered, persevered and succeeded in this new venture." ■



Ana Amicarella

CEO, EthosEnergy
 Houston

Ana Amicarella is relentless. “When I was 29 years old, I reached a big milestone in achieving my first executive job with GE,” she said. “This accomplishment was fueled by relentless determination and commitment to self-improvement.”

It’s an essential attribute to be an All-American synchronized swimmer at Ohio State and Olympic athlete who represented her native country of Venezuela. And it definitely comes in handy for a CEO implementing a cultural transformation of her company.

Amicarella credits her mother. “My mentor and source of invaluable advice has been my mother,” she said. “Her guidance centers around having relentless and high expectations for oneself. The best advice she gave me is to be driven not by competition with others, but by a commitment to bettering yourself every day. This has become the guiding principle of my approach to my career, pushing me to strive for continuous improvement, setting ambitious goals and maintaining focus on personal growth and excellence.”

That said, Amicarella has turned to numerous mentors and teammates in the industry for guidance, opportunities and a network that empowered her to reach the executive level.

“It really reinforces for me the importance of not only building a strong support system and quality network, but also maintaining and nurturing these relationships through the years,” she said.

Amicarella was drawn to oil and gas by what she termed the profound connection between macroeconomics and the pivotal role energy plays in shaping global dynamics.

“The ability to influence and contribute to macroeconomic trends,

coupled with the crucial role of oil and gas in shaping the world’s energy landscape, inspires me daily,” she said. “Being part of an industry that not only drives economic growth but also plays a pivotal role in addressing global energy challenges fuels my passion to lead and innovate in this dynamic sector.”

That passion led to one of the most memorable projects in her career: the cultural transformation initiative for the EthosEnergy, a joint venture between Wood Group and Siemens.

“This transformation went beyond organizational changes,” Amicarella said. “Our simplified OneEthos plan focuses on core strengths, eliminating unprofitable activities, embracing cultural principles and maintaining an unwavering commitment to quality and consistency for our customers.”

The positive impact of the collaboration and productivity shift resulting from the program has been immensely gratifying, she said. “It’s more than a project; it’s a journey of fostering a unified ethos within the organization, enhancing teamwork and ultimately driving the business toward greater success.”

It’s also a manifestation of how Amicarella describes her leadership style: inclusive and engaging.

“I firmly believe in the power of teamwork and fostering a culture where diverse voices are not only heard but valued,” she said. “My leadership approach is rooted in transparency, open communication and a commitment to empowering individuals within the organization to contribute their unique perspectives and talents.”

That commitment to empowering individuals extends beyond her company to her advice to young professionals, especially women, in the energy industry.

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I competed in the 1984 Olympics in synchronized swimming representing my country, Venezuela.
- 2** I am passionate about health and wellness. I believe exercising and eating well are key to a happy and well-balanced lifestyle.
- 3** My biggest accomplishment is being a mom to my three amazing children. Family shapes my life and I am very proud to be a mom.

“As professionals, recognize that you are where you are because you have earned it,” she said. “You have earned a seat at the table; leverage it. Make your voice heard, contribute boldly and be unapologetically yourself. Embrace your unique perspectives and insights. Diversity of thought is a catalyst for innovation, so don’t shy away from challenges. Instead, see them as opportunities to showcase your expertise.”

Her advice for the industry as a whole is to focus on adapting to change.

“Personally, I believe leaders should lead by example in embracing transformation,” Amicarella said. “Educating yourself is crucial, and I have made it a priority to stay informed about emerging technologies, industry trends and sustainable practices. By enhancing my understanding, I can effectively educate others, fostering a collective mindset that supports the industry’s growth. It’s not just about keeping pace ... it’s about leading the charge toward a sustainable and innovative future for the energy sector.” ■



Kayce Bartlett

*Manager of Geoscience, Permian Development,
Ovintiv
Denver*

Like father, like daughter. Owen Stone was the strongest influence in Kayce Bartlett's career. He set the bar high for her early in life in whatever she did, and let her know he expected her to succeed.

"Looking back, he has always challenged and supported me to be the best I can be, in whatever I wanted to do," Bartlett said. "I see this now in how I mentor and support others."

It's reflected in her ability to pull people together toward a common goal. In 2023, that goal was integrating five E&Ps purchased by Ovintiv into the organization. She led about 100 people in Ovintiv's operations due diligence and transition teams, coordinating daily with each of the purchased companies' CEOs.

"Each of the acquired companies was unique and operated differently," Bartlett said. "I helped set a vision for the team to rally behind, simplifying complex challenges, allowing the team to prioritize where it was needed. I ensured we received the operational data to support communication across all disciplines throughout the integration. My leadership, coupled with a great transition team, led to a successful and safe integration of a \$4.3 billion transaction in record time."

That type of leadership doesn't just happen. It requires development of a range of skills and the determination to acquire them. For Bartlett, her Ovintiv experience began in 2007 on the company's midstream team.

"I loved my job but realized that in order to grow in the organization, I needed to diversify my work experience and knowledge," she

said. "I decided that I wanted to work on the reservoir engineering development team, even though reservoir engineering was not my background."

Leaders both within and outside her organization supported and challenged Bartlett to reach outside her comfort zone and apply for roles that she herself didn't think she was ready to handle.

"Through all of this, my dad continued to be a sounding board when considering a new opportunity," Bartlett said. "This was the first step in me realizing that others saw more potential in myself and supported me in ways I never imagined."

Her first role outside of midstream was as strategic infrastructure planner for the Permian. Just two months later, she was offered the position of water infrastructure manager, providing the opportunity to manage a new team within Ovintiv.

"By taking a leap of faith into a new role, it opened other opportunities that eventually led me to manage the Permian reservoir engineering team," Bartlett said.

Throughout her career, she has strived to broaden her vision.

"When I first entered the industry, my goals were centered around being the technical expert and resource for the team," Bartlett said. "I worked hard to understand the big picture, the role I played to contribute to the overall objective and how to communicate effectively with all stakeholders."

"I am still focused on being a technical resource, but my goals have changed to also include my team," she said. "My current goals are to set a clear vision for the team, create a culture of open mindedness

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I like to think I have a contagious laugh.
- 2** I think it's important to have fun at work. I enjoy the people I work with as much as the challenges and work we do together.
- 3** This whole experience continues to showcase how great of a community I get to work in. I am very fortunate to get to work with a great team in a great industry.

and trust. I focus on building others' technical competency, while challenging and supporting them to meet the needs of the organization."

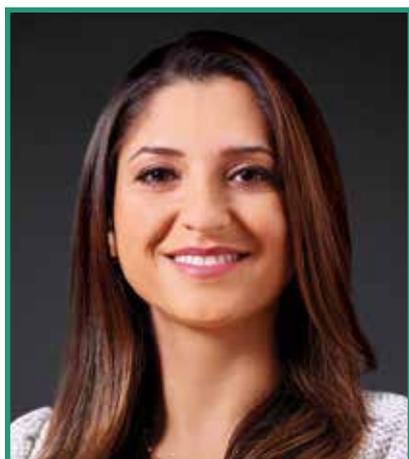
It is technical competency that will propel the oil and gas industry into the future, Bartlett believes.

"Our industry is constantly changing, and I feel that we will see a step change in our technical approach soon," she said. "At some point, we will hit a limit in how much more we can improve without another technical breakthrough."

The next step change, she said, will be to increase the overall recovery in existing wells. It could be tertiary recovery to increase recovery factor, more effective restimulation of existing wells, or an as-yet unknown approach to overcome base decline rates.

Technology alone, however, won't be enough.

"Our industry will have to continue to work with the public," she said, "to educate them on our industry and the benefits of producing a cheap and reliable energy resource." ■



Nooshin Behroyan

*Founder and CEO, Paxon Energy & Infrastructure
Oakland, Calif.*

On Sept. 9, 2010, a natural gas pipeline exploded in San Bruno, Calif., devastating the San Francisco suburb with a fireball that shot 1,000 feet into the air. The blast destroyed 38 homes, damaged 70 others and killed eight people.

It also seized the attention of a young environmental engineer who became intrigued about the root causes of such an event and what could be done to avoid similar disasters in the future.

"It was this curiosity and my desire to make a meaningful contribution that inspired me to join the industry, particularly in the emergency response group," said Nooshin Behroyan. "This role allowed me to gain in-depth insights into the processes, post-repair procedures and crucial safety measures required to enhance the industry's safety and reliability."

A few years later, she posed a fundamental question to executives of a major California utility: "Do we know how much methane our operations release into the atmosphere?"

They didn't.

"They suggested putting it in a presentation, which became my signature project, and Paxon Energy was born," Behroyan said. "Between 2013 and 2016, I developed three groundbreaking programs, inspired by the San Bruno incident."

Paxon has established itself as one of the country's fastest-growing businesses, achieving \$350 million in contract revenue in just its seventh year. In the last year, Paxon operations have recovered 830,000 tons of methane directly from natural gas pipeline projects using its cross-compression technologies. That's

the equivalent of keeping 23 million tons of CO₂ from escaping into the atmosphere, or enough fuel savings to power 1 million homes for a year.

Behroyan's motivation is her hope that she can lead by example and inspire more women to pursue careers in the oil and gas field. She is also driven to find solutions to address climate change challenges while meeting the world's energy demands—and not sacrificing one for the other.

"When I initially founded Paxon, my objective as an environmental engineer was to contribute to the energy industry and drive substantial change in the context of climate change," she said. "Today, this goal continues to be the central focus of my mission. What's even more gratifying is witnessing how the industry has transformed into a strong partner in this shared endeavor."

But to thrive in the future, Behroyan said, the industry must shift its focus from carbon credit trading to large-scale adoption of advanced technologies like methane recapture. The industry should support initiatives to effectively reduce methane emissions and address climate change.

Behroyan attributes much of her success to her education.

"If it weren't for my master's degree in environmental engineering from UC Davis, I wouldn't be doing what I do today," she said. "As a result, I have developed the discipline of being a lifelong learner. I regularly participate in executive management and leadership programs each year to keep my skills sharp and expand my knowledge and empathetic intelligence."

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I am a professionally trained pianist and played for the UC Berkeley jazz ensemble.
- 2** I have a huge sweet tooth. Believe it or not, Paxon is named after a chocolate I grew up eating as a kid in Iran.
- 3** As a young girl growing up in Iran, my grandfather's encouragement was outrageous. He said, "don't stop until you are president."

She has learned to leverage her voice as a female executive and engineer to navigate the predominantly male-dominated oil and gas industry.

"Being, often, the sole woman in the room has underscored the significance of my voice transcending gender boundaries," Behroyan said. "I've come to understand that my voice, as a woman, possesses the capacity to influence, inspire, advocate and drive meaningful change. However, it demands determination, courage and a clear vision to represent and surpass stereotypes."

Her advice to young professionals, particularly women, is to leave the comfort zone behind.

"Be scared, do it anyway," Behroyan said. "Be underqualified, and get in the room anyway; be imperfect and unsure, but show up anyway. Because comfort is the enemy of growth. Get uncomfortable." ■



Carolyn Benton Aiman

*Senior Vice President and Chief Legal Officer,
Chief Compliance Officer, Sempra Infrastructure
Houston*

Carolyn Benton Aiman's career path in law led her to the energy industry.

"I started in law firms and worked for several energy clients," Benton Aiman said. "I appreciated the work these companies were doing, how they approached communities, and their pride in delivery and the importance of energy. They took the responsibility seriously and I found it inspiring.

"The energy industry also changes lives, including mine in that the wages and compensation can be life-changing for many."

The Harlingen, Texas, native received her bachelor's degree in mathematics from the University of Texas at Austin and her juris doctor with honors from the University of Missouri School of Law. Her clients as outside counsel included Texaco, Apache Corp. and Coastal Corp. Texaco eventually recruited her to join its in-house legal team.

Her rise to the top levels of management was the very definition of the path not taken.

"I was considered for two significant leadership roles and didn't get either one," Benton Aiman said. "Both decisionmakers reached out to me and told me not to feel discouraged and that they were confident that I would rise in the organization. That was helpful to get such positive feedback, even after not being the successful candidate."

Three months later, she was the one chosen to advance, but

preparation for the fast track began in her youth.

"I learned how to sell early on," Benton Aiman said. "Whenever my siblings had fundraisers when we were kids, I was the one who went door to door. It taught me a whole host of skills, including connecting with people, how to communicate concisely and clearly, how to influence people and their choices. I think it helped my entrepreneurial frame of reference. I learned not to take things personally, not to feel (too) dejected when I heard no, and that it only took a few yeses to achieve your goal."

"Don't worry about being an only when you are working on a matter, but use your power to change it as often as you can, as much as you can."

In her present leadership position as a senior vice president, her approach is to read a lot, ask a lot of questions and try different approaches to learn.

"I am also (mostly) willing to listen to feedback," she said. "At least, the helpful kind."

Among her career triumphs was leading the team that

shepherded Sempra Infrastructure's recent LNG project to a final investment decision.

"The cadence and pace was incredible and working across teams, across time zones and with multiple outside counsel," she said. "It was collaboration in action."

Benton Aiman's counsel to young professionals, particularly women, is both from macro and micro perspectives.

"Stay focused on how energy advances communities," she advises. "Don't worry about being an only

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I like to write and hope to publish.
- 2** I worry that those of us who support DEI aren't sufficiently meeting the moment.
- 3** My maternal grandmother was Mexican-American.

when you are working on a matter, but use your power to change it as often as you can, as much as you can."

Also:

- Remember that your colleagues are not your competition;
- You have power and influence no matter where you sit in the organization; and
- The key is to learn how to sit with it, how to use it and how to grow it.

"My goal in the past was to learn the industry, learn the basics and grow along the way," Benton Aiman said. "I think continuing to learn and grow is critical. That hasn't changed. But now I focus more fully on the big picture, leadership and how I can more completely impact the communities in which we do business and building the next generation of energy leaders."

Building that next generation is necessary for the industry to thrive.

"The industry must increase its inclusivity and how it develops talent," she said. "We are in the midst of incredible change and to maintain relevance, importance, sovereignty and continue to meet the next phase, it will take talent, broader thinking and the ability to bring communities along." ■



“I learned how to sell early on. Whenever my siblings had fundraisers when we were kids, I was the one who went door to door. It taught me a whole host of skills, including connecting with people, how to communicate concisely and clearly, how to influence people and their choices. I think it helped my entrepreneurial frame of reference.”

—Carolyn Benton Aiman, Senior Vice President and Chief Legal Officer,
Chief Compliance Officer, Sempra Infrastructure

EOG Resources is proud to celebrate the excellence and leadership of this year's **Influential Women in Energy**





Sushma Bhan

*Non-Executive Director, Ikon Science;
Technical Director, Data Science &
Engineering, SPE
Houston*

The oil and gas industry has evolved in multiple ways during Sushma Bhan's career, and so has she. Not content to remain in technical roles at Shell, she earned an executive MBA, which allowed her to pivot into leadership positions.

"Learning how to manage a business and getting hands-on experience made a key difference for me and helped my business career blossom," Bhan said. She joined technical organizations, as well, enabling her to keep her skills sharp and up to date.

"Joining Society of Petroleum Engineers was particularly helpful, as it gave me the opportunity to publish industry papers and to present at conferences, which broadened my reach, confidence and knowledge," she said. "SPE also helped enhance my multidisciplinary know-how and technical acumen, and provided keen external insights that were valuable for my leadership roles within Shell, and today at Ikon Science."

Bhan was encouraged to pursue a career in oil and gas by her husband, Opinder, a scientist at Shell. She was particularly drawn to Shell because of its international operations, growing computing applications and technical leadership in deep water, and took a job in production computing operations in 1988.

"I quickly realized that technical expertise and delivering results were important," she said. "These became my mantras for success."

She's shared her knowledge to help other achieve success, as well. From 2002-2003, she led Shell's women's employee network, which supports women's retention, attraction and progression in the company. She has also mentored women and provided them with opportunities to contribute,

lead and be visible within Shell and SPE.

Bhan advises young professionals to follow her lead in continually sharpening and updating their skills and strategic know-how. Achieving results, she said, comes down to five key factors:

- Enhancing communications skills;
- Building courage and confidence;
- Showcasing commitment;
- Collaborating (building alliances);
- And connecting the dots (strategic focus).

"Lastly, and most importantly, remember to believe in yourself," she said. "If you don't, others won't, either."

Bhan has relied on different mentors and role models throughout her career, but her most important one was her manager in the Netherlands.

"He firmly believed in quality work and always encouraged me to drive excellence," she said. "One key mantra that I hold with me to this day is that 'nothing succeeds like success.' By that, I mean that one should lead by example and strive for excellence every step of the way."

Another message that has resonated with her is, "what you measure, you can improve." In other words, value must be quantified, measured and tracked, because this is the only way to make results visible to customers and stakeholders.

Bhan's goals have broadened from the project-focused ambitions of developing software and achieving customer satisfaction early in her career.

"I want to help the energy industry leverage existing and cutting-edge technology for industry-wide results," she said. "I also want to foster multidisciplinary collaboration across an integrated value chain. Key to this vision is ensuring women and talented professionals both locally and worldwide are included in current and

THREE MORE THINGS

1 I started my first role around production data in early 1988 and joined Shell's wells digitalization initiative in 1991. Becoming the Chief Data Officer at Shell was the culmination of a global journey for me and helped demonstrate my growth, both personally and professionally. Expanding from local West Texas assets to the producing assets of over 20 countries is something I couldn't have imagined at the onset of my career's journey.

2 I have fun creating art using oil pastels.

3 While "SMART" goals were learned much later in my career, I discovered the importance of hitting the right target all the way back in high school, when I was the State Javelin champion in New Delhi. "Watch out, when Sushma has a javelin in her hand or any task, she's unstoppable."

future opportunities within the industry."

This is all the more important as the industry races to meet new challenges.

"The world's energy needs are continually changing," Bhan said. "To thrive in this dynamic environment, the industry needs to be agile, not only by embracing new data science techniques, but also by nurturing talent from diverse backgrounds. We need to educate the world about the industry's innovations on safety and environmental issues. I think women will have a greater central role to play in all this." ■



“One key mantra that I hold with me to this day is that ‘nothing succeeds like success.’ By that, I mean that one should lead by example and strive for excellence every step of the way.”

—**Sushma Bhan**, Non-Executive Director, Ikon Science;
Technical Director, Data Science & Engineering, SPE

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We celebrate the accomplishments of women in energy. Their dedication, innovation, and expertise have reshaped the industry and inspired generations to come.



Adrienne Randle Bond

*Partner, Frost Brown Todd
 Houston*

Adrienne Randle Bond was drawn to oil and gas because of its technical and math underpinnings. The more she learned about the industry, the more she thrived in the environment.

Her career has now thrived through parts of five decades, in which she has plied her expertise in energy finance, securities and LLC law to the benefit of an array of corporate E&P and oilfield service companies, as well as clients in real estate, service businesses, digital start-up organizations and entrepreneurs.

Bond has closed more than \$2 billion in transactions over her career. Topping the list is Wapiti Energy's purchase of the Conroe Field from Exxon Mobil, and its sale after re-development to Denbury Resources in 2014.

She has also hired and managed legal teams, built legal departments from the ground up, and has published many scholarly articles and papers throughout her career.

"My goals have been to know my area of specialization and then take every opportunity to learn about how the other technical areas, such as engineering and accounting, affect that," she said. "I also have tried to create and maintain strong personal relationships."

She is known for her acutely observant—and empathetic—nature which, combined with a keen attention to detail and willingness to roll up her sleeves, has established her as an effective leader. Bond is fluent in English and Spanish, competent in French, and has studied Portuguese, Greek and Italian, allowing her to communicate with international clients and parties in their native languages.

She advises young professionals, particularly women, in the energy industry to "spend your 10,000 hours intensely on the skills you need as a professional, keep them sharp and then figure out how small and generous the Houston oil and gas community can be."

As a woman in the male-dominated oil and gas industry, Bond strives to be kind.

"In the south, woman are always taught that you attract more with honey than vinegar," she said. "As a young woman, that wasn't always easy. I did spend some early days quite angry about how I was not treated fairly. But in the long run, the power of kindness really does work. ... I have persevered and I think my record stands for that choice being a good one."

She has been an active member of the Houston legal community as a frequent author and lecturer on corporate and securities law issues, and has served as Adjunct Professor of Corporate Law and Securities Law at the University of Houston Law Center. She is a past president of the Women's Finance Exchange and has been a member of the State Bar of Texas' Corporate Law, Continuing Education, and Venture Capital Committees.

She has actively volunteered at the Neuhaus Education Center for more than 10 years, currently serves on the Advisory Board, and served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors for two years. Bond said she believes in the importance of arts education for all children and serves on the Houston Grand Opera Community and Learning Committee, which oversees the production of short operas for school-age

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** When I learned in NLP (neurolinguistic programming) training that 80% of human communication was nonverbal, I paid much more attention to the four-legged creatures in my life.
- 2** I believe that visual, written and musical arts are a metaphor that allow humans to wrestle with the larger questions of cause and effect and purpose and can allow us to go places without physical movement. Also, that arts are an important way for humanity to experience unity. For example, beautiful music universally engages our emotions, our senses and even our souls.
- 3** I have two horses that I train and ride in Western Dressage, and three dogs that manage my household affairs to my complete satisfaction.

children, as well as commissioning and producing original operas focusing on telling the stories of all the communities in Houston.

To thrive in the future, Bond advises the energy industry to "reach out more to help the business community understand the breadth of the use of petroleum products, and actively engage in the coming process and decisions about decarbonization. Our industry is the one spot with the technical knowledge necessary to the solutions that must be found." ■



Rebecca Boudreaux

*President and CEO, Oberon Fuels
Hamburg, Germany*

A self-described energy nerd, Rebecca Boudreaux was on a career path to nursing when the dean of the honors college at the University of Southern Mississippi encouraged her to pursue a career in science. A bachelor's degree in polymer science, and a master's and doctorate in polymer science and engineering later, she's now on a career path to change global production of low-carbon intensity fuels.

She didn't pivot entirely from health care, though. Her first company, formed with graduate school colleagues from the University of Massachusetts, was a biotech startup focused on making more effective treatments for cancer.

"This experience helped me find my personal 'why'—to use my scientific background to solve global challenges related to health and energy—and set me along the path of building emerging growth companies," Boudreaux said. "I met the Oberon founders when the company was only five months old and realized I could once again use my scientific training to solve huge challenges around waste, emissions, developing cleaner energy sources and creating economic opportunity in rural communities."

In May 2021, eight months after she was promoted to CEO of Oberon Fuels, the company produced the first renewable dimethyl ether (DME) in the U.S.

"Doing anything for the first time is a huge accomplishment," Boudreaux said. "However, not only had our team done something that no one in our country had ever done before, but they did it in a time of global turmoil from 2020-2021 when COVID first turned our world upside down. Still, innovation found a way to push forward."

Boudreaux is acutely aware of the

need for mentorship and executive role models for women.

"While women leadership is increasing across the industry, we are not where we should be," she said. "I am still too often the only woman in the room, on industry panels and in strategy meetings.

"One of the biggest challenges is the lack of female role models in executive positions. It is hard to imagine yourself as something that you cannot see."

That is why mentoring programs such as Women in America are crucial to develop and mentor the next-generation of female leaders, she said.

"Spending over 20 years in emerging growth companies, there are limited professional development programs within these companies," Boudreaux said. "WIA stepped in early in my career and provided that development opportunity for me."

Her advice for any young professional is to become comfortable with being uncomfortable.

"Step out of your comfort zone and confront your fears," Boudreaux said. "We're all scared of something, whether it's talking in public or jumping out of a plane, but you have to confront it and not let that fear rule you."

She also believes in surrounding herself with good people. Boudreaux was picked as CFO at her biotech startup, despite a lack of financial background at the time. She studied up and worked hard, but more importantly asked for help and hired people who were knowledgeable in that field.

A champion of transformational energy technology, Boudreaux sees hydrogen as key to the future of the industry.

"More hydrogen technologies will get out of the lab and into proofs of concepts and small-scale deployments, refining the approach and business model to pave the way for larger and

THREE MORE THINGS

1 Outside of my industry involvement, I currently serve on the Board of the University of Southern Mississippi Foundation, which raises student scholarship funds and was the reason I was able to afford a college education. For six years, I served as a Board Member and former Chair of UrbanPromise International, which works to break the poverty cycle for children around the world through education and workforce development.

2 At Oberon, we take our work seriously but not ourselves. Thanks to Oberon's co-founder Elliot Hicks, Oberon is named for one of the 27 moons of Uranus—which we all agree is the funniest planet. The moon Oberon also has a lot of methane, which is our feedstock.

3 One of the things I enjoyed doing as a child was running. My dad is a runner and I learned from him. I was never very fast but I was always persistent, which parallels the reality of my professional career. Over the years, I have run multiple half-marathons and full marathons and now prefer to CrossFit and cycle. With the right training, you can really do anything.

larger deployments in years to come," she said. "The industry needs to be prepared for a healthy debate and lots of confusion around the different colors and associated climate-friendliness of hydrogen." ■



Courtney Brownie

*Vice President – Commercial & Finance,
 Power Solutions, NexTier Completion Solutions
 Houston*

When the pandemic hit, Courtney Brownie found ways to keep money flowing into her company. When a sustainability report needed to be crafted, she found a way to get it done. And when cattle needed to be herded, well, who else would you call?

“While based in Denver, Colorado, our Rocky Mountain leadership team embarked on a real, live cattle drive in Wyoming,” she said. “We went to a ranch, saddled up horses and moved cows on horseback. It required lots of teamwork to accomplish the goal of moving all cows from one pasture to another while containing a few unruly ones that tried to escape, and certainly came with a lot of laughs.”

Wrangling cattle may not be a prerequisite for fast-track executive success, but effectively handling corporate “unruly ones” definitely is. Brownie subscribes to a methodical approach.

“I believe how we respond to challenges, especially as women, is how we can build credibility and trust from our teams and senior leaders in the organization,” she said. “When I’m faced with challenges, I like to gather as many facts and data as I can to analyze the situation and work towards a data-driven decision versus an emotional decision.”

That type of response was particularly valuable during the COVID-19 pandemic, when emotions ran high and operations slowed. Brownie was tasked by her company with helping to collect cash and minimize bad debt.

“I knew this was critical to the longevity and success of the organization, and I didn’t take that lightly,” she said. She worked with sales representatives, customers and

the legal department to ensure liens were filed, and engaged in countless phone calls with customer accounts payable departments. It was a hard fight, she said, but a successful one.

When NexTier launched its first sustainability report, Brownie jumped in to help. At first, she worked with third-party consultants hired to prepare the document.

“We received the draft, read it and agreed it wasn’t a true reflection of our company, narrative and culture we were proud of and wanted to share,” she said.

So, not allowing her lack of prior experience writing sustainability reports stop her, she and a co-worker tackled the assignment themselves, starting with a blank sheet of paper. With support from senior leadership, the two composed the report and met the deadline.

Brownie offers three pieces of advice to young professionals, particularly women, in energy:

Be knowledgeable. Be credible. Be memorable. “I set a personal goal in my mid-30s to be a vice president at a large publicly traded company by 40. I didn’t have a clear path, but I knew I needed to be impactful and stand out amongst very talented and experienced peers.”

Don’t be afraid to tell people what you want. “I had several discussions about my career goals with Kenny Pucheu, currently Chief Integration Officer at Patterson-UTI, at the time CFO at NexTier and my manager, and how to work towards achieving them.”

Build a network both internally and externally. Brownie was

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** My personal goal is to sit on at least one board, and I ultimately aspire to sit on the board of a large and/or publicly traded company.
- 2** I spent my very first two weeks in the oil and gas industry in Angola.
- 3** My idea of fine dining is champagne and a thin crust flatbread!

selected by Pucheu to provide financial support to newly-hired Aaron Hilber, NexTier’s Vice President of Power Solutions, to organically build a natural gas fueling business. Hilber invested countless hours sharing his knowledge of compressed natural gas with Brownie. When the need for a commercial role in power solutions was identified, she was tapped to fill it.

“These two men helped me achieve this milestone in my career, and I will never forget it.”

Brownie said she has always set high goals for herself. When she entered the industry, she wanted to be a CFO or senior vice president of finance at a large publicly traded company. Her goals today are similar but more ambitious.

“Remove the word ‘finance’ from my early goals and extend it to all functions within an organization, all the way up to CEO,” she said. “I’ve learned that you can be a highly effective leader of an organization, regardless of your background or education.” ■



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Lyndal Cissell

President Americas Land, SLB
Houston

Lyndal Cissell doesn't mind leading the way for women in energy. Or just leading the way, period.

"One of my most memorable experiences dates back to my early years with [SLB], when I was given full responsibility for a rig and project in Northern British Columbia, involving the first wells drilled in the Horn River Basin," she said. "Drilling novel formations and having my own crew involved responsibilities and provided leadership lessons that have stayed with me throughout my career."

Cissell, trained in petroleum engineering technology, advises young professionals to head to the field.

"Build a strong technical foundation that you can draw on throughout your career," she said. "Field experience is critical—it is where you will learn the operation and become an expert in your field while building relationships with your teams. You will use these skills throughout your career. The expertise you gain will give you the confidence to lead and manage others through good times and crises."

Field work is even something of an equalizer for the sexes in the oil and gas business, in that both men and women share the experience of missing holidays and events with family and friends. And while women

are outnumbered by men in this industry, Cissell doesn't think that's always a bad thing.

"If anything, being the only woman gives you the advantage of a unique platform," she said. "People listen when you speak up and remember you from job sites and events. This is a privilege and a responsibility—you can convey a message on behalf of others and be a leader if you so choose."

"If anything, being the only woman gives you the advantage of a unique platform. People listen when you speak up and remember you from job sites and events."

Cissell said she has benefitted from support and mentorship throughout her career with SLB.

"The best advice I received was to never say 'no' to an assignment, especially if it is in an area or discipline that's new to me, because I learn just as much as I contribute," she said. "There are always new perspectives or ideas that help me grow."

In a global company like SLB, opportunities can take an ambitious worker anywhere.

"I've been fortunate to have had the opportunity to work on some amazing

projects, from drilling some of the longest laterals in the world in the North Sea and Alaska to delivering 20K subsea systems in the Gulf of Mexico," she said.

"When I first joined the industry, I wanted to prove that I could do certain roles and run a more profitable operation," Cissell said. "I've been given great opportunities

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I was one of the first female directional drillers in North America.
- 2** In high school, I was the Canadian national champion freestyle wrestler.
- 3** I grew up on a horse ranch.

to work all over the world with SLB, and one location changed my mindset.

"I worked in Chad, and seeing real energy poverty firsthand changed how I view both our industry and the purpose behind what we do. Having reliable and affordable energy gives people so much time and opportunity to pursue other activities—learning, innovating or creating instead of looking for firewood, or gathering food and water daily to survive. Today, I'm focused on how we can develop technology to deliver energy to all for a more balanced planet."

Cissell is a firm believer in the power of technology.

"As an industry, we've already entered the energy transformation," she said. "Culturally, we need better alignment with our communities and governments. What oil and gas has done over the last 100 years in raising our standard of living is nothing short of amazing. Going forward, our industry needs to focus on providing energy that is cleaner, safer, more reliable and accessible to all. Technology is the solution." ■



Carrie Clark

*Senior Vice President, Chief Commercial Officer,
Black Stone Minerals
Houston*

Like many women in the oil and gas industry, the further Carrie Clark has advanced in her career, the more often she has tended to be the only woman in the room. She has responded to gender-related challenges by assuming a responsibility to advocate for and give a voice to others.

“Through some of my experiences as a woman in the oil and gas industry, I internalized very early on that I have a duty and responsibility as a leader to ask a lot of questions and really try to understand different backgrounds and perspectives,” Clark said. “I’ve closed a lot of pay gaps and helped move company cultures in positive directions. I’ve been vulnerable, honest and real with people, and I’ve been blessed by genuinely connecting with people, truly getting to know people, sharing success with people, supporting people, and receiving their support.”

She realizes she may not be able to do everything for everyone but is grateful to have been in positions for the past 15 years to achieve business strategy success and development of people and corporate culture.

“Accepting that incremental success isn’t the same thing as failure helps me stay motivated, positive and passionate about leadership,” she said. “There’s a balance of striving for continuous improvement and challenging myself and my teams to be the best we can, while knowing that perfection can’t be the goal.”

Clark’s father, an independent oil and gas operator and investor in the Texas Panhandle, inspired her to join the oil and gas industry.

“Some of my most significant and earliest childhood memories are of my dad loading up ‘his girls’ (me and my two older sisters) in the back of his

pickup to visit well locations,” she said. “The oil and gas industry was such a big part of our childhoods. By the time I was 15, I already had a plan to get an undergraduate degree in petroleum land management so I could be a landman, and then go to law school and work in the oil and gas business.”

She followed that plan, earning her degree from Texas Tech, then attending law school at the University of Houston while working as a landman for Shell. Her career track included serving on executive teams for five companies and eventually an appointment to the Brigham Minerals board of directors, a career milestone she considers an honor and an education.

“The experience of sitting ‘on the other side of the table’ and working with such a great group of people to help provide guidance to senior leadership on board-level matters gave me insight and perspective that has made me a better executive in my current full-time position,” Clark said. She withdrew from the board to avoid a conflict of interest when she joined Black Stone Minerals.

In her 26-year career, she has developed a set of tenets to approach gender-related challenges:

- Don’t take or make things personal;
- Face challenges respectfully, directly and honestly;
- Focus on problem-solving, professionalism, healthy communication and the work that needs to be done;
- Continuously check yourself—operate with self-awareness, be honest about the situation, stay true to your core values and stay open-minded;
- Personal challenges in the workplace are minimized when the focus is on what’s best for the company, taking time to clearly articulate the challenge

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1 Mentoring is a passion of mine. I love helping young professionals reach their potential, and I’ve been fortunate to work with some amazing people.
- 2 I love music and performing!
- 3 Baking is one of my favorite things to do. I’ve been told I create bakery-quality cupcakes.

and stating it clearly for yourself and others, maintaining professionalism and respect, and collaborating among teams.

Her advice to young professionals follows those tenets on a broader scale.

“Try to figure out where you want to be in your career five, 10 or, even better, 15 years from now,” Clark said. “If you’re fortunate enough to have an answer to that, think about what you should be doing now to prepare for that role and start asking questions and expressing interest by telling your colleagues and managers now.”

Colleagues might find that strange or unusual at the very start of a career but eventually, perceptions and a willingness to lend support will change based upon stated goals and ambitions.

Another asset is confidence, Clark said. It changes everything, but it might take practice to express it effectively. “It’s OK to fake it ‘til you make it, but don’t exchange anything for authenticity and integrity.”

Finally, “Never forget that the best answer you can often give is: ‘I don’t know, but I will find out.’”

“There’s a lot of power in honesty.” ■



Rachel Collins

CEO, W Energy
 Houston

In late 2022, W Energy was struggling. The company was overwhelmed by change that included new private equity owners and an acquisition—Seven Lakes Technologies—that the staff was working to integrate into operations. Employee attrition was high, morale and profitability were low.

Into this phase of adversity stepped the new CEO, Rachel Collins.

“I have a history of taking on challenging situations,” Collins said. “It makes you inherently more positive and unafraid to face the hard tasks head-on.”

Over the next year, she would lead a comprehensive turnaround. The customer net promoter score increased by 20 points, employee attrition fell from 24% to 2%, and both free cash flow and profitability returned to health.

The company’s culture also began to transform, based on principles in Kyle McDowell’s book, “Begin With WE: 10 Principles for Building and Sustaining a Culture of Excellence.” Principle No. 1: WE do the right thing. Always. In McDowell’s words, “The right thing is not always easy to determine and usually not the easiest path, but it’s the only path to get people to rally behind you consistently and authentically.”

Collins has pursued numerous goals in her career, but finding the easiest path does not appear to be one of them. In her mid-20s, she founded Aspire Technology, which eventually grew to a multimillion-dollar enterprise. The company developed large energy trading applications for Dynegy and Reliant Energy, as well as a case management system for Christus

Health and an accounts payable workflow solution for Encana.

“It was a remarkable experience because I learned every aspect of running a company—sales, payroll, international taxes, marketing, etc.,” she said.

Collins wound down the company after seven years when she gave birth to two daughters, 18 months apart. She ventured into a behind-the-scenes role in private equity where she learned to successfully integrate acquisitions. She also learned that careers and life may not work out as planned, but still work out.

Early in her career, she asked her mentor, a “superhero” woman named Dana Longmire, for advice. Longmire, technology director at Pacific Gas & Electric, had three children. Collins wanted to start a family but not negatively impact her career.

Longmire’s advice on how to do it all was simple and unapologetic: “You don’t. You give yourself a break. You must become OK with some things falling through the cracks—the house may be messy, you may eat out a lot, your kids may go to school with mismatched shoes every now and then. But know that the times that your kids remember the most are when you are present—and they aren’t the times that you orchestrated.”

Collins, now with three kids, took the lesson to heart.

“I try to never apologize for having a life,” she said. “Things happen, plans change, meetings sometimes need to be rescheduled. It’s OK. That doesn’t make you unprofessional; it makes you human.”

That approach is what she carries

THREE MORE THINGS

1 I regularly walk around my house with a small laser level and straighten all the pictures on our walls. Yes, I am “that” person—very detail oriented, very much a perfectionist.

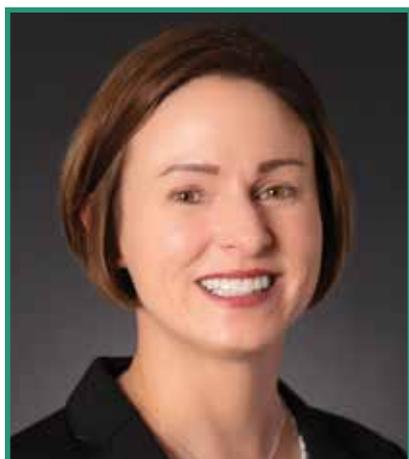
2 I am a die-hard SEC football fan and, most importantly, an LSU fan who bleeds purple and gold. During football season, I can be found on my back patio screaming at the television on most Saturdays.

3 I was the Homecoming Queen at LSU (all the way back in 1995).

as she navigates what is still a male-dominated oil and gas industry.

“One of the challenges of being an executive in oil and gas is that society typically has a mental image of executives being male—and even more so in oil and gas, which is often portrayed as a tight network of primarily men,” Collins said. “I have tried to respond to this challenge by demonstrating that the qualities of a good leader have nothing to do with gender.

“I hope to be an example for young women and men who aspire to have leadership roles within technology and the energy industry—and to be a positive and inspiring role model for my own three children, two of whom will enter the workforce in just a few years. I want them to truly know and believe that they can do anything if they put their mind, energy and will into it.” ■



Courtney Diezi

COO, Corva
Houston

“Get in there,” Courtney Diezi urges young professionals. “Work hard and keep learning. Don’t be afraid to ask for help when you need it while demonstrating the effort you’ve already put in. Always be ready for opportunities when they present themselves.”

The question related to advice to young professionals, particularly women, in energy, but Diezi’s (pronounced DEET-zee) counsel could apply to any go-getter in any field. In particular, it applied to her when she was working on her MBA and looking for part-time work. She landed a gig as a part-time receptionist at a subsea equipment inspection company. Her hiring manager was her mother-in-law.

“I actually never intended to be in the oil and gas industry, but once we moved to Houston to be closer to my husband’s family, I was introduced to an amazing series of opportunities within the space that allowed me to grow and learn, and be able to work with so many great people,” she said.

Among them was Mark Simpson, one of her earliest managers at Weatherford.

“Very little ruffled him, so he was a good mentor in taking challenges with ease,” Diezi said. “Mark said making an impact was most important to him, and that stuck with me.”

That thinking was echoed by Corva’s executive chairman, Dharmesh Mehta: “He’s taught me the importance of thinking bigger and more strategically, several years in the future.”

Diezi joined Corva as its COO when it launched in 2017.

“This has been my first startup and

there are new challenges every day,” she said. “We have grown from only a few people in 2017 to almost 300 globally today, and work for small operators in North America to many of the largest companies in the world.”

A significant career accomplishment for Diezi was when Corva reached 100 rigs within a year of going commercial. “This period was characterized by a great product/market fit and rapid growth; we established solid traction with a diverse range of customers across North America,” she said.

“It’s been fulfilling as I’ve been able to utilize a lot of my previous experience at some level during this time with Corva, as well as learn an incredible amount.”

Strategic planning for a company differs from strategic planning for a career. Sometimes things just work out the way they work out.

“Entering the industry in 2000, I had no idea what my career would look like and I’m happy for that,” Diezi said. “Viewing a career path as a straight line would have really limited me. I’ve always been a good leader, communicator and organizer, so honing these skills along the way was important. My biggest career goal today is growing Corva to have a strong global presence while delivering multiple product solutions.”

To accomplish this, she relies on her breadth of exposure to various experiences, from her early days in marketing and key accounts, to more recent roles overseeing operations and business functions.

“These varied experiences have instilled in me the ability to maintain grace under pressure and think strategically before reacting—a

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I have two crazy little dogs named Duke and Jinx. They’re from the same litter but look nothing alike.
- 2** My husband and I are building a barndominium in the country! We even have cows and a John Deere tractor.
- 3** We’re wondering how the Aggies are going to do next football season....

critical aspect of effective business leadership,” Diezi said. “My entrepreneurial spirit has been fueled by a deep sense of ownership in every task I undertake. My engineering degree has equipped me with the invaluable skill of breaking down complex concepts into simpler, manageable pieces, facilitating a pragmatic approach to problem-solving in the realm of business and entrepreneurship.”

That pragmatic approach can be found in her guidance to the oil and gas industry:

- “Technology has to deliver meaningful value or the change to embrace something new is worthless;
- “Communication within an organization is challenging on a good day. Never underestimate the importance of communicating a well-thought message many times; and
- “The culture that you create in an organization must evolve purposefully as the company and customers evolve.” ■



Jeannie Gardner

*Global Leader, Digital and Asset Transformation,
KBC Advanced Technologies, a Yokogawa Company
Houston*

Jeannie Gardner was in the chemical engineering office at North Carolina A&T State University, dressed in shorts and a T-shirt for tennis practice, when she was diverted to an unexpected job interview with a UOP recruiter that ended up launching her oil and gas career.

Her backhand may have suffered, but the energy industry has benefited from that sudden twist of fate. Still, she doesn't recommend serendipity as a career strategy.

"If you have been working hard and not reaping the rewards you think you deserve, it is not wise to leave your career to fate and hope that it intervenes," Gardner said. "You have to set your career on the right path and ensure that you and your career continue to grow. The secret in scaling that corporate ladder is to move up one rung at a time so that you can manage each step effectively."

Gardner lists three principles that she has followed to own her

career and move to the next level:

- Build your circle of advocates;
- Communicate with impact; and
- Prioritize like a CEO.

A little toughness helps, too.

"Have the strength to take risks, the confidence to deal with obstacles and setbacks and learn from failures," she said. "Cultivate strength to deal with remarks, insults and stereotypes, while being adaptable to changing situations. Believe in yourself and be confident. Don't measure your success by someone else; go by the beat of your own drum."

Gardner believes women have a vital role to play in the energy industry.

"As the industry implements new strategies around decarbonization and energy transition, we will see new companies and opportunities opening, and women will be key from both a technical and leadership perspective to help these companies grow and succeed," she said. "Women bring fresh new ideas and different perspectives on how to solve problems."

Women should feel safe in stepping out of their comfort zones and be

confident in the skills and capabilities they bring to the table, Gardner said. Now is the time for companies to shift the status quo and put money and policies into play to ensure a future for women in the workplace.

"Creating a supportive and inclusive workplace is not only the right thing to do but can also lead

to better business outcomes," she said. "By embracing diversity and empowering women, companies can tap into a broader talent pool, unlock innovation and drive sustainable growth."

For Gardner, utilizing executive coaches throughout her career has been critical to her success because of the value of having someone to give unbiased and objective opinions on the challenges and decisions that must be made by leaders

"Having a coach has helped me be more self-aware and really have

"... It is not wise to leave your career to fate and hope that it intervenes."

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I am the youngest of six kids.
- 2** I played tennis in college.
- 3** I've been to six of the seven continents.

a deeper understanding of my strengths, development areas and blind spots," she said. "Through coaching, I have gained the confidence to take risks, step out of my comfort zone and embrace personal growth. Working with a coach has helped me explore my potential, discover new strengths and overcome limiting beliefs which have been barriers to my success."

Gardner also advises people to give themselves a break on self-criticism.

"The best piece of advice that I've received is to own your mistakes, learn from them and move on," she said. "Some people think making a mistake is a sign of weakness and demonstrates a lack of knowledge. What I've learned is, admitting and owning mistakes fosters a culture of transparency and accountability within a team and/or organization. By being transparent about your mistakes, you set an example for others to follow and encourage a culture of learning and growth. It's important to not be too hard on yourself, but rather see mistakes as an opportunity for growth, improvement and learning experiences." ■



“Women bring fresh new ideas and different perspectives on how to solve problems.”

—**Jeannie Gardner**, Global Leader, Digital and Asset Transformation,
KBC Advanced Technologies, a Yokogawa Company



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Beth Good

*CEO and Partner, Resource Royalty
Dallas*

For Beth Good, joining Resource Royalty in 2011 was a homecoming of sorts.

“My maternal great-grandparents owned property right in the middle of the East Texas oil boom back in the '30s,” she said. The property was large enough to construct very small wooden homes to house oil field workers. At the end of the day, my great-grandmother regularly handed out metal buckets to feed everyone on the front porch steps.”

Growing up, Good heard many stories revolving around this time period, all with the same ending: “Never sell your minerals.”

But Good’s career took her in a different direction. After graduating Southern Methodist University with a degree in accounting, she worked for companies like KPMG and JPMorgan before a friend mentioned that he needed a CFO for an oil and gas venture he was putting together. She had found her home.

In late 2022, she was tapped to be Resource Royalty’s CEO.

“I’ve been very fortunate throughout my career to have been surrounded by a few people with great management skills,” Good said. “It’s one of those things that I didn’t appreciate at the time, but as I think back, I draw on my time and experience while working with them and try to emulate what I consider their best qualities. What made me enjoy working for them, what motivated me and what made me

want to go that extra mile—I think these are the things that have helped me be successful.”

For a role model, she returns to family.

“I’m one of those people that adhere to the mantra, you’re in charge of your own life and career,” Good said. “I face challenges head on, don’t try to appease but get to the real issue and get it resolved. Probably credit my grandfather for that. He had several careers over the span of his life, the last one and the one I remember was a cattle breeder—think John Wayne. At the end of the day, I think my grandfather was my role model.”

For young professionals who want to be successful, Good imparts the same advice she gives to her daughters.

“Make sure the standard you measure yourself by is above what is perceived as the norm,” she said. “In other words, if you’re stack ranked, against men or women, always

strive to be at the top of the ranking.”

Getting Resource Royalty to the top was a goal when she joined the startup.

“Resource Royalty was a new company,” Good said. “For me, it was important and still is to create a brand with credibility. We have clients that have never invested in an oil and gas program; therefore, they rely on us for education and execution. I’m proud of the fact that after 13 years in business, we have over 750 investors, many of whom have invested with us several different times.”

“You’re in charge of your own life and career.”

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** After my family, my real passion is food. If I were to go back and do it all over again, I think I would do something in the food industry, maybe a chef.
- 2** I’ve visited the DMZ in Korea.
- 3** All-time favorite vacation spot: anything Italy.

Though she entered the industry relatively late in her career, Good is unapologetically passionate about oil and gas.

“I’m going to step in it here a bit,” she said. “We all know that as a society we are dependent on fossil fuels, yet we have voices out there trying to tell us it’s over for the industry, for example, putting mandates on [electric vehicles] by 2030, etc. I have three grandsons and my wish is to leave the world a better place for them. If that means changing industry practices, supporting innovations in technology, then yes, count me in, I am passionate about it! What I don’t want to see is us as a society throwing the baby out with the bathwater.”

That enthusiasm translates into her take on what the industry needs to do to thrive in the future.

“2023 turned out to be an interesting year, specifically with regard to record-setting production numbers,” Good said. “The headlines are overwhelmingly pro-EV and anti-fossil fuels, yet somehow, we set a record. I credit that to the quiet tenacity of all phases of the industry. I say, keep on innovating.” ■



*“Make sure the standard you
measure yourself by is above what is
perceived as the norm.”*

—Beth Good, CEO and Partner, Resource Royalty

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Kajsa Greenhoward

*Vice President, Corporate and Strategic Planning,
Chesapeake Energy
Oklahoma City*

A native of Onsala, Sweden, Kajsa (KAI-sa) Greenhoward's motivation for entering the oil and gas industry was driven by the need for employment.

"I was in need of a job and had a referral to Chesapeake," Greenhoward said. "I was offered the job and have really enjoyed it from the start. It has provided me with challenges and learning opportunities in many different areas of finance throughout the years. I have been fortunate to work with people who included me in new projects and were willing to teach me. Being part of something that impacts not only staff, but the community is and has been rewarding."

She began at Chesapeake in 2001 and has many memorable experiences. Early in her career, the challenge was to hone accounting, forecasting and reporting skills as the company grew quickly. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Chesapeake filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, and Greenhoward led the corporate and strategic planning team as the company navigated the challenges of bankruptcy.

It was a demanding yet rewarding time at Chesapeake, she said, as she carried the weight of high-stake decision-making while collaborating with the executive team to guide the company. Her principal project today is assisting in the transformation of the company to a leader in the industry, which is what she terms the "ultimate reward."

As a woman in the industry, Greenhoward said she has responded to gender challenges by learning and contributing as much as she can.

"I am just me, a hard worker, mom and wife," she said. "I advocate for a seat at the table; I don't shy away from challenges. That said, it has not

happened without sacrificing time from my family."

For Greenhoward, the most formative experiences were being raised on a farm and seeing her parents' dedication and positive attitude in dealing with challenges. They learned from their challenges and found opportunities for growth within them, she said.

Greenhoward advises young professionals, especially young women in the energy sector, to actively seek mentorship and stay informed about industry trends.

"Continuously develop your technical and soft skills," she said. "Never hesitate to voice your ideas, contribute to discussions and embrace challenges as opportunities for growth."

When she started with Chesapeake, her goals were centered on gaining expertise in oil and gas accounting and best practices. Today, her objectives have evolved to include a broader focus on supporting the company and its staff, and the company's long-term vision.

"The industry has undergone significant changes: dealing with technological advancements, environmental concerns and fluctuating market dynamics," she said. "Challenges include navigating energy transitions, addressing environmental sustainability and adapting to geopolitical shifts. The sector has also faced economic downturns and the need for resilience in the face of global uncertainties. Adapting to these changes while delivering a profitable and sustainable business has become paramount."

Innovation and agility will be crucial for the oil and gas industry to adapt to evolving market dynamics and emerging technologies, she said. Embracing diversity and inclusion

THREE MORE THINGS

1 I love sports—soccer, football, basketball, skiing, swimming and tennis to mention a few. I grew up playing soccer and watching many sports. Today, sports are a way for me to relax and they provide an opportunity to bring the family together, as well as creating friendships.

2 I enjoy the outdoors; taking long walks, working in my garden or just sitting by the pool. Growing up in Sweden, being outdoors was essential. Many people think, because of the weather, you wouldn't want to be outside as much in Sweden. However, weather isn't seen as an obstacle. Swedes have a saying: no bad weather, just bad clothing.

3 When I retire, I aspire to use my knowledge and experience to educate high school seniors in the fundamentals of personal finance.

will help because they provide varied perspectives to problem-solving.

"In terms of technology, investments in digitalization, automation and artificial intelligence can enhance operational efficiency and decision-making," Greenhoward said. "A future-ready oil and gas industry necessitates a commitment to sustainability, innovation, adaptability and collaboration to navigate challenges and contribute to a resilient and responsible energy landscape." ■

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Kajsa Greenhoward
Vice President – Corporate & Strategic Planning

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Hart Energy's 2024 Influential Women in Energy
HONOREE



Barbara Harrison

*Vice President, Offsets & Emerging Technology,
Chevron New Energies, Chevron
Houston*

The best advice Barbara Harrison ever received was from her dad, a chemical engineer.

"You don't have to actually be an engineer, but with an engineering degree, people will know that you are smart, can solve problems and work hard," he told her. "That opens up most opportunities for you."

Her career path has reflected her dad's advice.

"My core engineering degree got me in the door, but growing as a leader and growing my commercial aptitude is what has allowed me to advance," Harrison said.

Her first opportunity in oil and gas was a summer internship in California, which Harrison, then a student at University College Dublin, seized upon.

"I quickly fell in love with the size and impact of the energy industry and the solutions we create every day," she said. "I was hooked and finished up university and returned to Chevron as a full-time employee when I graduated."

Harrison advanced quickly at the supermajor, beginning as a process engineer at the Richmond (Calif.) Refinery, then moving up through Chevron's downstream and chemicals business. Eventually, she was named general manager, value chain optimization for Asia. It was an opportunity to live in Singapore for almost three years.

"I really appreciated learning the international downstream business, cultural norms outside the U.S. work environment and the diverse experience

for our family," she said.

Her father was not the only mentor with useful career advice. Jim Gable, now president of Chevron Technology Ventures, was Harrison's manager when she was in her first team lead position. His guidance was to provide executives with the information they need to make a decision, not for her to share all the information she has.

"This critical distinction in both thinking about when and how decisions are made and how I can concisely and impactfully share the appropriate level of information is a skill I still consciously practice to this day," she said. "But getting that guidance then allowed me to start flexing a critical muscle early."

Colleen Cervantes, who retired in 2023 as president of Chevron Chemicals, offered Harrison valuable advice on how and why to delegate. First, think about what her managers or team members can do and what only she can do. Performing tasks that subordinates are capable of handling keeps an executive from spending time on projects where

only she can make a difference.

But it's more than that: it also takes away the opportunity for subordinates to grow and earn her position in the future.

"She turned my struggles with delegation as not just an issue for managing my own workload, but also a disservice to my leadership team," Harrison said. "It completely changed my perspective and actions going forward."

While she endured some negative experiences as a woman in the

"I learned early to be a strong advocate for myself and my career aspirations—never let an assumption linger when you can share your actual viewpoint."

THREE MORE THINGS

1 I was born, raised and educated in Ireland and still visit regularly. There are some words I still need to ensure I am spelling "American."

2 I absolutely love to travel, experience new cultures, food, etc. I always want to have my next vacation booked before I return from my current trip!

3 I am passionate about mentoring and will always prioritize time to meet with anyone who wants to connect!

workplace early in her career, she describes them as well-meaning but misplaced.

"An example being a more experienced male colleague assuming that decisions that made sense for their spouse and family would also make sense for me and translating that to opportunities," she said. "I learned early to be a strong advocate for myself and my career aspirations—never let an assumption linger when you can share your actual viewpoint."

Harrison advises young professionals, particularly women, to not be afraid of entering a male-dominated industry.

"There are amazing opportunities for everyone, mentors who have paved the way and a culture that is evolving all the time to meet the needs of working professionals—men and women!" she said. "If you are looking for an industry where your only limitation is your ambition, then the energy industry provides tremendous opportunity to have a broad experience, grow skills and develop as a leader." ■

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Susan Hart

*General Manager, Middle East and Africa
(Chemical Technologies), ChampionX
Dubai, UAE*

Some people, like Susan Hart, seem to have been born into the oil and gas industry.

“Growing up in Aberdeen, which is an oil city, the constant presence of the industry shaped my upbringing,” she said. “My parents both worked in the industry. My father was an engineer and had been involved in the startup of the Brent field.”

The technical and engineering accomplishments of the time captured her imagination. At school, chemistry became her forte, driving a passion for science, and the combination of these influences gave her a natural path to follow.

She has followed it far from Scotland to Dubai, UAE.

“Running the Middle East and Africa regions is a huge career milestone for me,” Hart said. “First, there are not many women in these types of roles in our industry, especially in the Middle East, so it’s quite unique to be in this position. It’s a very dynamic business—operating in over 20 countries and managing 500 employees—so there’s a wide scope to keep growing and learning. We are a part of multiple joint ventures, and every country has their own rules and regulations, plus there are a lot of local content requirements, so the work remains challenging.”

It’s those challenges that keep her passionate about oil and gas.

“I have always loved the dynamic nature of the industry and ChampionX’s focus on continuous improvement means you are always learning and adapting,” she said. “No day is the same, and there are always new opportunities that arise for us to find greater efficiencies, internally and for our customers.”

Hart has taken on multiple roles in

her career which have been important for her development as an executive.

“Working in different countries and cultures has helped broaden my knowledge, and I believe this has made me a more versatile and well-rounded business leader,” she said. “Not everyone thinks in the same way, and this wide scope of work has really opened my eyes to a whole different side of working. Equally, I think you can learn a lot about being a leader from negative experiences. We have all had these.”

Some of those negative experiences have related to her gender.

“Looking back at the start of my career, things were sometimes difficult for women, but it wasn’t really talked about and you just accepted it as the way things were,” Hart said. “There were not many women in senior positions in the oil and gas industry, and the absence of female role models made it difficult to envision oneself in higher-ranking roles.”

“Recognizing the difficulty of aspiring without visible role models, I’ve been conscientious about forging my own path. I’ve diligently worked to establish a career in areas and roles where female representation is limited, aiming to help pave the way for others in similar positions and regions.”

Hart advises young professionals to find a mentor or coach.

“Having someone who has experienced the workplace for a longer period than you have can help you avoid some of the pitfalls,” she said. “Networking is a great way to meet people like this, who can help you develop. If your organization has any [employee resource groups], I would always encourage young professionals to join these, too.”

THREE MORE THINGS

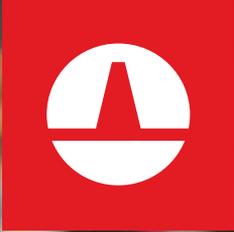
1 While I chose to initially pursue a career as a chemist when I completed university in the late 1990s, I had a chance to contribute to the foundational establishment of networks and data management systems within the company for two to three years before returning to my roots in chemistry.

2 When I find the time, I love drawing. I usually sketch animals and everyday objects. It’s incredible how your mind can relax and unwind when you’re immersed in this kind of focused creativity.

3 Several years back, I embarked on a volunteering journey centered around lion conservation in Zimbabwe, a project that supported not only the majestic creatures, but also the local communities. It was an amazing experience and immersed the volunteers in understanding the intricate ecosystems pivotal to sustaining such initiatives.

Hart’s first senior female mentor left a lasting impact on her.

“She always emphasized the significance of using your voice and ensuring it was heard,” Hart said. “Her words highlighted the purpose of being at the table—to contribute my perspective. Even in situations where discomfort may arise, her counsel echoes: have the confidence to speak up, share your opinions, and make your presence felt.” ■



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Joanne Howard

Former Senior Vice President, Sustainability and Corporate Communications, Crestwood Equity Partners Houston

“I find excitement in solving complex challenges, embracing technological advancements and contributing to a sector that plays a pivotal role in powering the world,” Joanne Howard said. “I’m passionate about how energy access and energy security can transform lives, particularly by raising communities around the world out of poverty. Additionally, the opportunity to be part of innovations that address environmental concerns and promote sustainability fuels my passion for making a positive impact within the industry.”

Howard’s career in energy has centered around sustainability, enhanced transparency and decarbonization. She led the development of the first-ever Midstream ESG Reporting Template through her work co-chairing the Energy Infrastructure (EIC) ESG Working Group.

“This collaborative process, that included members from both EIC and GPA Midstream, involved significant participation from in-house ESG specialists and professionals with operational and technical expertise from across the industry,” she said. “We received positive feedback from investors as they are now able to compare the ESG performance of each midstream company across the industry. The development of this ESG reporting template has also enabled other midstream companies to start their ESG reporting journey.”

A native of London, Howard grew up in Houston, then returned to the U.K. to earn bachelor’s and master’s degrees in international relations. Her first energy job was as vice consul for energy at the British Consulate-General in Houston.

She joined Spectra Energy in sustainability positions, then oversaw the combination of its sustainability program with Enbridge’s after the two companies

merged in 2017. She continued her work in sustainability at Crestwood Equity Partners, rising to senior vice president in early 2022.

As senior vice president, Howard spearheaded the development and implementation of a comprehensive sustainability strategy.

“This program not only met but exceeded industry standards, earning Crestwood external recognition and receiving multiple third-party awards from Hart Energy, The Wildlife Habitat Council, Girls Inc. and Institutional Investor, to name a few,” she said.

The strategy represented a team effort from the board of directors and CEO all the way to the operations team in the field. Every employee contributed to Crestwood’s success.

“It’s essential to foster a culture of sustainability driving positive change from the top down and bottom up, leading through influence while building trust and transparency,” she said. “This career milestone was not just about professional success but also about making a meaningful contribution to a more sustainable company, while implementing initiatives that contributed to the bottom line and enabling our social license to operate.”

For Howard, being able to learn from peers and mentors on the job has been essential to her career. Her mentors include Bob Phillips, founder, chairman and CEO of Crestwood, and Robert Halpin, the company’s president.

“From them, I have gained confidence in my abilities and have been willing to learn from both successes and failures,” Howard said.

Another mentor is her father, an energy banker in Houston, who taught her the power of networking. A mother of two sons, ages 5 and 9, Howard believes it’s important to be a

THREE MORE THINGS

1 I love to travel and learn about different cultures. I’ve traveled to over 60 countries.

2 My love of community service began at an early age, inspired by my late mother who was passionate about giving back to the community. As early as 16, I traveled to a remote community in Fiji to help build a school and teach English and Health to the children of the village.

3 While working for the British Consulate in Houston, I escorted a member of the British Royal Family on a trip to Texas and Louisiana, with a special visit to the Shell MARS platform in the Gulf of Mexico.

mentor to her family, too.

“My boys are my everything,” she said. “I feel it’s important that they see strong working women in their lives.”

Howard takes a pragmatic approach to the industry’s future, pointing out that while it has made strides in innovation and decarbonization, the work isn’t done.

“We need to continue to do this in a practical way while telling our authentic story—eliminating greenwashing,” she said. “We need to continue to foster a mindset of collaboration across the energy value chain and continue to eliminate silos. Embrace cutting edge technologies such as AI, smart grids, etc. Continue to prioritize [diversity, equity and inclusion] to harness a wide range of perspectives and further promote diversity of thought.” ■



Pamela Kearney Skaufel

Vice President, Procurement, Exxon Mobil Houston

In 2003, Pamela Kearney Skaufel found herself on an airfield in Chad, watching an Antonov transport aircraft laden with spare parts for Exxon Mobil's Chad/Cameroon Development Project.

It was her first expatriate assignment as a procurement supervisor and it exposed her to the effort needed to start up a production facility and pipeline of that magnitude.

"We had thousands of critical spare parts that had to be available in Chad and had to be mobilized before startup," Kearney Skaufel said. "It was a huge team effort for weeks to get everything staged and transported to an airfield in Chad. We started up on-time and feeling the sense of gratitude after all the hard work taught me the importance of working in a team, and the vital part everyone plays in a successful outcome."

The native of Limerick, Ireland, was drawn to the industry while studying petroleum geology at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland, an area dominated by the oil and gas sector.

"There were a huge variety of roles/careers I observed, which was very appealing to me," Kearney Skaufel said. "I was fascinated with the technology and commerce associated with exploration, and I had a curiosity about large corporations and how business was conducted."

That fascination continues, as she observes the changes sweeping the industry.

"I am excited to see new businesses emerging from our traditional energy sector," she said. "Whether it's biofuels, carbon capture, or hydrogen processing or plastic waste recycling as feedstock for new products. I am extremely

proud to be part of this business that can change and is now leading some of the discussions globally on how we tackle emissions, but also being part of the solution."

Over the course of her 26-year career, Kearney Skaufel said she has gained the confidence to take on tasks even if she lacks experience in that area, and to approach challenges with a learning mindset.

"I have also pivoted to the future and I want to make this industry better for those that follow me," she said. "Including those that are driving business process outcomes/technology improvements and those that are creating really innovative procurement strategies to lower our cost of doing business."

The skills Kaerney Skaufel has learned over her career have also paid off outside of the office, helping her to make difficult choices as the Board President of the Houston Area Parkinsons Society.

"I would never have had the courage to do this without all the lessons I have learned at work about 'doing hard things'," she said.

While Kearney Skaufel said she never felt like she would be denied opportunities to progress in her career at Exxon Mobil because she was a woman, she was also acutely aware of the challenges for women in the oil and gas industry.

"I attribute my own personal successes to being true to who I am, never compromising on my values of hard work and doing the right thing," she said.

Her advice for young professionals, particularly women, is threefold:

- "Invest for the long term. This industry can take many turns and cycles and one role or job doesn't

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1 I love dogs and we have three of them—Maggie, Abbey and Finn.
- 2 I have run 24 marathons, 4 ultra runs and will complete my sixth Star of the Marathon Majors in Tokyo in March. Last year and this year I guided a blind runner in the Marathon.
- 3 I am the eldest of six girls in our family—we have no brothers.

define your career."

- "Gain experience across the entire value chain and don't limit yourself to your immediate view of either your education or your previous job."
- "Think experiences—what experiences do I want to give me job satisfaction? It's different for everyone and each career path will be different."

She also cites a recent McKinsey study highlighting that oil and gas trails all other STEM industries in entry level female participation.

"This problem is not an industry issue alone, but is also an issue for the university system where women account for fewer STEM graduates than men," Kearney Skaufel said.

"As a leader in this industry now, I have a personal responsibility to change this trajectory. We can do this by being advocates for our business, encouraging younger women to be part of it and showing them that they belong in this business. I try and do this every day." ■



Robin Laine

CEO, *Transect Inc.*
San Antonio

For Robin Laine, it's all about the "why."
"Knowing my 'why' as a woman in this industry has allowed me to remain steadfast in the challenges I have faced," she said. "When I was confronted by pushback as a young woman in oil and gas, and even now as a female CEO, I choose to focus my efforts and mentality on my 'why' of helping developers make environmentally informed decisions."

In her first oil and gas job as an environmental consultant, she quickly understood that pipeline projects traversing vast amounts of land almost always have the potential to impact sensitive environmental resources.

"While the oil and gas professionals working on these projects want to do the right thing in regards to the environment, they may not always have all of the resources on hand to make the best decisions about pipeline routing in respect to the environmental conditions of the land," Laine said. "I have spent my career working to protect our natural resources and landscape here in the U.S. while also enabling the development of projects that support our energy needs."

Accomplishing those goals requires capital. Laine is particularly proud of raising Series A funding for Transect.

"Less than 3% of all [venture capital] funding is directed to female entrepreneurs, so receiving the interest of high-value investors was empowering and reiterated the importance of Transect's mission to solve the environmental compliance problem," she said. "Building a tech company can feel lengthy and lonely, but the arduous journey is worth it for the growth it has provided for me, my employees and my company."

A career move to a larger consulting firm in 2012 was key to developing her leadership skills. At her new company,

she was responsible for building the natural resources program from scratch. Her first project was a 500-mile pipeline from Weld County, Colo., to Cushing, Okla.

"Needless to say, it was a daunting task," Laine said. "Being in my late 20s during this role, I held tremendous responsibility for everything from hiring to budgeting to field work coordination to final deliverable."

However, she also had a boss who trusted her leadership abilities and provided the space for her to learn and grow. The project was a success.

"Not only was this an incredible opportunity to develop my technical skills, but it also shaped much of my character as a leader," Laine said.

Not that leadership is easy. Her skills at environmental consulting were so formidable that managers assumed she would be adept at managing others to do that same thing.

"I'm still trying to figure out how to be a good leader; it's quite hard," she said. "I've had to learn to adapt, research, actively seek out the expertise of those around me and, most importantly, learn to trust myself and show up authentically."

Laine's advice to young professionals is to first master their craft. The first decade out of college is about establishing a career and starting at the bottom, but that's what lays the foundation for future opportunities.

"Also, be careful how much you job hop," she said. "Any resume that shows a lack of commitment goes to the bottom of my pile."

Laine adds, with some frustration, that women have to work harder, especially in any field that is traditionally dominated by men.

"But the secret weapon will always be building professional and friendly

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I used to be a zookeeper.
- 2** Outside of professional work, I am passionate about non-profit causes that serve my local community in San Antonio and our neighbors on the border. I am on the board of For Her, an organization that provides resources and support for marginalized women to take autonomy of their lives, and Isaiah 55 Ministries, an organization committed to serving the deaf community in Mexico.
- 3** I am permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services to survey for golden-cheeked warblers, the endangered songbird that also serves as Transect's mascot.

relationships with other women," she said. "It feels like an unspoken code that we will help each other open doors however we can, from whatever position we're in, because it's a small cohort and we want to see each other succeed."

That goes back to her "why."
"Finding your why and searching out other women to support your mission are critical to success in this industry," Laine said. "The midstream sector contains very few women, which, in my experience, means we are that much more willing to lift each other up in this small community. I would go to significant lengths for a woman who wants to grow and thrive in this industry, and the lengths other female leaders have gone to for me are truly incredible." ■



Heather Leahey

*Vice President, Intelligence, Enverus
Calgary, Alberta, Canada*

Heather Leahey ran her first half-marathon in 2017. It could have gone better.

"I remember starting out of the gate much quicker than my normal pace to keep up with other participants, but then burning out by the three-quarter mark and finishing much slower than my targeted time," she said. "Had I focused on my own race and running at a steady pace that was appropriate for my body and training, the outcome may have been different."

The lesson, which she passes onto young professionals: run your own race. "In the age of social media, it is far too easy to draw comparisons with others and to feel inadequate."

Leahey acknowledges the advantages of working at Enverus, a company that prioritizes diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace.

"Still, women are underrepresented across most levels in industry, including in senior positions," she said. "I have sought out both male and female mentors for encouragement and advice, especially for managing imposter syndrome and overcoming personal and professional challenges."

"I am also grateful for the sense of community and the connections I have formed with female peers in the industry, both within and outside of Enverus. I am passionate about supporting other women in energy and am always looking for ways to get involved, whether it be through organizing internal networking activities or participating in external conferences and events."

A key moment in Leahey's career was her transition to the energy transition. In her work on the Eagle Ford Shale, she began fielding questions about EOR using CO₂. Her research led to work on the broader CCUS value chain and, eventually, to leaving coverage of

upstream to head up CCUS research in 2022.

"I conceived the group's first low-carbon strategy and empowered a growing team to execute on key CCUS and low-carbon deliverables," Leahey said. "I really enjoyed the opportunity to see this project from ideation to implementation—zero to one—and to collaborate with so many talented and innovative teammates."

One of the best pieces of advice she received early in her career was to approach her work with an entrepreneurial mindset, or to treat it like a business.

"The mindset shift helped cultivate more ownership in my work and empowered me to innovate and think strategically about how I was spending my time," she said. "I learned the value of intimately familiarizing myself with customer problems and generating solutions that fit those needs. This change in outlook was extremely powerful and helped push me to the next level in my career."

Empathizing with the customer is critical to success. She advises young professionals to stay and ask why something is important.

"Truly understand your customer, be it an internal or external stakeholder, and the root of their problems," Leahey said. "We too often design solutions to address low value or the wrong problems without taking the time for appropriate discovery and validation. Learning to ask the right questions at the onset and throughout the process helps ensure innovation meets its objectives."

Her role at Enverus is to work with corporate and institutional clients that have a strong foothold in oil and gas, but are exploring ways to participate in the new energy space to reinforce the longevity of their businesses.

THREE MORE THINGS

1 I completed my first backpacking trip in 2019 on the West Coast Trail, which is located on the south side of Vancouver Island in Canada. It was a six-day, five-night, 75 km trip along the beach and through the rainforest—a bit ambitious for my first experience, but I ended up loving it.

2 I grew up watching the Toronto Blue Jays and try to see as many games as I can each year over my travels. I watched two Spring Training Jays games in Florida, one regular season Jays game in Toronto and three Houston Astros games all in 2023. I also went on a Washington Nationals ballpark tour in October, but I think Fenway will always be my favorite.

3 I really enjoy reading Adam Grant's books. He is an organizational psychologist and professor at Wharton. He delves into what motivates individuals and teams, and I have learned a lot about employee engagement and performance from his body of work.

"The broader energy landscape is rapidly evolving, and unlike traditional oil and gas development, the energy transition investment playbook is much less defined," Leahey said. "There is a strong desire for collaboration and diversity in industry—we need lots of new ideas from many different individuals to find success in the face of the challenges in front of us." ■



Catalina Leal Isaza

*Global HSE Director – Production Solutions,
Baker Hughes
Claremore, Okla.*

Catalina Leal Isaza earned her bachelor's degree in chemical engineering in her native Colombia and her MBA in the U.S. Her passion for learning, however, transcends academic achievement.

"Being a woman in this male-dominated industry can be perceived as a challenge, but my continuous hunger for learning has served me well," she said. "I work continuously to identify my strengths and areas of opportunity and I always keep my eye on the job that needs to be done, focused on the results. I surround myself with people I can learn from to improve my knowledge and capabilities."

She has used her assignments as learning platforms to become a better leader.

"I believe developing business leadership and entrepreneurship skills is a journey of continuous learning," Leal Isaza said. "Our greatest achievements sometimes are just beyond our perceived limits."

She pursues opportunities to stay challenged. That has meant taking roles in different product lines and different functions, and pivoting from engineering to quality, and from drilling to production.

"Someone once told me, 'if you look at a job description and it feels you can do everything in there, it is probably not the right one for you,'" Leal Isaza said. "But if, in turn, it looks daunting, chances are that it is the one that will potentially give you the most opportunities to grow and develop yourself."

Staying curious tops her list of advice to young professionals. But it's not her only advice.

"Remain authentic and keep a positive spirit," Leal Isaza said. "Being authentic is key to developing trust with your teams. Also—and this is a big

one for me—always be of service to others. Your actions will have a ripple effect. A random act of kindness in the professional world can have an enormous impact on a career, a team's success and even the evolution of your organizational culture. By helping others and staying positive, you will also find daily joy."

And, of course: network, network, network.

"I underestimated the value of networking early in my career," she said. "I would remind young professionals to grow and nurture their networks."

Among the challenges that many women face is imposter syndrome, or doubting abilities and feeling that women must work extra hard to prove themselves in the male-dominated oil and gas industry.

"As women, we need to be confident in our own self-worth and expertise," Leal Isaza said. "We need to learn to recognize our own achievements and our continuous growth. Learn to take mistakes in stride and to remember the saying that 'this too shall pass.' Chances are, later you will realize what a great learning opportunity it was. So, challenge yourself and grow in confidence as a result."

Another challenge, not unique to this industry, is becoming a mother. Leal Isaza acknowledged that balancing the load from her day job while juggling the responsibilities at home never gets easier.

"It is a struggle, but my kids are the reason to try to find that balance every day," she said. "My daughter, in particular, has shown me how she is always watching and how I am a role model to her. This has been my most important job I have had and the one I would not trade for anything, so, even with the challenge, it is worth it."

THREE MORE THINGS

1 I don't do spicy food. I improved a bit in my assignments in Mexico, but even my Mexican friends say that I am not even a 3 in a scale from 1 to 10.

2 When in college in Colombia, I joined a program for students called work and travel and we would come to the U.S. during the summer under a special cultural exchange visa. I worked as a ride operator in amusement parks, cashier at a supermarket, and there was one season I worked five different jobs at once to help pay tuition back at home. So, I know how it is like to work at Wendy's, TJMaxx and I even learned how to make pizza from scratch.

3 My first real job after graduating as a chemical engineer was in a different industry and I would come home smelling like baby shampoo every day. Very different than oil and gas!

Making a difference in people's lives keeps Leal Isaza passionate about coming to work each day. Those people include the ones who report to her.

"Keeping my team motivated and inspired to improve how we work is a blessing to me," she said. "I believe in unlocking everyone's potential by encouraging and helping them find their passion. Our industry provides energy to the world, and what a responsibility that is. It really is an exciting time to be part of this industry and be able to drive change." ■

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Kendra Lee

*Chairman and CEO, Merichem Co.
Houston*

Merichem Co. was a success in the industrial chemicals business before Kendra Lee took over as CEO in 2014. But since then, the culture shift that Lee championed has made it a better place to work, which has resulted in continued improvements in efficiencies and revenues.

"The oil and gas industry is laden with execution or authoritarian culture," Lee said. "I placed an unrelenting focus on developing and maintaining an innovative culture where unorthodox thinking is encouraged, and there are tools and processes in place to capture and progress ideas."

Merichem's leadership fosters an environment of trust, she said. That translates to a motivated workforce, with employees knowing that everyone else in the company is also focused on innovation.

"We have eliminated such dangerous phrases as 'we've always done it that way,'" she said. "Rather, I listen to employees and empower them to question, 'How can we do this better?'"

Customers have noticed, as well.

"I am also incredibly proud of the high customer satisfaction we receive at Merichem," Lee said. "We have global repeat customers, especially with the caustic side of our business. It gives me great satisfaction to know that, as a smaller company, we compete solidly against such large organizations as Siemens and Honeywell."

Merichem was founded in 1945 by Lee's grandfather, John T. Files, and two business partners, as a soap and industrial cleaning company which they relaunched for the cresylic acid business. Merichem took cresylate,

which is spent caustic containing cresylic acids, from refineries and recovered the naturally occurring cresylic acid, which they refined and purified to sell into the industrial chemicals market.

Lee joined the company as a lab technician after receiving her bachelor's degree from Texas A&M. Realizing she wasn't suited for lab work, she moved into sales while pursuing her MBA at the University of Houston. She later served as the corporate treasurer and on the Board of Directors before becoming CEO.

"I have never considered my gender a challenge, even in a male-dominated industry like oil and gas," Lee said. "In being undeterred, undaunted and unflinching, I took a straightforward approach to forwarding my career and always asked for what I wanted."

"In establishing my place as the leader of Merichem and in the boardroom, I've had to be my own advocate. I know what it takes to run a business. I don't see challenges presented in my positions as any different than for anyone else."

Lee advises young professionals to adopt that gung-ho approach, as well.

"Don't be daunted or dissuaded," she said. "Assess your skills, knowledge and expertise that may be transferable to the oil and gas industry."

That might mean seeking an internship at a major oil and gas company like Shell, Chevron, BP or Exxon Mobil to get a taste of what it's like to work in the industry. Lee also favors finding a mentor to help navigate the industry.

In her own case, there wasn't a specific individual, but supervisors and others throughout her career who

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I love to cook and bake for friends and family.
- 2** If I had more free time and lived in the mountains or at least the hills, I would go hiking every day.
- 3** I am a native Houstonian and a seventh-generation Texan.

offered advice and rooted her on.

"The mentoring I received was more organic in nature," Lee said. "My mentors made themselves available to me, and I took advantage of the time they offered to create lasting friendships. By listening to their stories and ideas, and being open to absorbing information, I learned better ways to navigate the business world."

The oil and gas industry is hampered by the negative stigma attached to its reputation as an exclusive club of good ol' boys, Lee believes. There is still a great deal to do in diversity and inclusion efforts, she said.

"Although lack of diversity in the industry is a real issue, culture and processes also need immediate attention," she said. "By encouraging an innovative culture, the industry at-large could embrace a work environment where unorthodox thinking is encouraged, and there are tools and processes in place to capture and progress ideas. Innovative cultures foster an environment of trust with leadership and with one another." ■



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Nikki Martin

*President and CEO, EnerGeo Alliance
Houston*

In 2015, the board of what is now known as EnerGeo Alliance nominated Nikki Martin to be its next president. She was 32 years old and the first female to lead any global energy association.

"Of course, there were perceptions that I was too young, and I was also the only woman in my board room," Martin said. "However, my board has always been supportive of my leadership from the start, and in my role, I was able to work towards one of the objectives that inspired me more in my career: Supporting the energy discovery industry in Making Energy Possible every day."

EnerGeo Alliance's "Making Energy Possible" campaign explains how geoscience and exploration leverages data, science and technology to make affordable, reliable and secure energy possible.

While taking the reins of the global trade association for the energy geoscience industry at age 32 is a career milestone, Martin prefers to focus on her achievements since then.

"In my first year as president, I brought oil and gas operators and integrated energy companies into our organization as industry partners, and have since increased their vested interest and built a Leadership Forum consisting of the top leaders responsible for exploration globally," she said.

"I love this role because I get to play a significant part in ensuring more people and communities are connected to energy in a sustainable manner," Martin said. "This is a humanitarian need. It is hard to believe that in 2023, 10% of the world does not have access to any source of electricity, and 30% of

the world does not have access to clean fuels for cooking; the World Health Organization estimates this contributes to over 3 million premature deaths per year.

"This is the time for the energy geoscience industry to tell its powerful story of how it has and can continue to connect people to energy by enabling its discovery and development—both of mainstay sources of energy like petroleum and natural gas and of lower-carbon solutions like wind, geothermal and carbon capture and storage."

The Alaska native knew she wanted to pursue a career in energy or public policy, or both, when she graduated high school and was drawn to policies that balance multi-use and the maximum yield and benefit of natural resources.

"The notion that people should be able to benefit from and live off the natural resources within their grasp is so important that it's a constitutional principle in Alaska," Martin said.

She learned early as a lawyer on the staffs of Sen. Ted Stevens and former Alaska Senate President Ben Stevens that conservation and development are not mutually exclusive.

"We can develop our natural resources and protect the environment to improve the quality of people's lives through the access to indigenous energy sources," she said. "This is something in which I deeply believe and that inspired me over my career in this industry."

Martin's first piece of advice for young professionals is to not hesitate to ask for help.

Early in her career, she engaged an executive coach to build her confidence and help her find the

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** Being from Alaska, I am a salmon snob. As we say up north, "Friends don't let friends eat farmed fish!"
- 2** I was once featured on "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."
- 3** I was a competitive long-distance runner in college.

right language to express ideas to executives before she had the experience to do it on her own.

"Knowing when to seek help is also key," she said. "Probably the toughest challenge in my career was navigating how to lead and how to show up for my team and still add value to my work when I was experiencing the unexpected personal loss of my daughter. When it happened, I knew being able to walk through the grief and still function was something I couldn't do myself, and immediately sought a counselor who was key to my stability.

"Knowing when you can do something on your own and when you absolutely cannot is critical."

Her second piece of advice: Embrace where you are in the moment of your life and don't waste energy worrying about where you are not.

"Excelling at work and in your personal life do not have to be mutually exclusive," Martin said. "When you feel like they are, remember there are seasons when you need to or have the ability to lean more into one than the other, but they will swap and it will all balance out." ■

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Katie Mehnert

CEO and Founder, ALLY Energy
 Houston

In January 2020, Goldman Sachs announced during the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, that the investment bank would no longer carry out IPOs for companies in the U.S. and Europe that lacked at least one woman or non-white board member.

Katie Mehnert responded to Chairman and CEO David Solomon with a piece in the Harvard Business Review, calling his policy “misguided, and potentially damaging.” She contended that board representation wasn’t enough and that if “a company is genuinely committed to gender equality and diversity, that commitment will show up in its metrics at all levels.”

Solomon responded by reaching out to her for a one-to-one conversation.

“I was stunned and equally thrilled to have a conversation with him,” Mehnert said. “He encouraged me to join the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Business program and Women’s program that his firm and Babson College have put together to help small businesses grow. The course was intense, and I was lucky to complete it during COVID-19. It ultimately is what led me to change the name of the company and focus on the growth we’re experiencing now.”

“I’m glad I had the courage to write that piece. Had I not, who knows where the company would be today?”

Hard to tell, but with Mehnert at the helm, ALLY Energy, formerly known as Pink Petro, would likely be in good

shape anyway. Her first energy-related job was with Enron. She went on to other traditional oil and gas roles, including high-level positions at Shell and BP, before realizing that she was a creator and builder who wanted a bigger purpose than just Big Oil. Her mission had evolved to one in which she would lead the charge in changing hearts and minds to shape the energy workforce of the future.

“I had the courage to leave a very well-paying leadership role and executive path for the chaos of becoming an entrepreneur,” Mehnert said. “I cut my pay to \$0 for two years and have bootstrapped my company

to seven figures.”

ALLY Energy works with companies to develop a framework and thought leadership to become brand leaders, attract top talent, build culture and retain high performers. At ALLY, Mehnert employs a people-centric philosophy.

“We cannot solve big energy demand and emissions goals without

people,” she said. “Human capital is the heart of what we do. Our workforce is woefully short, and we need to get more people excited about the opportunities and challenges we face in energy.”

Mehnert advises young professionals, particularly women, to “know your worth and add tax. You are the best stock you own, so invest in yourself because no one else will.”

Finally, “find a great partner/spouse who will be your equal partner.”

She credits her spouse, Mark Mehnert, for believing in her and giving

“I had the courage to leave a very well-paying leadership role and executive path for the chaos of becoming an entrepreneur.”

THREE MORE THINGS

1 My daughter, Ally Mehnert, is the namesake (and rename) of my company and the reason I do what I do.

2 Last fall, I led a team of multi-national energy executives to run the New York Marathon and ring the closing bell at the NYSE.

3 People think I love pink. I really didn’t like the color, and when I started the company as Pink Petro, I learned to embrace it. It put color on our industry and that was more important to me than my own ego.

her the space to do this work.

“He’s stood by patiently, and often in the background, giving me the encouragement to go for it,” she said.

Sheryl Sandberg, former COO of Meta and author of “Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead,” has been her mentor for a decade.

“Her one resounding piece of advice to me has stuck with me since I met her,” Mehnert said. “She asks a question: ‘What would you do if you weren’t afraid?’”

“That question is something I ask when I feel fear,” she continued.

“Sheryl was a first in her industry. She got the conversation started for women around the world. Being able to call on her for advice in my journey has been invaluable as I’ve navigated as a ‘first.’ I’ve joined and formed Lean In mentoring circles to encourage other ‘firsts’ that they are not alone.” ■



Carolina Ortega

*Vice President of Sustainability,
Milestone Environmental Services
Houston*

Carolina Ortega was all about sustainability before sustainability was hip.

"I have a passion for driving positive change on environmental and social issues," she said. "I joined the oil and gas industry because I wanted to make a positive impact in the lives of communities touched by the industry. Prior to joining this industry, I worked for two global consumer products companies, also in the sustainability field."

Ortega said she fell in love with sustainability because it provided an avenue to be an agent of positive change.

"I always knew that sustainability should have an important seat at the table and I worked hard for many years for this to happen. Almost 23 years later, looking at my career and my current role, I would have never, in my wildest dreams, imagined this was possible."

For the oil and gas industry to thrive in the future, sustainability must be a factor.

"I believe the industry must further its transparency about the positive and negative impacts of its operations," Ortega said. "Similarly, the approach to stakeholder engagement and building solid, mutually beneficial relationships with host communities will be a key determinant of success in the years to come."

A native of Mexico City, Ortega views travel, experiencing other cultures and speaking different languages as key components of her business leadership and entrepreneurial skills set.

"This has given me the superpower to be adaptable, curious and unafraid of change," she said. "In an industry where change is constant, this has helped me stay resilient in the face of many challenges."

Among her adventures:

- Working in Malawi and Mozambique to eradicate child labor in farming;
- Building social responsibility projects for Bedouin women in the desert of Oman;
- Discussing sustainability (in French) with the Labor Minister of Gabon; and
- Leading the Social Responsibility Group of IPIECA (the global oil and gas trade association for social and environmental issues) for four years.

Ortega's latest adventures in her current role have led her to develop a new framework to describe the value created by

Milestone's sustainability efforts.

"This was a great accomplishment for me," she said.

Ortega has made it a point to pursue partnerships in the workplace.

"I seek out internal allies for my work and my priority issues in the companies where I've worked," she said. "These mentors and peers

"I always knew that sustainability should have an important seat at the table and I worked hard for many years for this to happen."

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I speak four languages, have worked in 12 countries and traveled to over 30 countries.
- 2** If I had to choose another career, and I was 20 years younger, I'd be a flamenco dancer!
- 3** When I retire from the energy sector, I will get a Ph.D in art history.

have enriched my career in immeasurable ways. I've also had the honor and privilege to work with amazingly supportive women, who have taught me that we need one another to further our careers."

Early in her career, a boss taught her that a steadfast commitment to excellence and exceptional work would take her far. She still believes this to be true.

"My M.O. is a strong commitment to excellence, transparency, collaboration and always doing the right thing," Ortega said. "I believe this is what my peers and colleagues appreciate the most about me."

She is an optimist when it comes to the future of oil and gas, holding "a deep and strong belief that the energy industry is a force for good and can continue to transform the lives of millions for many years to come. The energy industry will continue to be a key player in the energy transition, and I want to contribute to that transformation." ■



Samantha Richardson

*Vice President, Commercial – Natural Gas,
 Tallgrass Energy
 Lakewood, Colo.*

When Samantha Richardson's first child underwent multiple surgeries as an infant and a toddler, she was spared one worry as a parent: the operating room would not lose power.

Many families worldwide lack access to these essential resources, a privilege Americans often take for granted, Richardson said. Her deeply held belief that every individual deserves access to affordable and reliable energy is what motivates her work in the oil and gas industry.

"Witnessing unreliable infrastructure in countries that lack these resources, including the small, remote village in Brazil that my mother was raised in, has fueled my commitment to working towards ensuring that future generations encounter less of these challenges," she said.

Richardson has more perspective than most about the global impact of energy. Growing up the daughter of a drilling operations leader, she visited rigs, shared meals with rig hands and spent weekends at the office with her dad. She was born in Saudi Arabia, spent her childhood in Oman, Kuwait, Egypt and UAE, and eventually made it back to her father's hometown of Denver.

"The global, diverse and ever-evolving nature of the oil and gas industry offers a unique platform for connectivity, innovation and creative solutions to meet our growing global energy needs and goals," Richardson said. "This dynamic combination aligns with my vision of harboring diverse thinking to contribute to a more sustainable and interconnected world."

As a seasoned professional in the natural resource industry and a devoted mother, she works hard to instill feminist values in her son and daughter, reflecting the influence of her own mother who,

despite lacking the privilege to obtain higher education, prioritized her children's education and encouraged them to explore all opportunities. This passion extends beyond her family as she is passionate about promoting women's empowerment in the oil and gas sector.

"This industry provides women with opportunities in the U.S. that might be constrained in regions abundant with resources but facing different challenges," Richardson said. "By promoting local growth within the industry, we are inherently creating avenues for women's empowerment, especially in regions where they may encounter more limitations."

Richardson's diverse mentorship experiences have significantly shaped her leadership philosophy. At Tallgrass, her first peer, who she still considers a female role model, not only developed her foundation of skills as she transitioned into a commercial role, but this person also served as the catalyst for Richardson's pursuit into leadership. This experience is proof that mentorship in non-traditional forms are equally impactful as it inspired Richardson to focus on leveraging the collective knowledge of those around her, emphasizing the value of diverse perspectives.

Building on this foundation, Richardson's current boss has fostered her development in strategic thinking and encourages her to lead authentically. His confidence in her knowledge and leadership style have inspired her to enable her team and the people she interacts with to surpass their perceived capabilities.

"This statement," she said, "captures his vision as a leader: 'I know I've been successful as a leader when you no longer feel the need to consult with me on every critical decision. My goal is that,

THREE MORE THINGS

1 At the age of 3, I experienced a near-drowning incident. Post-resuscitation, my mother promptly reintroduced me to the pool to mitigate any future fear of the water. This experience not only instilled my love for water and swimming, including becoming a competitive swimmer, but also marked my first triumph in overcoming challenges and fears.

2 I was in an a cappella group at the Colorado School of Mines. Our harmonies soared higher than the GPAs of our fellow students. It was aca-amazing!

3 As a mother to a beautiful and creative cleft affected child, I am passionate about supporting families within the cleft community. Leveraging my personal experience, I am dedicated to guiding them through the complexities of this birth difference.

one day, you become so successful that I eventually will work for you."

Richardson said she often echoes that statement to members of her own team.

"This captures my commitment to fostering an environment where personal growth is not only encouraged but actively supported," she said. "In essence, my goals have shifted from personal knowledge acquisition to a focus on empowering and nurturing the potential within others, creating a culture where each individual can thrive and contribute to the success of our organization." ■



CONGRATULATIONS

Samantha Richardson

2024 INFLUENTIAL WOMEN IN ENERGY

Congratulations on being named one of the 2024 Influential Women in Energy. You are a visionary leader at Tallgrass — thank you for setting an excellent example of empowerment and innovation.



Serena Agaba Rwejuna

Partner & Co-Head, Energy Markets and Regulatory Practice, White & Case Washington, D.C.

An accomplished attorney, Serena Agaba Rwejuna found a loophole in her promise to her family not to pursue more academic degrees after she collected her fourth.

“HA HA! My cheat code is working in the energy industry,” she said. “I am able to constantly learn and develop new skills, challenge myself, tap into my intellectual curiosity and creativity, mentor, train and empower others, all while developing effective, commercially minded, real-world solutions to some of our most pressing and complex issues. I truly love what I do, and it taps into all of my greatest talents, skills and passions!”

The daughter of an East African immigrant, Rwejuna takes her standing seriously as one of just a handful of black women who are “Big Law” partners specializing in energy regulatory matters. She uses her platform to mentor and serve as a role model to diverse young professionals, particularly for the development and advancement of women, African and African American lawyers.

“Working in the energy industry, I’ve often found myself as ‘the only’—the only woman in the room, the only person of color in the room, the only woman of color in the room,” she said. “I’ve made it my mission to mentor, champion and empower other women and diverse professionals so future generations hopefully won’t have to endure being ‘the only.’”

Rwejuna has taken on the mantle of advocate and champion for diversification in the energy industry.

“Not just because it’s good for business and the bottom line, or because it’s what we need in order to support the energy transformation and energy transition,” she said. “But because it’s the right thing to do and it’s critical to empowering the next

generation of leaders within our industry so they’re prepared to solve our most complex energy challenges.”

Rwejuna advises young women in the industry to “invest in building a personal board of directors, which is a group of people who you trust, admire or aspire to emulate professionally and seek out their guidance and support as you approach each major decision you have to make—whether professionally or personally.

“Having a diverse sounding board of advisers has helped me at every stage of my career and I encourage every young professional—especially women and professionals of color—to build and cultivate a personal board of directors early in their educational and professional careers.”

Rwejuna has availed herself of numerous mentors in her career, all of whom demonstrated outstanding leadership, selflessness and dedication to empowering others.

“Some of the best advice I’ve ever received is to think and act like the role you want—not the one you have,” she said. “My earliest champion in the legal profession challenged me to act and think like a partner, an executive and an owner—even as a junior associate.”

She also attributes her leadership skills, in part, to studying management.

“Attorneys are often trained to be excellent writers, effective orators and zealous advocates, but what is often missing is a focus on leadership and relationship building—and the importance of developing strong and effective leadership skills and authentic relationships,” Rwejuna said. “Learning how to lead, empower and authentically connect with others has had the most impact on my career and success.”

“It’s the difference,” she said, “between an effective individual having an immediate impact and an effective

THREE MORE THINGS

1 For more than 10 years, I’ve maintained two personal goals: do or try one new thing every week; and travel once per month. These have helped me to remain authentic, engaged and human while working in a fast-paced, demanding industry.

2 I love traveling and am on pace to have visited 40 countries by the end of this year.

3 For the past decade, I’ve been a dedicated volunteer, supporter and board leader for Calvary Women’s Services, a D.C. nonprofit organization that provides housing, health, education and employment programs to empower women experiencing homelessness and survivors of domestic violence to regain their independence.

leader leaving a legacy.”

When she began her career, Rwejuna wanted to be an example for other women and professionals of color who often did not see leaders who looked like them holding the highest positions of influence within our industry.

“My passion for authentic and empathetic leadership is at the core of every goal I set for myself and my team,” she said. “My ultimate goal is to continue to break barriers, shatter glass ceilings and clean up sticky floors as an authentic leader and executive within the industry. As for my next goal, I’d love to take my unique skills and experiences to the C-suite and public company boards where I can hopefully have an even greater impact and opportunity to lead!” ■



Celebrating Influential Women in Energy, including White & Case partner, Serena Rwejuna

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Amrita Sen

*Founder and Director of Research,
 Energy Aspects
 London*

Amrita Sen received her doctorate in economics from the University of London and her master's degree in economics from Cambridge University, accomplishments that indicate high levels of math skill.

And yet, Paul Horsnell, head of commodities research at Barclays Capital, said she would be a good energy analyst "because I was comfortable with 2+2 not adding up to 4," she said. Of course, there's more to it than simple arithmetic.

"That is a critical trait I believe an energy analyst needs to have, as most energy markets—with the exception of natural gas—are very opaque and a lot of assumptions need to be made daily to fill the gap in data in order to make informed decisions around investing and risk management," Sen said. "Of course, manipulating large data sets and the need for coding (Python, AI, etc.) are skills that come in very handy in today's day and age, but interpreting what the data means is a far more important skill."

It's that skill that has propelled her to build a world-class markets research firm, be called on to brief the National Security Council in Washington, D.C., and discuss energy and world politics with Prince

Abdulaziz bin Salman Al Saud, the energy minister of Saudi Arabia.

"Hard work, perseverance, being humble, respectful and fostering relationships is what helped me get there," she said.

Sen says one of the biggest hurdles in her career has been ageism.

"When I wasn't getting promoted at Barclays Capital despite doing work at a director's level as an associate (as I was too 'young' and didn't have a set number of years of experience), I didn't sit around lamenting their decision," she said.

"Together with friends, I set up my own company 11 years ago which now serves 600 companies around the world, has nine offices globally and employs more than 250 people."

Sen advises young professionals to not let being a woman or a minority define them.

"Let your work, your personality and morals define you," she said. "Don't expect favors from anyone just because you are a woman but, equally, don't hold back or take nonsense from anyone

because you are a woman. There is space in energy or, for that matter, any industry for everyone as long as you define your path. Never feel sorry for yourself."

Indeed, she believes women may possess an advantage in their ability

"Don't expect favors from anyone just because you are a woman but, equally, don't hold back or take nonsense from anyone because you are a woman. There is space in energy or, for that matter, any industry for everyone as long as you define your path. Never feel sorry for yourself."

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I wanted to become an astronaut as a kid—didn't even know what oil and gas was.
- 2** I have never had a cup of coffee in my life even though I barely sleep due to my work commitments.
- 3** I am a fairly disciplined person; one hour of exercise every day keeps me sane.

to diplomatically navigate the energy market in a world that is increasingly divided politically and the energy transition risks leaving millions in poverty.

"Oil and gas are the lifelines of civilization and society," Sen said. "Without energy, there is no economic growth and without energy, the billions of people under the poverty line will stay there."

Addressing that problem is what gets her out of bed every day.

"I grew up in India, where load shedding was common at that time," said Sen, who calls both Kolkata and London her hometowns. "I have seen what energy poverty is."

As Sen's career has evolved, her core goal has not changed much.

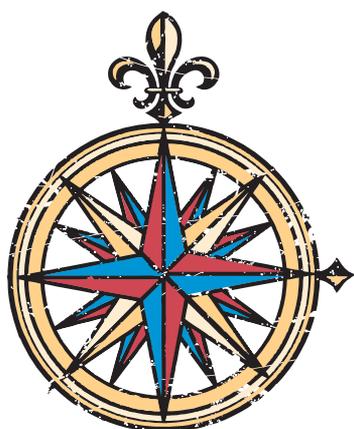
"Setting up Energy Aspects and growing it to a half-billion-dollar company was not a goal I set for myself," she said. "We started as four people in a small office that looked like a prison! The goal was to provide the best energy market analysis 11 years ago and the goal remains the same today. Everything else that has come with it is a bonus."

It's an approach that has added up to success. You can do the math. ■



“Oil and gas are the lifelines of civilization and society. Without energy, there is no economic growth and without energy, the billions of people under the poverty line will stay there.”

—Amrita Sen, Founder and Director of Research, Energy Aspects



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Sequitur is honored to congratulate this year’s talented honorees.



Jan Sherman

*Co-Founder and Chief Development Officer,
Carbonvert
Houston, Denver*

In 1986, the oil industry was mired in a down cycle and majoring in petroleum engineering, according to conventional wisdom, was an unwise move.

Jan Sherman did it anyway.

"I loved petroleum engineering so decided to stick with it," she said. "I figured I would be good at something I enjoyed and never had any regrets."

She was inspired by Joe and Patty Mueller, owners of a family oil and gas company in Corpus Christi, Texas, where Sherman worked as an assistant. She took care of everything from dictation and payroll to typing well reports and technical and legal documents for the engineering team.

"They were amazing role models for me and encouraged me to finish my college education," she said. "I stayed in touch with Joe and Patty throughout my career. They were great mentors and continued to have an influence on my choices."

Sherman started her energy career as a reservoir engineer, tasked with figuring out ways to improve production on Shell's five lowest producing fields in the Gulf of Mexico. She worked with an experienced geologist to define a redevelopment program to drill six new wells in an old oil field.

"This started a series of jobs where I was tasked with identifying improvement opportunities for workover rigs and production operations," she said. "I learned a lot from these experiences and loved every bit of it."

Sherman would take on numerous high-profile projects during her 30 years at Shell. Among them, the Bonga development in Nigeria, *Perdido* installation in the Gulf of Mexico and Quest CO₂ storage

project in Canada. Other projects including Unconventionals, EOR and CCS provided experiences in project delivery, leadership and commercial that set her apart from others and were the foundation of her success.

"As I shifted from technical roles into leadership, my business and leadership skills advanced quickly when I started leading teams where I did not have subject matter expertise," she said. "This allowed me to focus on how to lead with accountability and that resulted in the development of high-performing teams and my own progression to executive roles."

To succeed in a male-dominated industry, Sherman took inspiration from other strong women in her life.

"I saw strong women thriving in the industry, starting with Patty Mueller, and felt privileged to participate in a meaningful way," she said. "Also, being raised in a family as the third of six children with three brothers helped. Plus, both my mother and grandmother were strong women who raised big families and still had meaningful impact in their own professions. I take on the challenges as opportunities to learn and solve problems rather than roadblocks."

After retiring from Shell, Sherman co-founded Carbonvert, a carbon capture and storage project development and finance company that focuses on decarbonization for industrial emitters.

"It was the external connections that I made while in Shell that helped bring Alex Tiller and I together to build Carbonvert into a successful project development company," she said. Tiller, her co-founder and the company's CEO, has guided her through the complexities of the

THREE MORE THINGS

1 I love my family and enjoy being a wife, mother, and grandmother. "Mimi" is my favorite role ever! I hope that I can participate for many more years in my children's and grandchildren's activities with my husband, Blake.

2 As my children became adults, I noticed that my siblings became a more important relationship for me. All five of them are special to me and I know that I can count on them.

3 I am enjoying my second career as a project developer—it is fun to work with such talented, humble and caring people.

private investor world.

Sherman sees opportunity for the oil and gas sector in the era of decarbonization, but realizes that not all in the industry are convinced.

"One of the keys in transformation is admitting that the energy transition is here," she said. "I still hear a lot of skepticism about the need for changes in how we produce and receive energy for our lifestyles. Regardless of your viewpoint, we have an opportunity to thrive as an industry by providing solutions to the challenges we are facing in an effective way. Let's all work together to create cost-effective solutions for a low-carbon future." ■



“... (B)oth my mother and grandmother were strong women who raised big families and still had meaningful impact in their own professions. I take on the challenges as opportunities to learn and solve problems rather than roadblocks.”

—Jan Sherman, Co-Founder and Chief Development Officer, Carbonvert



Leading The Industry through
Equality and Empowerment





Cristina Stellar

*Senior Vice President and Managing Director,
BOK Financial Securities
Houston*

Cristina Stellar, who grew up in Spain, was working for PwC in Mexico City when she was assigned to handle a project offshore Equatorial Guinea for, then client, Hess Corp.

“Two weeks later, I was hooked, and soon after I became a Hess employee,” she said.

Few commodities impact daily life like oil and gas, she said. “What keeps me motivated is our resilience and adaptability as an industry. The pace of work, challenges and ability to navigate risk are unique to what we do.”

Those attributes translate into career advice, as well.

“Be resourceful, reliable and resilient,” Stellar advises young professionals. “Set goals and work hard to achieve them; there are very few things that cannot be accomplished if you consistently put your best self forward. Work as a team, ask questions, learn from those who are the best at a particular skill and be willing to take less desirable assignments. Excelling at those less desirable assignments will lead to your dream job.”

After beginning her career at PwC, she spent 13 years at Hess before joining Vanguard Natural Resources, which rebranded as Grizzly.

“Leading Grizzly’s corporate development team was a career milestone,” Stellar said. “A lot of people helped me get there, including Amanda Goller and a former boss, Scott Sloan, who knew I was a hard worker and trusted I could succeed in that role.”

She became senior vice president and managing director at BOK Financial Securities in 2022, a move she is excited about.

“Joining BOK Financial to expand its Energy Investment Bank footprint in Houston has been rewarding and the focus of my last two years,” Stellar said.

Stellar said she has learned a lot from her experiences as a member of a team.

“My time offshore taught me what a team can achieve by working together and relying on subject matter experts,” she said. “Keeping the motivation and team morale while divesting all [Grizzly Energy] assets helped me develop as a leader, and partnering with clients in BOK Financial and PwC has exposed me to different companies, business models and management styles, providing a full picture and setting a benchmark.”

Stellar said she owes much to the women in her family who have been role models for her.

“My mother and grandmothers were strong leaders who showed me fulfillment comes from different places, and that working could make me a better mom and vice versa,” she said. “Hopefully, I can set the same example for my children.”

Stellar’s dedication to family has helped chart the direction of her career.

“When I entered the industry, my goal was to be an expat and work offshore,” she said. “I loved that job and would have been happy doing it for the rest of my career, but I wanted to have children. I decided to return to the office and never looked back. I adore my family and cherish the memories of my days offshore. Dealmaking is as rewarding. I cannot imagine myself doing anything else.”

Stellar views the oil and gas sector as on the right track because of its

THREE MORE THINGS

1 I have worked on just about anything that floats offshore including FPSO (floating production storage and offloading), CPF (central processing facility), TPL (tension leg platform), intervention vessels, export tankers, crane semi-submersible vessels, drillships and jackup rigs. The list goes on.

2 I recently became a U.S. citizen. It is a dream I have had since the first time I visited the United States when I was 12 years old.

3 I met my husband in well logging class. It does not sound romantic, but somehow it was. His support, kindness and patience have made me a better person.

resilience.

“Our industry has proven its ability to adapt to changes,” she said. “The upstream oil and gas business shifted from a high-growth no-return model to a low-growth, high-return sector focused on keeping debt leverage low and returning capital to investors. Exploration and production companies are operating leaner and choosing to self-fund to keep production relatively flat. Consolidation should continue and will strengthen this capital discipline. The new paradigm is working, and the industry is thriving.” ■



“Set goals and work hard to achieve them; there are very few things that cannot be accomplished if you consistently put your best self forward.”

—**CRISTINA STELLAR**, Senior Vice President and Managing Director,
BOK Financial Securities

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Jennifer Stewart

*Director, Climate Policy,
 American Petroleum Institute
 Washington, D.C., and Houston*

Jennifer Stewart, who balances working in both Washington, D.C., and Houston, and has balanced a career in publicly traded companies, government, academia and a trade association with raising two children and earning a law degree while working full time, insists there is no such thing as work/life balance.

"It is a continuum and something, either work or family, will always suffer or take the back seat along that continuum," she says to young professionals. "Don't feel guilty about it!"

But that's not the only advice from Stewart, who was a senior executive at Southwestern Energy and is now director of API's climate and ESG policy. She also encourages young women in the oil and gas industry to ask for what they want.

"Studies show and my own experience indicates men always ask for what they want and women wait for it to be handed to them. That doesn't work," she said.

"If the answer is 'no,' you are no worse off than if you had not asked. The caveat here is that you must have earned the right to ask (example: promotion or salary raise)."

And Stewart, who has served as an adjunct professor at the University of Houston Law Center, has consciously sought opportunities to educate herself throughout her career:

- Going to law school and becoming an attorney provided a skill set that translates to almost any role.

- Being an executive for a publicly traded company gave exposure to strategic work and how a board of directors and management work together to create or preserve value for shareholders.

- Fiduciary and advisory board roles on emerging company boards showed the challenges of running and growing a business from scratch.

- Learning how much political and government policy making control the macro environment, and thus the success or failure of the oil and gas business. ("Leaders are remiss

to not pay attention to what is going on in our federal and state capitols.")

"When I first entered this industry, [my goal] was making sure I knew everything about it," she said. "Not just in my area but the geology, drilling and completions, and production. In the finance area, it was complicated areas such as hedging and reserve-based lending. I wanted

to know what the words meant when I heard my colleagues' discussions. Today, I certainly can't find a reservoir or drill a well, but I know what folks are talking about."

Like many Influential Women in Energy honorees, Stewart has almost always been the only woman in the room and learned to accept it as her "normal."

"I took comfort and earned credibility by always having a firm grasp of any subject matter at hand, making sure I knew as much, or

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I rode the distance equal to the circumference of Texas, 3,612 miles, on my bike in eight months in 2022.
- 2** I went to law school while working full-time with two little girls at home. Do NOT recommend.
- 3** I am a first-generation college graduate on both sides of my family.

preferably more, of the issues," she said. She also focused on being authentic and true to herself, along with displaying confidence even when she didn't feel confident on the inside.

Stewart also knows what the oil and gas sector needs to do to thrive in the future.

"Our industry must adopt flexible workplace policies to keep and retain women," she said. "Many women enter our industry but opt out once they start a family due to the inflexibility. Who cares where you work, or what hours you work, as long as you get your work done and you are a collaborative and effective colleague?"

In her current position in Washington, Stewart sees firsthand how effective policy and advocacy on Capitol Hill can result in real, positive developments for the oil and gas industry despite the increasing hostility and adverse regulatory environment. One of her main takeaways is the need to "depoliticize energy."

"Renewables and oil and natural gas are an 'AND'—not an 'OR,'" she said. "We need both to facilitate the transition to a low-carbon economy." ■

"If the answer is 'no,' you are no worse off than if you had not asked."



“Our industry must adopt flexible workplace policies to keep and retain women. Many women enter our industry but opt out once they start a family due to the inflexibility.”

—**Jennifer Stewart**, Director, Climate Policy, American Petroleum Institute

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Jane Stricker

*Senior Vice President and Executive Director,
Houston Energy Transition Initiative,
Greater Houston Partnership
Houston*

In a way, Jane Stricker has found her life's work to be like riding a bicycle. "My cycling coach told me that the key to improving on the bike was to get comfortable with the uncomfortable—push past the known limits and get used to the feeling of that stretch," she said. "Having a great career requires the same."

That means accepting big tasks. Following the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, BP agreed to improve safety protocols in its settlement with the U.S. government. The company tapped Stricker to oversee the effort.

It would take five years and over 20,000 pages of documentation, examined by two federal auditors and a federal monitor, to demonstrate improved processes and programs in support of safety and compliance for the company's U.S. operations. Its completion was a milestone for BP and another mission accomplished for Stricker.

"Don't shy away from roles that are not in your core discipline," she advises young professionals. "My best career opportunities and experiences came from taking on roles that I didn't know existed and weren't in my core discipline. Don't let imposter syndrome or fears of failure stop you."

Among the best pieces of advice Stricker received from mentors were:

- Work hard and take responsibility for mistakes.
- See the big picture and the importance of excellence in execution.
- Empathy, humility and vulnerability are important in leadership. Be a servant leader.

But the advice that had the most lasting effect came from closer to home.

"The best career advice I ever received was from my father, who told me, 'All things being equal, take the job that makes you happy. The rest will work itself

out,'" she said. "It has allowed me to build a truly interesting and exciting career and take on roles I never would have imagined."

As a graduate student, Stricker completed an independent study with a professor, Gerard Egan, who authored "Working the Shadow Side: A guide to Positive Behind-the-Scenes Management."

"Reading that book and understanding the insights alongside the author helped shape my business and leadership style," she said. "I learned the importance of collaborating, leveraging other's strengths, and understanding their style and preferences to achieve alignment and move issues forward. It has greatly influenced my approach to business leadership."

The challenges facing women in oil and gas are much like the challenges women have faced over the last two decades in many industries, she said, including barriers to growth and development opportunities; difficulty finding sponsors and supporters with influence; limited self-confidence; and lack of recognition for outstanding performance.

"These are all things that could have held me back, but instead, they continued to give me a reason to work harder, respectfully challenge false thinking or poor leadership when appropriate, seek out great leaders and build meaningful relationships built on care and trust," Stricker said. "When I realized that keeping my head down and just working harder wasn't going to get me where I wanted to be, I sought out the people, skills and opportunities that would allow me to grow and lead. A willingness to step into new roles, but also to humbly seek help from others to learn, became the key to overcoming those challenges."

THREE MORE THINGS

1 For two years, during my role as U.S. Company Secretary at BP, I was Chairman & President of The Standard Oil Company (along with about 150 other inactive U.S. subsidiaries).

2 I have competed in nearly all cycling racing disciplines—including road, track, mountain, gravel, triathlon, and even BMX. I was 50 when I got my BMX bike and license. You are never too old to do something new.

3 In 2012, BP gave me the opportunity to host two Olympic Cyclists and one Paralympic Cyclist to ride the BP MS150. Later that year, they all went on to medal in their events in the Olympic and Paralympic Games. One became my cycling coach and coached me to the 2015 Masters' Track Cycling World Championships in Manchester, England where I earned a bronze medal in the 2000m Individual Pursuit.

In her current role at the Greater Houston Partnership, she is building her own team of professionals to help her develop and implement the Houston Energy Transition Initiative strategy.

"Building that team was a key milestone for me in my career," Stricker said. "And each one of my team members has the potential to create significant impact over the course of their career. I love having the opportunity to guide them and prepare them for their place as leaders in our industry." ■

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Andrea Tettleton

Partner, Seabaugh & Sepulvado
Baton Rouge, La.

Andrea Tettleton knows enough to know she doesn't have to know everything.

"My mentor was my first law partner, and he would always tell me that you don't have to know everything, but you have to know what you don't know, meaning stay curious," she said. "You should never feel like you have all of the answers, because it will definitely lead to blind spots in your critical thinking and title analysis."

And even prominent energy attorneys start off by not knowing much.

"I did not have a particular desire to enter the oil and gas industry, but I graduated law school in 2009 during the Haynesville boom, and the law firm that hired me specialized in oil and gas transactional law," Tettleton said. "I did well in successions, property, matrimonial regimes and other key areas of title examination, but, hilariously enough, I had not taken mineral law. I had no idea what a mineral servitude even was. The partners assured me that I would pick up the 'mineral law' part, but I was doubtful! It was a steep learning curve, but here I am 15 years later."

The same held true for public speaking. Tettleton is good at it, but it wasn't always this way.

"When I first started out in this industry, I was terrified of public speaking, but it is essential to promoting yourself and your law firm," she said. "My first public

speaking engagement was at a landman's seminar in front of 20 people, and I honestly did not think I would make it through the hour without tears. This past year, I was asked to be the keynote speaker at the Horizon Breakfast for the AAPL Annual conference in front of 500-plus people. The cliché is true: to get over your fear of public speaking, you should continue to participate in public speaking."

Tettleton was the 2023 President of the Global Board of the Women's Energy Network, an organization with more than 7,000 members across 25 chapters. Yet, the challenges of

being a woman in the oil and gas industry apply to her too. She is often mistaken for her law partner's wife, paralegal or secretary. She responds to it with humor and assertiveness.

"It is rare that I walk into a room, and I am recognized automatically as the managing partner of a law firm, so

those situations can amplify my imposter syndrome thoughts," she said. "I encourage young women in the energy industry to walk into a room with confidence and to not let anyone's erroneous perceptions overshadow their successes or determine their self-worth."

Tettleton's goal at the outset of her career was that of a typical associate: to learn oil and gas law and to bill enough hours to make partner. However, her goals today are focused outward.

"I recently became licensed to

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I have never met a karaoke song I can't or won't sing.
- 2** I am an avid reader! I read 50-60 books a year.
- 3** I am trying to visit all 50 states before I turn 50. I have 12 more to go!

practice law in Texas, so I hope to expand our law practice to include Texas prospects," she said. "I also want to provide more mentoring opportunities to the associates with our firm."

A lot has changed since she began practicing oil and gas law, but a lot has not.

"The first client dinner I attended was comprised of 30 men and me," Tettleton said. "Fifteen years later, there has been an increase in women in the energy industry, but we are still woefully underrepresented, accounting for less than 25% of the workforce and worse, only around 17% hold executive leadership positions.

We need to be the change we want to see in the industry by showcasing successful women in leadership positions as role models. This not only provides inspiration but also demonstrates that the industry values and supports the advancement of women. We need to actively seek out diverse talent through inclusive recruitment practices. This may involve reevaluating job descriptions, using diverse interview panels, and partnering with organizations that focus on promoting women in STEM fields." ■

"We need to be the change we want to see in the industry by showcasing successful women in leadership positions as role models."



Andrea Wescott Passman

COO, Aethon Energy
Dallas

Andrea Wescott Passman grew up about 100 miles south of the Arctic Circle in Alaska, where her family operated a gravel pit and a gold mine.

"Growing up in Alaska, women did the same work as men, so I was never dissuaded from being an engineer," she said. She was, however, dissuaded from being an environmental engineer.

Environmental engineers don't "run the show," her grandfather, a civil engineer, told her. Choosing petroleum engineering would open up more opportunities for her. Also, the weather may have had something to do with her decision.

"The television show 'Dallas' also convinced me that working in the Texas oil fields sounded better than freezing in the gold mine or gravel pit in Alaska," she said.

Wescott Passman quickly warmed to the oil and gas industry.

"I love that what we do is tangible," she said. "You can put your finger on it, it impacts people's lives and has benefits far beyond the people you work with and all the people who use our energy and products. I love the technology and how fast and forward-thinking the industry moves. I love the people who turn wrenches in the field."

Not that the job has always been easy.

"The failures are the most memorable because those are the moments you learn the most, like when I managed a blowout with CNX in 2019, and I had to inform our public investors about it on an earnings call," Wescott Passman said. "Learning to lead in a crisis is one of the most important lessons of my life."

She's absorbed other lessons as she's advanced in her career, even in ways she didn't expect.

"Earning my MBA probably accelerated my career by 10 years because it immediately gave me a whole new language and skill set," she said. "But when I 'made it,' the accomplishment of becoming an executive felt flat. There was no ticker tape parade. A mentor advised me to quit making it about myself—that's when I realized accomplishments as an executive are actually about pouring yourself into supporting everyone else."

At that moment, she said, she started feeling more successful and her perspective about the purpose behind her career changed.

Wescott Passman advises young professionals to take care of their network.

"Pour yourself into it and build real relationships, starting early in your career," she said. "Use your Friday afternoons to pick up the phone to call and text to build and maintain relationships. Engage whenever you can when somebody reaches for help with their job search or to connect with someone else in your network. Building a massive spider web of connections is truly the key to success, and for women it's easier than you think because usually if you ask someone to help you out, they will."

Wescott Passman has found mentors at all stages of her career. One of her first was a company man named Russell on a rig in the Gulf of Mexico.

"He taught me how to push back when people were overstepping or might have been speaking inappropriately, but how to do it in a

THREE MORE THINGS

- 1** I'm teaching myself to play the ukulele. I bought an antique one that's been all over the U.S. and is covered in signatures.
- 2** A dream of mine is to live in Burgundy, France, for six months at some point in my life. I'd get a six-month visa to eat all the food, drink all the wine and ride a bicycle around.
- 3** All my pets have been rescues. I have a one-eyed cat right now named Roger. He's the seventh rescue cat I've had in my adult life.

way that was firm and respectful," she said. "Much of his advice was about the little things—like to drag a mattress into the electronics room so I didn't have to sleep in the men's (also the only) quarters—but they were huge for me as a 20-year-old woman on a rig."

Wescott Passman identifies three trends the industry must acknowledge to thrive:

- The pivot to ESG is real.
- AI is already here and, if you're not embracing it, you're already behind.
- If you're not engaging your workforce so that team members feel appreciated, you won't make it much longer in this industry.

"Look how many companies aren't around anymore," she said. "If you're not embracing these things, you will miss the boat." ■



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Here's to Ms. Flat-Bottomed Paper Bag Inventor

A salute to the women of genius, including 'Ms. Plain English Computer Language Inventor' and 'Ms. Parity is Not Conserved in Weak Interaction Discoverer.'

NISSA DARBONNE | EXECUTIVE EDITOR-AT-LARGE

There was an “unconstructed taco” dinner here recently that led to finding Budweiser’s turn of the century “Real Men of Genius” series of ads on YouTube and the one saluting “Mr. Giant Taco Salad Inventor.”

The series had also celebrated Mr. Grocery Store Cart Wrangler and Mr. Fantasy Football Manager Guy, among others.

I checked ChatGPT for its own list of “genius inventors.” How many would be women?

Of course, none of the Budweiser picks is on ChatGPT’s short list. But none is a woman either.

Striking out, I asked for “genius women inventors.” The abridged 10 include several we know: Hedy Lamarr, who invented what became WiFi and Bluetooth; Rosalind Frank, whose work proved DNA’s double-helix structure; and of course, Marie Curie.

On the non-gender-specific list is “various inventors” of the personal computer, naming only Steve Jobs and Bill Gates specifically.

But on the women’s list is U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Grace Hopper, co-inventor of the plain-English-style computer programming language that led to COBOL and the approach to subsequent coding languages used in iOS, macOS, ChromeOS, Android and MS-DOS.

Stephanie Kwolek, a chemist, invented Kevlar.

And there is Dr. Chien-Shiung Wu, a physicist who contributed to the Manhattan Project by separating isotopes 235 and 238 from uranium and later conducted the “Wu Experiment” that found parity is not conserved in a weak interaction.

The findings of the Wu Experiment were awarded a Nobel Prize.

But not for Wu.

It turned out that her work—like Franklin’s—was dismissed by the prize committee, which honored her male colleagues for it in 1957. Similarly, in 1962, Franklin’s male colleagues won the prize for her proof of DNA’s double-helix structure.

Moving on, though, on ChatGPT’s short list of genius women inventors is one whose work, like Lamarr’s WiFi and Bluetooth, is universally appreciated today.

The genius: “Ms. Flat-Bottomed Paper Bag Inventor.”

Margaret Knight received a patent in 1870 for the threefold-and-glue process that created mass-manufacturing of the flat bottom and, according to different sources, either was the first woman to request



Margaret E. Knight

National Museum of American History

Margaret Knight used this model when she applied for a patent for her machine that folded and pasted flat-bottomed paper bags.

and receive a patent or was the first woman to do so without disguising her gender by using only first and middle initials.

She applied as Margaret E. Knight.

The machinist she hired to build her metal prototype that was needed for her patent application used his work to apply for the patent in his own name. Providing the prototype she made of wood and additional evidence—sketches, tests and inspiration—Knight prevailed in court.

She had gone to work to help support her family when she was 12, missing out on receiving any further formal education. That appears to have not daunted her, just as she was undaunted when needing to defend her work in an extended court battle.

Today, fewer than 10% of U.S. “primary inventor” patent-holders are women, according to a Smithsonian Magazine article about Knight’s work. A functioning version of her flat-bottom bag machine is in Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History.

The National Inventors Hall of Fame, when inducting

“The cars are nice. The cell phones cool. Electricity, indeed, helps us get things done. But where would we be without the foldable, flat-bottomed bag?”

—THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

Knight in 2006, reported, “Between 1870 and 1915, [she] was granted patents for at least 26 inventions, ranging from a window frame to a sole-cutting machine for shoemaking to a compound rotary engine.”

The American Society of Mechanical Engineering celebrated Knight’s invention in 2012, reporting, “The cars are nice. The cell phones cool. Electricity, indeed, helps us get things done. But where would we be without the foldable, flat-bottomed bag?”

A vintage bag manufactured by what was the Union Paper Bag Machine Co. in Pennsylvania at the time is part of the Museum of Modern Art’s architecture and design department.

MOMA noted in an article on it, “Many examples of good design have become so ubiquitous that we tend to gloss over the innovations they embody. Flat-bottomed grocery bags—humble objects incorporating design principles fundamental to the way we inhabit the modern world—are a case in point.”

Knight is named by MOMA as the work’s artist. Today, the Nobel committee regularly awards prizes to women.

And Budweiser’s “genius” commercials evolved in 2020 to include women in a four-ad-only pandemic series, “Stay at Home Humans of Genius.”

The salutes are to the Creative Recipe Sharer (“Your inspiration has no expiration.”), the Balcony Sing-Along Starter, the Air High-Five Inventor (“Thanks to your pioneering vision, we spread good vibes to each other. And good vibes only.”) and the Indoor Sports Maker-Upper.

The late Wu’s unyielding advocacy was for teaching STEM subjects in schools—and to all genders.

Let’s be certain to share that with the next generation of inventors and pioneers.

A start: Two children’s books feature Knight and her flat-bottom bag invention, “Marvelous Mattie” (2006) and “In the Bag!: Margaret Knight Wraps it Up” (2013).

Pass it on. ■



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