



Trailblazer of the year award 2020

4th women to watch international – 20201129

Good evening. I am deeply honored to receive the Trailblazer of the Year Award from Women to Watch International. THANK YOU!

I thought about the meaning of being a trailblazer, which is defined as: “A Trailblazer is a pioneer, somebody who is willing to **take risks** and **go in a path** that isn't already there. It is the first person to do something or go somewhere, who shows that it is also possible for other people”

As a pioneer, this year I have lead my Financial & Business Consulting firm, STC Consulting, and our clients, through all the uncertainties that came with 2020 using the same strategies that have used in the past: Having a dream, embracing uncertainty, working with persistency, integrity, and determination, and never giving up.

As a child, I **had a dream** of getting an international education from a great university. This **dream** was specially far from my reach since I was born and raised in Ecuador to a Swiss German father and an Ecuadorian mother, and the great universities I dreamed of, were here in the USA.

24 years ago, I moved to the U.S. with a bachelor’s degree in business with emphasis in Management from the Universidad Catolica de Guayaquil in Ecuador. I was the first woman

in my family to graduate from college, but **My dream** NOW was to study in a Master's program. I found that opportunity through a work-study scholarship program, which set me on my path at University of St. Thomas, here in the heart of Houston.

The first day of classes at UST, tears of happiness were running down my face. I had arrived, and there I **was: walking into my dream**. This was the first time I studied in a foreign language, and the dictionary was my best friend. I moved forward, an inch at a time, test after test, and class after class, until I finished. My mother and my brother flew to Houston to see her only daughter and sister and first member of the family, graduate with a Master's degree in the USA. I was so incredible proud!

In 2001, I became an American Citizen and later I further my education at Rice University where I earned a Certificate in Organizational Leadership.

I worked with the same Logistic company for almost 20 year. During that time, I went through 7 complicated mergers & acquisitions. Yes, 7! One key element of my success and longevity with DHL was to turn the uncertainty of mergers into a strategic opportunity, which worked to elevate my career and deepen my experience. I chose to stay and **embraced the uncertainty**.

My area of expertise was Business Financial & Controlling. At the height of my Corporate career, I was the Global Director of Strategy, Performance and Metrics and Controllershship based out of Bonn, Germany. I was overseeing 140,000 employees and travelling all over the world, working in wonderful places such as: India, Germany, Switzerland, Uruguay, UK, Ecuador, and many others. Having worked overseas and with so

many people, I learned to respect, admire, and enjoy our similarities. These experiences taught me to be opened and embrace our amazing diversity. I love to travel to different places, eat new foods, listen to great music, and meet people from all over the globe.

Then, I heard the call to entrepreneurship in 2016. My dream now was to become a global authority in Financial Management & Business Consulting. I wanted to make a bigger impact and founded my Consulting firm with the purpose of supporting the business community, especially women and minorities. I wanted to increase financial knowledge in the communities so people can improve their quality of life because financial knowledge gives you freedom. Our promise is **to lead you in the journey to Profit & Productivity.**

Small business are the foundation of the American Economy and I believe business knowledge and financial literacy are the foundation to the success of entrepreneurs. The key element is to have sustainable businesses that gives the people and the community a better life. Having a business gives you a sense of pride, when you see that you are business is growing and you are making a difference.

It takes **courage** to start a business. It takes **determination and resiliency**, to build the business. It takes financial knowledge & expertise to make it profitable.

The guiding principles that have always lead me to growth are: **Visualize your dream, and with persistence, knowledge and expertise, anything is achievable.**

You will have to make choices, and none of your decisions will be 100% perfect. Keep moving & continue. Work with passion, find your purpose and create a way to be successful. Prepare for the unexpected. Have a reserve and discipline to save. Live below your means.

I leave you with this: Life is a gift and a journey. It is not about where you start, but where you are heading. And to every trailblazer in this room, let's keep paying it forward because when we lift up others and make their path easier, we help more dreams to become reality. If things do not work, then try again until you find your path because success might be just one step away.

2020 has been a unique year and COVID-19 has changed us, and the way we do things in many ways. We are at an inflection point where new sets of rules are being created and will be fundamentally different from the past. We need to have an expanded vision, and an increased ability to adapt and adjust. We need higher levels of resilience to thrive and succeed, embracing change when facing the unknown. In the future, I believe, there will be a new way of making sense of the world and ourselves, and that is our greatest Challenge in this new chapter. Always remember, no matter who you are, where you are, what you started with or how high the climb might be, you can create the life of your dreams. **Never give up! Dreams DO come true. Thank you!**