

Houston International Trade Development Council
6th Annual Global 7 Awards Gala
Mayo 24, 2019
Speech: Soledad Tanner

Good evening,

As a child, I looked like a little nerdy girl. I had a dream of getting an international education from a great university. This dream was especially far from my reach since I was born and raised in Ecuador to a Swiss father and an Ecuadorian mother, and the great universities I dreamed of were here in the US. I was persistent in pursuing my education and studied at Universidad Catolica de Guayaquil.

Then came a curveball, when I was 20 years old, my father suddenly passed away. This was the worst day of my life. We had to learn to deal with the shock of the loss and a very complicated situation. The future became uncertain, but I kept my faith that a better future could be built despite the difficulties. I continued working full-time while taking classes full-time and finished my degree. I graduated with a Business Engineering degree with emphasis in Management. I am also the first female college graduate of my family.

However, my business degree was not enough; I wanted more. I returned to my dream and came to the US in 1996 to continue my education. With 2 scholarships through my work at Danzas, I received a Master's in International Business in 2002 from University of St. Thomas. By that time, I was an American citizen. Then in 2007, I completed a Certificate of Organizational Leadership from Rice University. I couldn't believe I had achieved my dream to study at TWO great American Universities.

After graduation I continued working with the Logistic company: Danzas and went through 7 complicated mergers. Later the company was named DHL Global Forwarding and finally Deutsche Post DHL Supply Chain. I was with them for almost 20 years.

My area of expertise was Business Financial & Controlling. At the height of my career, I was the Global Director of Strategy, Performance and Metrics and Controllershship based out of Bonn, Germany. This Ecuadorian dreamer was overseeing 140,000 employees and travelling all over the world, working in

wonderful places such as: India, Germany, Switzerland, Hong Kong, Brazil, Uruguay, UK, Mexico, and many others.

In 2016, I decided I wanted to make a bigger impact and founded Soledad Tanner Consulting, LLC: A Business & Financial Management Consulting firm. My new dream: to become a global authority in business profitability and productivity. I want to increase financial literacy in the communities so people can improve their quality of life.

I help people that struggle because they know their trade, but they don't have the time or expertise to be financially savvy. 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.

As Mahatma Gandhi said: "Be the change you want to see in the world" I REALLY enjoy what I do. As people improve the business financial situation, they increase their quality of life, having more time and resources to do what they love to do.

I'm deeply honored and humbled to be recognized as "Outstanding International Consultant" and thank the "Houston International Trade Development Council" organization and the board members, for this award.

To my mother Yolanda: Who is here from Ecuador. Thank you for never giving up on my English classes. You have always been there. Mom, this award is yours too. Love you!

To my father Ernesto in heaven: If you were here today, you would be so proud of the woman I became: a strong woman of integrity, of faith and a fighter.

To my brother Ernst: who is watching via Skype from Switzerland. Your quiet wisdom is my light, your words reach my soul and your support means the world to me.

To my brother Xavier: Who is here from Switzerland. This dream would have not been possible without your brilliant philosophical, and artistic guidance. Thank you for your patience, vision and inspiration.

To Gabriel: I doubted many times if the change from Executive to Entrepreneur was a good idea. You saw the possibilities when I couldn't see them. Every day you would ask me: "What are you going to do today?" and you would say: "same thing we do every day, try to take over the world."

Thank you for your loving support and for helping me see the infinite possibilities of the future.

To all friends that came to support me: Roberto & Anita, Cathy & Dave, Helen Cavazos, Dr. Dorothy Caram, Dr. Cindy Childress, Kathy, Ximena, Ludy, Monica and Melly and to all that couldn't be here today.

I leave you with this: Life is a gift. It is beautiful and complicated. Fight with dedication, perseverance and integrity. If things don't work, then try again, because success might be just one step away.

No matter who you are, where you come from, how much you have, or how high the climb might be, you can create the life of your dreams. Go and never give up!

And something else... cherish your nerdy friends because we are changing the world! Thank you!