REPORT:
Women in Innovation at Converge@Seattle 2014

Challenging assumptions, unlocking insights and exploring opportunities
November 20, 2014, Seattle

Co-sponsored by Washington Business Alliance
Produced by Women in Innovation, Center for Accelerating Innovation, Cisco Systems and Jim Kastama & Associates in collaboration with PNWER

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By Kristiina Hiukka
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By Kristiina Hiukka
The Context

The Converge@Seattle team:
To follow the success of the Women in Innovation Summit (22nd September 2012 at the Intiman Playhouse, Seattle), the founder Kristiina Hiukka partnered with the co-leaders of the Pacific Northwest Innovation Summit, Egils Milbergs and Jim Kastama to co-produce an innovation summit 2014. Sharon Wong of Cisco Systems, joined the organizers. The team chose four topics for the summit, one of which was Women in Innovation. (See the website or the program for the organizers’ bios.)

The organizer team partnered with the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER), a twenty-year old public-private partnership organization promoting trade relationships and innovation across the Pacific Northwest in the US and Canada. Since the annual PNWER Leadership Forum was scheduled for November 2014 in Seattle, it was an opportune time to partner for the Innovation Summit and include it in PNWER’s program as an option for its members.

The Converge@Seattle Sponsors:
Alaska Airlines and Washington Business Alliance took the leading roles as sponsors and were featured prominently in the program.
The Converge call for Diversity

Keynoter **CEO Kat Taylor, Beneficial State Bank** - introduced by **Tammy Young, VP HR, Alaska Airlines** - brought up the values of social justice and sustainability in banking and in the society.

Speakers **Dr. Anne Condon, UBC, and Kris Kutchera, VP IT, Alaska Airlines**, both called for ways to increase women and girls’ participation in the STEM fields to increase the potential for innovation through increased diversity.
Producers

Kristiina Hiukka
Founder
Women in Innovation

Jim Kastama
President
Jim Kastama & Associates LLC

Egils Milbergs
Founder
Center for Accelerating Innovation

Sharon Wong
Director, Business Development
Cisco Systems
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Purpose of Converge@Seattle

• The purpose: **Convene** those who have a stake in or are interested in the evolving innovation ecosystem of the Pacific Northwest and provide an engaging platform for a conversation about it.

• The goals: 1. **Connect** the experts’ “collective brain” through an intense day of catalyzing five-minute “lightning talks”, work group discussions and sharing of information. 2. **Create** opportunities for synergies and information exchange. 3. **Catalyze** action.
Attendees

The Summit attendees consisted of some 200 + subject matter experts, legal professionals, entrepreneurs, executive level decision makers and leaders from business, government, academia and non-profits.

There were some 100 participants in the Women in Innovation Session, 20% of whom were men.

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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>12:45-1:30pm</td>
<td>Disruptors and Convergers: Entrepreneur Panel with Brier Dudley of <em>The Seattle Times</em></td>
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<td>1:30-1:45</td>
<td><em>Convergence Intermission</em></td>
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<td>1:45-3:00</td>
<td><strong>Women in Innovation: How are women changing the innovation paradigm?</strong></td>
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<td>3:00-3:15</td>
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<td>Manufacturing: What role will humans play in the next generation of manufacturing?</td>
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<td>4:30-5:00</td>
<td>Commitments &amp; Closing Remarks</td>
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Drawing for 2 first-class Alaska Airlines tickets

*Must be present to win!*
WOMEN IN INNOVATION

How are women changing the innovation paradigm?

By Kristiina Hiukka
The Process of the Women in Innovation Session

1. The total session was 75 minutes. It consisted of 5-minute, impactful, "lightening strike" talks by the panel catalysts, Jennifer Gilhool, Dr. Ann McMahon, Hannah McConnaughey and moderated by Kristiina Hiukka.

2. Each presenter posed a challenge question at the end of their talk for the attendees to work on in small groups. The attendees were seated in groups at tables with poster paper that was later posted on the wall after the discussion.

3. The challenge questions were discussed and a spokesperson reported the results to the whole group.

4. After the one-minute reports by the attendees, the panel speakers were encouraged to provide a one minute observations what had been reported.

5. After the session concluded the attendees also were able to view the results of the individual table groups and the graphic facilitator’s notes on the back wall of the room.

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Women in Innovation Catalysts

Jennifer Gilhool
CEO
Pink Streak Ink

Hannah “Captain” & Haley “Pilot” McConnaughey, Annika “Tether” Hustad
Atlantis ROV Team

Dr. Ann McMahon
Vice President of Science and Education
Pacific Science Center

By Kristiina Hiukka

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Challenge Questions

1. What will you do to help shift the paradigm from women as “problem” to women as solution? (Gilhool)

2. How might we provide opportunities inside and outside of school for girls and young women to practice solving problems that inspire and empower them? (McMahon)

3. How can you make changes in your life, company, or environment that will support youth in STEM and welcome girls into the arena? (Atlantis ROV team)
Instructions to Discussion Groups

1. You have 10 minutes.
2. Introduce yourselves: name and organization (no pitches, please).
3. Select a Scribe.
4. Select a Challenge Question presented by one of the speakers.
5. Each table member provides their suggestion/perspective to the question.
6. Discuss & agree on an answer to the question.
7. Write or draw your answer on tablet paper.
8. Write the name of the speaker whose questions you discussed.
9. Select a Spokesperson.
10. Provide a ONE minute report to the entire audience.
11. Post your notes on the conference wall.

By Kristiina Hiukka
Catalyzer Points – Jennifer Gilhool

1. Innovation culture is inherently described in feminine terms: empathy, vulnerability, humility, inclusivity, generosity, balanced, patient

2. Embrace the “Nation of Women” – bigger than the BRIC countries together ($21 trillion economy).

3. More mentoring, women need sponsors within current power structures and organizations.
What will you do to help shift the paradigm from women as “problem” to women as solution? (Gilhool) - Audience Notes:

- Identify entrepreneurs early + Encourage risk-taking among girls; just like with sports and academics
- Social media campaigns / Coordinated PR campaigns to tell stories of role models, women in STEM; teach boys and girls in a structured manner about achievement by women
- Initial Question: can we be our authentic selves as women in our workplace?
- Other question: How can we/can we accelerate the pace of change?
  -> create awareness, though role models in elementary schools/Visit schools – role models needed
  -> bias training at work help employees become self-aware, Mothers and fathers
  -> focus on auxiliary skills: mentor leadership, network – use it / Mentorship capacity/Seek out mentors – examplars of success
- Women are a better investment: sponsor the Atlantis ROV team!
- Passion / Value – ROI / Multitaskers
- Values for 21st Century jobs – Collaborative/ Transparency
- No more fear-based system
- Positive Civil Rights

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What will you do to help shift the paradigm from women as “problem” to women as solution? (Gilhool) - Audience Notes:

- Overarching Paradigm Shift: Make it personal / Ask questions (at home and business)
- Dissolve our own limiting beliefs as women. Elders model inherent value.
- Embrace our own influence & authority: economic (80%, #pursepower) team-orientation, flex time support, emotional intelligence, compassion-modeling vs competition modeling, balance-thinking/acting
- Move beyond societal/cultural assumptions: vision, attitude, action
- Intentional structures for leadership, modeling, mentoring, exposure to strength, risk-taking.
- Women are not problems – we are rebels; crafty, articulate and intelligent AND we don’t always act this way.
- Leadership/We need to buck the system so girls are equipped to led – girls must believe they can do anything.
- To shift behavior we must shift the men at companies at the highest level
- Lawsuits – raise awareness / change policies/ affirmative action works!/Laws for gender wage? Get around rules
- Shine light on BAD behavior in press – Satay’s karma / shame /
- Reverse the bias / Games where you recognize your bias / Role playing

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Catalyzer Points – Ann McMahon

1. Adopt engineer mindset: learn to fail, fail fast and learn from failure.

2. Embrace ambiguity and uncertainty.
How might we provide opportunities inside and outside of school for girls and young women to practice solving problems that inspire and empower them? (McMahon) - Audience Notes:

- Summer camps
- Women-only training
- Lead and speak up
- Number of organizations dedicated to educating and raising awareness of working with young women: Powerful Voices, Girls Inc, N Power, ADA, Developers Academy, Technology Access Foundation, programming for social good, General assembly of women, Women-only hack-a-thon in April 2015, Anita Borg
- Create a video highlighting women doing “the work” of STEM Professionals.
- Bring /create new opportunities for girls/young women, like a coding challenge or a day “in a life of” a STEM career.
- Encourage younger girls – get elementary schools to introduce technology – made it accessible – demystify ...
- Partner with Girls scouts, YMCA’s or road shows to include STEM curriculum
- Invite industry to bring design challenges to young women in schools for ex, to make it “real” and to help them engage in using those skills.

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How might we provide opportunities inside and outside of school for girls and young women to practice solving problems that inspire and empower them? (McMahon) - Audience Notes:

- Start on a personal level/Skill build/Build confidence/Vulnerability / Allow/Creativity to be in the moment/Collective creativity/ Willingness/ Be kind to self first/ Benevolence/Curiosity
- Cultural shift/Embracing ambiguity
- Male people understand that partnering isn’t an option but a way of business life in the 21st cent
- Group genius/ Establish rules of engagement
- Low stakes environment – start with smart small 1 yr plan, learn business plans, go to large in 5yrs
- “Generations” within company, industry mentoring
- Partnering out of opportunity, not out of threat or fear / Not fear based / Systemize how we can equitably share IPs
- Incentives – for partnerships / Committed partnerships / Creative partnerships
- Connect dots
- Early exposure, fieldtrips, online tools
- Outreach – give speeches
- Girl-focused gaming (HerInteractive, Silicon siters Interactive)
How might we provide opportunities inside and outside of school for girls and young women to practice solving problems that inspire and empower them? (McMahon) - Audience Notes:

- Big Data
- Mentorship / Bring in role models, mentors, Mentoring as a form of partnership – a route into instilling a partnership mentality / Mentoring people – business-industry / Guide & Share experiences
- Bring girls into your business / mentor /Forums/storytelling/mentoring/apprenticeships /Leadership behavior / Embody the values
- Advocacy & Sponsorship: Those in power/control need to speak up! Stand up! Show a diverse group
- It isn’t about figuring out what to do, it’s about how we implement the solution
- Need to remove the fear
- Awareness, internal analysis
- Transparency (in wages, promoting, experienced bias)
- Funding, scholarships, financial incentives
- Disparate groups (school funding)
- Workplace flexibility and results-oriented work style to prevent leaving workplace

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How might we provide opportunities inside and outside of school for girls and young women to practice solving problems that inspire and empower them? (McMahon) - Audience Notes:

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• Encourage younger girls – get elementary schools to introduce technology – made it accessible – demystify
• Number of organizations dedicated to educating and raising Awareness of working with young women: Powerful Voices, Girls Inc, N Power, ADA, Developers Academy, Technology Access Foundation, programming for social good, General assembly of women, Women-only hack-a-thon in April 2015
• Partner with Girls scouts, YMCA’s or road shows to include STEM curriculum
• Invite industry to bring design challenges to young women in schools, for ex., to make it “real” and to help them engage in using those skills.
• Challenges and contests – crowdssource solving problem/Support future problem solving
• Launch initiatives that show the value of women as part of a team
• Project-based learning / Real-life exposure, applications
• Create a video highlighting women doing “the work” of STEM Professionals (e.g. ”Empowerment” documentary).
Catalyzer Points—Hannah McConnaughey

1 - STEM often feels inaccessible to students, especially when presented in prepackaged labs, or regimented, narrow-focus courses.

2 - We need to provide a broader variety STEM opportunity for school-aged kids, to get them excited and engaged while they're young.

3 - Gender bias is often implicit even in the most innovative and hands-on STEM education.

• I believe adapting the way we teach STEM and conduct STEM outreach will lead to an influx of new talent to those fields and help the U.S. regain its place at the forefront of these industries.

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How can you make changes in your life, company, or environment that will support youth in STEM and welcome girls into the arena? *(Atlantis ROV team)* - Audience Notes:

- Partnering: mentorships within companies to create openings in industries/companies that have not typically embraced the female factor – robotics (e.g. Go into the surgery/operating team and see a practical application)
- Apprenticeships
- Vocational integration opportunities
- Inspire to pursue tech careers
- Not having Barbie books with Barbie asking Ken to how to code
- Mentorships to align early “.... School”
- Career Day! Bring professionals into the classroom or field trip to companies to see how the company operates and what the output of the position really is not just our title or category.
- Support Atlantis ROV team at the coding event
- Support kids by providing and encouraging non-gender specific activities and games
- As a woman, volunteer at s STEM event schools and systems
- Personally mentor women toward leadership roles
  -> industry organizations to mentor
  -> focus on how women talk about each other

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Comments – What was liked:

- The Panel speakers.
- The format was terrific.
- The panel/audioence conversations.
- The interactive experience.
- The diverse group of people and how it made you think.
- Loved the discussions.
- Congratulations on an outstanding event with stellar introductions, an outstanding Keynote speaker, well-balanced informative panels and interactive conversations/participation!
- All in attendance came away with enthusiasm and sense of empowerment around the issues addressed.
- The partnership with PNWER is brilliant and strategic.
- It was a hugely interesting, stimulating and fabulous day.
- You did an incredible job producing and hosting such a powerful event. Congratulations and thank you.
Comments – What was wanted more/less of:

• More time to address the challenge questions.
• Longer Q&A with panelists.
• I’d adore if there was longer speeches. I could have listened to these speakers forever.
• Consider a couple of “in depth” presentations (15 minutes) and discussion.
• Opportunity to identify specific action items, from a team + report out in 2015.
• It would have made sense to “meet” the audience – have everyone introduce themselves.
• Fewer breaks to keep people in the room.
• More Q&A time.
• Cost of admission prohibits many groups of people from attending.
• Launch challenges in exchange for admission to the event.
Comments –
Take-Aways/What will I do:

• How much potential there is!
• Finding a solution to gender gap.
• Requires action every day.
• Make all issues we spoke of a constant presence in my and my peers’ minds.
• So inspiring! Just the environment is conducive to brainstorming and creativity.
CONCLUSIONS

The attendees gained significant intellectual and social capital through participating the Women in Innovation session – *in just 75 minutes*. They seriously considered and expressed their personal commitments to actions they will be taking. Some individuals committed to personally contacting schools to offer mentoring and talks. Based on the conversations, comments and commitments expressed at the Summit, we, as a collective need to take the following steps:

1. Provide access to this report to all summit participants.

2. Convene the interested parties of the Women in Innovation Session to participate in a follow-up conversations to plan project-based collaborations to advance the above mentioned action items.

3. Convene within the context of the newly founded Pacific Northwest Innovation Council. Continue to expose the concepts of inclusivity and women in innovation to all members of the innovation ecosystem in the Pacific Northwest.

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