Raising the Voices of Women in Engineering

Rupa Dachere
Founder & CEO, Thrive-WiSE (CodeChix)
International Women’s Day 2021

- My Journey: Why I do What I do
- The Problem
- Member Journey
- Perspectives
- Mission & Programs
- Engage and Benefit

#ChooseToChallenge
Monday, March 8, 2021
### Career
- 26 years Technical Ladder
- Refused Mgmt. Ladder
- Issues with growth
- Build best products
- No support (late 2000’s)
- Quit to go full time in 2019

### Personal
- Pain, Frustration, Anger, Sadness
- Grassroots hacking@home
- Nights/Weekends
- Grow into CodeChix
- Non-Profit in 2012
- Straddling 2 boats 7 years

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"Two roads diverged in a wood and I — I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."

**Robert Frost**, "The Road Not Taken"
2018
Google walkout, Time’s Up, Focus on women’s issues and discrimination

October 2018
Epiphany and Decision

November 2018
Quit my job

January 2019
Full time, no pay, no benefits
CodeChix --> Thrive-WiSE Journey
2009 - 2021

Monthly Hacking on Linux/OS
Grew from 1 – 20+
(Rupa’s Living Rm)

2009

2010

Grew from 20 to 60+

2011-2012

Grew from 60+ - 100+

2011-2014

50+ events/ year
Grew from 60+ - 100+

2015

First DevPulseCon
Women Engineers Only
First Safe Space Panel
80+ Women Coders
Computer History Museum

2016-2018

Annual two-day
DevPulseCon
20-50% growth/year
Hyper Technical
200+ Women Coders

2019

Largest DevPulseCon
Attendees: 75%+
Sponsorships: 300%+
NEW PM Track

2020

Rebranding to Thrive-WISE
Inclusive of Women in Science Workplace Environments

2021

Micro-DevPulseCon Quarterly
Beta Safe Space + Ally Training
3x Advisory Council + Board

5-day DevPulseCon
Pilot of Safe Space + Ally Training
Eng. & PM Ladders in R&D
Fortune 100 Silicon Valley Leader.

Self Funded Phase (2009-2018)
(Rupa’s wallet + Pizza/Sandwiches from companies)

Bootstrap phase
(2019 – Present)

Rupa quits her job
IEEE article on Rupa
Live on Savings (no benefits)
9 Months

IWD2021 @ Synopsys
Half of Women Leave Science and Technology (10 years)

- 47% Science
- 56% Technology

Women leave STEM much faster than Non-STEM

- 5 years – 40% drop
- 8 years – 50% drop
- 10 years – 60% drop
- 2x the rate of men

Source: ncwit women in tech 2016
Women Need Opportunities for Advancement & Respect

Advancement
- 33% (W) vs 24% (M)

Respect
- 27% (W) vs 19% (M)

Source: IDC’s Women in Technology Survey, June 2018
ALIYA

Thrive-WiSE Member

- Top student
- Passionate
- High Hopes
- Make it BIG
- Do Good
Aliya’s Journey – Phase 1

- Smart
- Talented
- MSCS
- Top University
- Ambitious
- Perceptive
- Driven
- Confident
Aliya’s Journey – Phase 2

- Promoted to Senior Engineer or equivalent
- Tremendous effort to stay technical
- Collaboration with peers has friction
- Balancing Work/Life issues arise
Aliya’s Journey – Phase 3

- Super-human effort (16-17 hour days)
- Sacrifice family/personal
- Unsupportive peers & workplace process (changing teams)
- Physical/Mental toll
Aliya’s Journey – Phase 4

- Unable to “keep up” - personal & career
- Isolated - workplace programs focus on younger workers
- Depression & feelings of failure
- No hope of promotions/growth
Why is this happening?
“Maybe I’m paranoid, but sometimes I feel like the boss is looming over me, glaring down, as if he could work faster than me.”
Career Process

I’m getting a raise

Thrive-WiSE Perspective
Pay Inequity and Transparency

- Working Mom: 70c for $1 men
- ~$70K less in retirement
Societal Expectations
Thrive-WiSE is Uniquely Focused on Retention

Mission
To support women technologists through training, community, and open source methods so that they thrive in their careers.

Vision
Women technologists can forge their path and have an equal voice in this tech-driven world.
Who We Are

- Women Engineers & Scientists
- Women Product, Program, Project Managers
- Women in Technical Leadership
- Women in PM Leadership
- Allies – Men and Women
Foundational Pillars & Programs

**Education**
- Open Source Technologies
- Hands-on Workshops
- SRI International Technical Program
- Micro-DevPulseCon Quarterly Series

**Mentorship & Sponsorship**
- Leadership-led Co-Mentoring
- Peer Mentoring
- 1-1 Coaching

**Advocacy**
- Safe Space Corporate Program
- Ally Training Corporate Program
- Anti-Racism Corporate Program
Diversity, Equity + Inclusion Spectrum

No Transparency
No DEI Programs
No Tracking/Accountability

Range of Effectiveness

Transparency on Metrics
Established DEI Programs
Leadership Accountability

Thrive-WiSE
Leadership Perspective
Allyship is Critical!

Thrive-WiSE Perspective

- Both Men & Women Allies - Good for Business and DEI
- Be a Sponsor and/or a Mentor
- Listen & Learn Mindset vs Speak & Dictate Mindset
- Accountability Metrics - Genuine and Committed
How can you get help?

- **Continue education**
  - MOOC study groups

- **Identify mentors and sponsors**
  - Internal & external

- **Invest time & energy for your career growth**
  - Prioritize what is important

**Remember:** Everything takes effort and some sacrifice

- Create realistic goals you can achieve
  - Professional & Personal

- And, of course, Volunteer
  - Thrive-WiSE, IEEE

**Thrive-WiSE, IEEE**
Thrive-WiSE Programs

April 2, 5p-6p Pacific

Tentative Topics

- Interviewing during Covid
- Keeping up with new tech without going crazy
- Peer conflict & how to handle

Thrive-WiSE co-mentoring

Please join us for a facilitated co-mentoring session for women engineers and PMs. This session will provide a space to share and learn from each other’s experiences, gain insight and support around the challenges women face during COVID, and advance in their careers.

April 2nd, 2021
5 - 6 PDT

Mimi Hilla, Co-Founder, Music Camp (Local Leader, Retired)
Helene Cohen, Strategy Consultant & Facilitator, Strategic Insights
Patricia Richards, Dir. Partner Engineering, VMware
Prasuna Muthyala, Sr. Dir. of Eng., Walmart Global Tech

tinyurl.com/TWmentorwise
Programs

Rust Hands
Frameworks for PM’s
Keynotes in morning session
Register: tinyurl.com/mDPC2021

4p Pacific
Tech and PM Panels

Site: devpulsecon.org
March 31, 8a-10a; 1p – 4p Pacific

- Keynotes in morning session
- Rust Hands-on Workshop
- Frameworks for PM’s Workshop
- Tech and PM Panels
- Register: tinyurl.com/mDPC2021
FYI – new site Alpha release!

tinyurl.com/TWjoinus

Thrive-WiSE Programs
May the code be with you…

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