

Lauren Sullivan Podcast

Kat: Welcome back everyone to this episode of the hub hustle podcast. We are so excited for this session. It's been a long time in the making. Today is finally the day that we get to bring in one of our faculty ambassadors for this past year, Dr. Lauren Sullivan, we are so excited. I'll give you a chance to introduce yourself and everything. Lauren, go ahead.

Lauren: I'm excited to be here, Kathryn, it does feel like a long time in the making. I've been a fan of the innovation hub ever since the day it opened. Just all the incredible things that are happening there and the energy and the team that you have. It really is a privilege for me to get to be here and talk about my involvement now.

I work as the assistant dean admissions and recruitment for the Texas Tech University Health Science Center School of Nursing. I can work, not only with prospective students, but students who are also enrolled, and alumni. I work with lots of faculty. I work with different, members of the teams within medicine and health professions and pharmacy and biomedical [00:01:00] sciences.

It's a really great place. We have a title and it kind of defines us yet, we go beyond those boundaries so much when it comes to serving our students and really showing up as teams for each other.

Kat: I always love chatting with you because We are all on the same lines

we're working with students, we're working with alumni, we're working with faculty, working with community that's in Lubbock. I think we see a lot of similarities, it's so heartwarming to see because you do touch so many people in your role, especially now as a faculty ambassador.

For those of you who don't know what a faculty ambassador is, these faculty ambassadors are appointed through our Faculty C Startup Program, and those applications typically open early in the spring, and we choose it before the end of the spring semester. These faculty ambassadors incorporate, innovation, entrepreneurship teachings, and into their syllabi for the upcoming school year.

I just want to go ahead and jump in. Lauren, you've served in so many roles in the school of nursing what motivated you to serve as the assistant dean for the office of [00:02:00] admissions?

Lauren: My passion really is I like to meet people where they are and understand where they want to go. Want to be able to catapult people. Maybe it's something that I can do, or maybe it's something that someone else can do. I think being able to refer and recommend and create opportunities for people is important. I think there's a place for everybody here in the Texas Tech system, whether it's in the School of Nursing, Medicine, English Department, and Innovation Hub.

I've been passionate about Student Affairs Administration for years. I started as a recruiter at the Health Sciences Center and was given lots of different opportunities to grow and develop myself here. I had wonderful mentors. I can't speak highly enough of the people that believed in me.

Kat: I completely understand that, as a person that just came out of college and going into professional role, leaning on my mentor and leaning on, my boss. If you have a mentor and if you have someone you can trust, lean on [00:03:00] them. I think that is such a wonderful piece of advice.

On top of your current role, you teach two courses in the honors college that encouraging and aspiring healthcare professionals to explore, these innovative solutions to unique problems that are in their field.

What inspires you to incorporate that innovative mindset into your classroom?

Lauren: I used to think about creativity in the sense that you had to go to Hobby Lobby and be able to, you know, purchase all the supplies to make a wreath.

And if you could do that, then you were creative. I Didn't ever have the desire to do that. I just wanted to buy the read that was already made that I liked. I wanted to be fun and creative, but that's how I defined creativity. When I went through my doctoral program, I was focusing on organizational change and leadership, because that's an area that I'm focused in and passionate about.

So, if you're going to focus on something, you better have some passion around it. Some of the coursework that was included was on creativity and innovation. I thought, this will be fun to learn about. One of the first things in this course [00:04:00] was, evaluating yourself. Do you think you're creative? It gave you this assessment that you could take. Throughout the course, you come to discover creativity and practice innovation. It's a skill that you can develop.

And I realized you can lean into that and that could be your creative approach, I just wanted to know more. I was very fortunate that, I have a mentor named Dr. Patricia Yoder Weiss, and she is not only nationally, but also internationally known in nursing leadership.

I love leadership, but I'm not a nurse. I'm passionate about the topic. Dr. Yoder Weiss came to me several years ago and said, I know that you have this area of interest that you're focusing on as well as creativity and innovation. I'd like for you to start teaching content and our Doctor of Nursing practice program and our leading team's course.

I thought that was such an honor and a privilege. I have now become a full faculty member in that course, which is a huge deal for me to talk about something that I'm passionate about. [00:05:00]

I'm fortunate enough to teach a seminar in healthcare. Designated for Honors College students who are interested in becoming, a healthcare provider. One of our big assignments is

called The Next Big Idea. I thought about the big opportunities that the innovation hub always offers students. I realized I wanted students to have this opportunity. I had to bring in the innovation hub because they would be the perfect partners.

last year when we launched it, you and Taysha came, and you judged all their pitches. Which was so exciting because they put together, 60 second pitches where they were either presented by video or presented by recordings.

Kat: That was so amazing. Everyone was passionate, everyone was excited to hear about what the other person was thinking. Taysha and I walked away from, your class last semester and we were like, this is what we're talking about, where the classroom meets the real world, it's that innovative, creative, spirit that we really, want to help nurture in students, especially because they're, right at the point where they're [00:06:00] determining what is their passion.

Is there something that you do just to keep them motivated? I mean, what is your secret sauce that goes into that?

Lauren: the seminar students who are doing the next big idea challenges, they're juniors or seniors.

They are so goal oriented, they're excited about the next steps. They're getting the chance to have these hands-on learning opportunities.

Whenever we talk, I always get excited because you apply it to a whole new perspective. We're talking about emotional, experiences and emotional empathy. All of these things that you won't really think about when you're just in a healthcare class learning about bone structure, this is a new way of thinking.

I think these are really, important skills that a lot of these students are really interested in learning about, and it does give them a bit of a foothold into the community.

Meeting these people and kind of integrating them into the community, whether they be students, faculty members, whoever that's really, awesome.

Kat: What advice would you give faculty members that want to start, but [00:07:00] aren't sure where to start implementing these techniques?

One thing I want to say is that the innovation hub is wonderful because it always meets you where you are. You do not have to be an expert. You do not have to be an innovator. The faculty see startup ambassador program offers is education. That is one of the things I was most excited about. They'll teach you how to use the business model canvas. Those are things that I was not familiar with. All these things that are so important for future healthcare providers and nursing leaders to know. One of the greatest things that the innovation hub offers is that opportunity to one partner with you and give you a space. To create those opportunities, but also in learning opportunities for students, also teaching you additional curriculum that you can put in your syllabus.

Anyone who is interested in the faculty ambassador program, you do get the 2, 500 [00:08:00] grant that can go towards anything to help, you know, your own personal growth, to help your students, you know, to challenge your students with a competition.

Kat: I mean, we've seen, seen it used in so many unique ways just to really, again, meet the students where they are. And so, do you mind talking on that a little bit?

Lauren: Yes, being able to be provided grant money to be part of this program. It's just icing on the cake. I think it's a privilege to even be selected for the program and to be able to give be given the resources that we were provided. I feel very grateful because I was accepted into a postdoc program that is a partnership between Arizona State University and Georgetown University. It's a one-year fellowship, and it's focused on innovation and higher education. I'm using the money to help pay for that program.

I'm truly grateful and I think it goes hand in hand to the innovation hub, being a faculty ambassador, getting to be part of the innovation hub, [00:09:00] being part of the Health Science Center, being part of TTU. I feel like anything I learn is going to be given back, not only to this whole system, but also to our community.

Kat: It sounds like that is going to be an amazing program. You can learn so, much. I look forward to hearing more about it as you go through it.

Well, as we wrap up, I just wanted to ask, what is one piece of advice that you want to leave with faculty members, students?

Lauren: I really want to encourage everyone to becoming a faculty ambassador and going through this program. You don't have to be an expert. You don't have to be teaching in the business school. You don't have to teach in the engineering program. Anyone can be taught to do this. Not only for creativity and innovation, but really giving them that foundation to be emotionally effective so they can be resilient. They can have growth mindsets, so that they aren't always one arguing with us. It doesn't matter what field they're in, whether it only impacts that field, [00:10:00] a small group of people, or an entire community. We're Texas Tech. we can change the world. At the Health Sciences Center, we truly believe not only our students and faculty. But also, staff members. All of us can be the future of healthcare and everybody at Texas tech can be the future when it comes to change, creativity, innovation, and just bringing something great into this world.

Kat: That's so beautiful. Amazing. It really homes in on, the mantra that from here it's possible. Thank you so much again for coming on this podcast. This has been phenomenal. Thank you so much for coming out and being a part of this podcast.

Lauren: Thank you so much, Catherine. It was a privilege and I love always getting the chance to talk to you.

Well, everyone, I hope you stopped by the Innovation Hub. If you're interested in learning more about the Faculty Ambassador Program, I'll have a link in the description below. feel free to check that out [00:11:00] as well. We're super excited to kick off the next year of

Faculty Ambassadors. Thank you so much for listening in and tuning in for this episode and we'll see you next time.