

IV. Challenges and Insights

1. What have been some of your greatest challenges & how have you overcome them?

I think one of the challenges has been being a woman in a male-dominated field. The way I overcame this was to make sure that I was technically strong and could relay this confidence internally as well as externally to our clients. To support this, I made sure that I was well-prepared for presentations, whether internal or external. Finally, I would study topics that I was not familiar with, on my own time.

2. Describe how you have balanced your career and personal life. Were there any corporate or professional programs that helped you advance both personally and professionally? Is there anything you wish you had known “then” or could have done differently?

Balancing career and personal life has always been a challenge for me. Unfortunately I am still challenged with this – but have moved towards making this a focus, largely because I want others to do the same! If they see their management having a hard time taking vacation and time off, others tend to feel guilty in doing the same. So it is my goal this year to take all of my vacation and take time for my family. I think if I look back at my career – I wish I would have followed my own approach today, earlier. I mean really, is IBM going to go under because I take all of my vacation? Hardly!!! I think we get so deep into our jobs that we forget the bigger picture and truly balancing both our work lives and personal lives is of tremendous benefit – in preventing burn out and unhappiness with our jobs.

3. Are there further experiences or insight that you would like to share?

I think in closing that I would just like to say that there are so many opportunities for women in the science and technology fields. We are under-represented today, and there is a great deal of opportunity! The women that I work with are extremely talented and strong – I would love to see more representation in the future!