

Episode 79 - Laurie Genevish

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SPEAKERS

Laurie Genevish, Moira McCullough

M Moira McCullough 00:00

Welcome to the College Scoops podcast. I'm your host, Moira McCullough and today we are talking with Laurie Genevish on how she helps students find a career that they will love and thrive in

L Laurie Genevish 00:09

Marine biology. That's it, oh my gosh, I have my career, love it and I actually went to school that specialized in marine biology. Then I got there and found out wow, there's a lot of math involved in marine biology. And my hatred for math was much greater than my love for the water.

M Moira McCullough 00:38

This is the College Scoops podcast and I'm your host, Moira McCullough, we focus on everything college related from the admissions process to where to eat, stay and explore on and round campuses. Our guests include founders, educators, authors and experts in the college space. Join us as these experts share their knowledge, experiences and lessons learned to help you have stress free and formative and tasty college journeys. Whether it's your first or last child going to college, or you're just interested in going to a college town for a game or meal. We've got you covered. If you haven't already, please subscribe to the

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L Laurie Genevish 01:48
Oh, thanks for having me. I'm excited.

M Moira McCullough 01:48
Well, we invited you here today. Because one, you're going through the process just like me, yes, it's always good to talk to other parents who are going through it and get any tips and strategies that I can use. And anyone else out there listening can use. But also you run a business, My Ideal College, which basically focuses on helping students find careers that they will thrive in any use assessment technology. So I'm so interested in that, and I can't wait for you to share that information with us. But first, can you just introduce yourself,

L Laurie Genevish 02:43
I live in the Atlanta metro Atlanta, Georgia area. And I do have two boys, my businesses My Ideal College, where I take teens and college students from doubt to destiny, because it's just identifying that career. So you pick the right major or even trade school or certification. There's just there's so many more options than when we went to school. So you can save a lot of money if you know the path you're going on.



M Moira McCullough 03:34

I think it's so hard. I just think back. And I tried to think about what my parents used to say to me, and now that I'm a parent, I did back then. But I mean at 17 It's so hard to know what you want to do. So that's the kind of the challenge is just to de stress the process and say college is also an opportunity, whatever type of college you go to, whether it's trade school, whether it's community, whether it's a gap year program, or a four year college is to be curious and take courses that you are interested in. But to your point also is to find some courses or professions that are more in line with your skill sets and what are you would really be happy just going back to your son in high school. Do you have any tips or guidance? Have you found anything helpful to you going through this process as a parent the first time around?

L Laurie Genevish 04:26

Yeah, the biggest thing is to start early. Don't wait till that junior year, which a lot of people do. And guess what happened - like a lot of people had their college tours plan for their junior year and then COVID hit and oh, guess what? Now you can't visit colleges. Really just working with we like we get with our sons, start talking about it even in their sophomore year because like here, it's called dual enrollment where you can take college classes while you are in high school. And that's a great opportunity. I had that conversation with my teen and his sophomore year. I said, is dual enrollment, something you want to consider? And he actually said, No, It's not something I want to consider because of the rigor and such. And I respected that in regards to it. And I would say, have them the tips as well. Have those conversations, you want to go to this school? Why? You know, Is it because of a great football team? So okay, great. That's a good option. But let's look at other reasons why you want to go there, what type of school, you want to go to a large school or small school having those conversations earlier than later, sooner than later in regards to it, because again, it starts planting those seeds, which has been helpful for us or high schooler?

M Moira McCullough 05:51

Are there any types of resources that you use or that your son has used? That has necessarily been a game changer, or an eye opening experience for? For you?

L Laurie Genevish 06:03

Yes. Honestly, doing these virtual tours of colleges. And also actually one tip someone told me was, go to YouTube, and Google the college and see what kinds of posts the students



are all, you know, students of the college are also doing so to help give you a feel of the college. So that's actually been a useful tip that I hadn't thought about in regard in regards to it.

M

Moira McCullough 06:32

Absolutely. It's amazing what's out there nowadays. And even more so now than eight months ago, I think a lot companies have become creative. And a lot of students, they are creative with social media. Now they're using it for fun, but actually, it's very official to all those students, high school students that are out there that don't have a sensor vibe of the school. And they can see it through their normal means of communication now, which is to the three minute video. So in your previous job, tell us a little bit you worked with a lot of companies helping them to hire and train and develop employees, and he used assessment technology. Can you share a little bit about that?

L

Laurie Genevish 07:15

Let me share a little bit of my story and sort of why I do what I do. When I was in high school. I knew college was like, you automatically go to college. And I knew that wherever I went to college, it needed to help me support in a career I want. So here I am in high school, what do I want to do as career? Oh, I love the water. So you know what? What are jobs that would have me in the water and make good money, like marine biology? Boom, that's it, oh, my gosh, I have my career love it and actually went to school that specialized in marine biology, then I got there and found out wow, there's a lot of math involved in marine biology. And my hatred for math was much greater than my love for the water. So I like many college students you know as either drop out or change my major. I changed my major to communications. And long story short, I thought I wanted to be a fundraiser and actually did it for four years after college, I realized I hated it. So I was that 24 year old living at home because fundraisers did not make a lot of money, not knowing what I was going to do with my life, thought I was destined to work in the mall, at The Limited. You know I am 50 years old as I am about the limited. And my Dad actually said I know a career counselor. Do you want to talk to them? Why not? Because I just don't know what I'm going to do. And I'm working with for identified a career in training and development. And I was like, Sure, I'll try it. And lo and behold, I loved it. I loved every aspect of it. I loved it so much that I got promoted left and right. And so I know what a good assessment and a good career coach can do to change the trajectory for someone. So as you said, I'm an assessment junkie, I love assessments. And there's one particular assessment that I use a lot in corporate and trained development is Harrison Assessments, where it takes your natural interests, it's not a it's not a personality assessment. It's all about what you like to do, and match it to jobs, that would you be good for or let you know, or also let you know,

okay, you can pursue this career. But you may not like this part of it. Because the research shows if your job contains at least 75% of what you naturally like to do, you'll be three times more successful and so it's about finding the job. So for example, if I had taken the assessment many years ago, it would have said, okay, you can be a fundraiser if you want, but just know there's a lot of things about it, you don't realize that you're just not going to enjoy. And so you know, it's just giving giving a form informed decision.

M Moira McCullough 10:21

Well, I think that's so important because it really does help you kind of refined your your area of interest in a sense, because as you said, most people would think I love marine biology, I love the water, I love to explore animals or you know, marine life and, and all the other aspects. But you're like, if it involves a lot of math, you don't enjoy it, and it doesn't come easy to you, then to your point, that really doesn't fit.

L Laurie Genevish 10:49

And plus student debt is such a big thing. It wasn't a big thing when we were growing up, and now, it's just this changing and deciding and changing again, it just, it can be costly. And so that's why it's more important that we really help our teams on their path.

M Moira McCullough 11:09

Walk us through how you do that with students.

L Laurie Genevish 11:12

I work with them, obviously, the they take the assessment, it's a 20 minute online assessment. That's the basis of my coaching with them. through it. There's lots of different reports, we first look at what are their greatest strengths? You know, I love starting with that report, because it's all about what they do. Well, I also teach them how to utilize it for job interviews. If it says the they're really good at brainstorming, okay. Let's walk through if How have you done that? You know, how would you explain it interview or also you can use in your college essays. Then we take a look at the careers. That's why I love what I do. I mean, I've had kids where it's like, they'd be a great film, television producer. But they would also be good at bartending and two very different types of things. Yet, there's something in them that they don't even realize that would make them realize that they like why they would like us jobs. We we dive deep, I say, Okay, let's look at these jobs, which ones are you interested in? You know, and, okay, here's what, here's where you're



going to be great at it. Here's some areas where you might not enjoy as much. But you can also overcome it. We talked about how to do that. So then they get a basis of careers that they feel good based on research to consider more then we also look at the job outlook and salary. People say, Oh, you help kids find their passion, I say I help them find their passion with reason, you got to have make a living. We want our kids to be independent. And so that helps narrow down and also the education. Some students I work with, they're like, Yes, no, I just want to go to school for years. If I need a Master's or doctorate for this job that's not my headspace right now. Okay, great. So it really just helped some a full picture of everything they need to think about. And then I have them talk to people in those careers as well. And schedule, what's informational interviews, then I also help them with their social media, not only what they shouldn't post, but what should they be doing? Who should they be following? How do they engage with a college of their interests that? Those little things can help them in the college admissions process.

M

Moira McCullough 13:34

So in terms of the introduction that you give to professionals in those industries, is that something that they mentor them throughout, or it's just kind of a resource that they can use to talk to learn more about that particular profession? And as you said, have mock interviews, reach out to meet other people within that industry or join certain industry associations?

L

Laurie Genevish 14:05

Yes, all of the above, to be honest I teach the things they're not used to again, because of texting and all that. Okay. Let's talk about how I make the introduction, but I didn't say okay, here are some questions you could ask. And I say, look depending on the person, yes, they may say, hey, come into the office for a day, I teach them to try to build a relationship with that person, because if it is a career, they're interested in that again, could be a good resource for them for internships, or jobs or that type of thing.

M

Moira McCullough 14:41

Right. And what's some of the common advice that some of these professionals are sharing with prospective employees and students who are just going to college to further their degree and then potentially get into engineering or teaching. Are there certain common themes that you see that professionals are recommending for students to hone in on? If you're going to go into psychiatry, sign up and try to join some of those associations? And you can do it with a reduced college fee if you join in college. But once



you graduate to join some of those associations, those fees increase. So looking at it, too, from a financial perspective, there's a time and place to join some of these with student discounts versus less.

L Laurie Genevish 15:30

And I actually tell that to my students, as well, I teach them how to research different business or professional organizations. And a lot of times they'll have scholarships, as well, and it is easy to get certain types of scholarships. So yes, I would say introduce them to business organizations. Also just making sure that they know that's a path that they want to go in especially something like these that require a lot of schooling. Are they up for the rigor?

M Moira McCullough 16:06

And I think it's helpful to for somebody who's been in that profession to say, if you had an opportunity to take certain classes earlier than later, or make sure from a planning perspective, that you're planning out your curriculum to enable you to succeed and apply for these types of positions, because I think that's another misnomer, or people don't know. And then all of a sudden, it's senior year. And they thought, If only I had known that I would have structured my class schedule a little differently.

L Laurie Genevish 16:38

Yes, Mom and Dad aren't there in college, helping them. And so they got to stay on top of this stuff and have the discipline so that they're not at the end going, Oh, shoot, I can't graduate because of this. Or like you said, I wish I'd taken this course before this course, really owning their education.

M Moira McCullough 16:57

When we were talking originally, you mentioned trade schools. I think a lot of students and families may look at that. More now, just like gap years where the perception was many years ago, it was a boondoggle, you just went away. And if you had the money, it was a great vacation. But that's changed. Intentional gap years are very rewarding and important to students, allowing them to mature and give them kind of almost a restart taking a break from formal education. But getting in and learning from a practical standpoint, and experiential standpoint, trade schools, what are some of your thoughts and advice to students who may not be ready for the four year and who may want to just



pursue that avenue?

L Laurie Genevish 17:46

Yes, if you're someone who likes to work with your hands, trades are a great option. I actually worked with one student who actually was depressed, because all his friends were like, Oh, I'm going to this big school and I'm gonna be a lawyer and a doctor. And he knew that wasn't for him. But he felt that that pressure anyway, and working with him identified a career in welding would be really good for him when he found out what he could be making. Like, I could be making that much while my friends are still in college. I'm like, yep, really helped him. And, and as a side note, female welders are known to be very, very good welders, I know of two women, they happen to be twin sisters are making over \$100,000, at 23 years old, they are actually teaching welding. Because, again, the research shows that women tend to be naturally good at welding, and a lot because trades are so in need because of the workforce. I mean, you're almost guaranteed a job in these different trades. If you love what you do. I'm sure my plumber and all those people probably live in houses bigger than I if you want it now only doing the actual trade and owning the business are two different things. So if you enjoy a particular trade that you're like, you don't want to own my own business, then you can go back to college, then or do something to instead or do something to get the education you need to build a business.

M Moira McCullough 19:24

So are there some other stories that have students you can share with students who came in with one particular framework or idea and then just through the work that the assessments that they took came out of it thinking oh, my gosh, I'm a light went on. I have a total perspective on what I want to do.

L Laurie Genevish 19:46

Honestly, a lot of the kids that I work with have no idea they are just so overwhelmed with a thought that they really have no idea what they want to do and it actually you know, it affects their self esteem and I'm able to do At the end, they're like, Oh my gosh, I am. So I know what I want to do. I know the steps, honestly, the biggest thing that I see is parents guiding the team in a direction that they don't want to go in. And the parent either isn't listening or the child or the teen is too afraid to say, like I was working with, with one, actually a college student and the mom. She was in engineering and a junior. So she's saying she wants to drop out. I don't know what to do. So I worked with a teen and she says, I hate my classes. I don't want to do it. And I said, why are you doing it then? Because



that's what my parents want me to do. And I said, if you could do because our parents understandably, is like, you need to get stem degree, you need to get a stem degree. That's where the jobs are. So in working with her and the parents, the mindset I heard, she said, I had no idea that I was even doing this. And it opened up the whole communication between the student and the parents. And they were able to, she didn't drop out. She actually is getting a degree in graphic design. So that art piece she likes and everyone's happy and the whole college funding has not gone to waste by her dropping.

M Moira McCullough 21:24

Now a good segue in terms of advice, from your perspective, or parents is to open that communication early. And talk with your students support them, but not overtake the process and insist on certain majors and careers.

L Laurie Genevish 21:45

And I get it when especially when your team has no idea what they want to do. You want to be like, Okay, well, I love what I do. Why don't you do this? Or I had one mom, she was really wonder daughter to be a doctor. But the daughter couldn't stand aside. I was like, are you? Oh, she'll get over it. I'm like, Yeah, I don't think so. And we think we know our kids, I'll give my own personal story. So with my my older son, I had him take the assessment and his sophomore year. And I'm like, Oh, I know, it's gonna say you should be a teacher, because you're so good with kids, you're so patient, blah, blah. Well, he actually didn't score high for being a teacher. And I was like, ah, I just find that so strange. And he said, Mom, just because I'm good with kids doesn't mean I want to spend 40 hours a week being around them. I'm like, Oh, my gosh, this is what I tell parents. We think we know our kids. And we may do to a certain extent, but to guide them in the right careers, you know, just honor what they're saying, have an open dialogue, set that agreement,

M Moira McCullough 22:58

And then as college students take that a step forward, when you're in talk with professionals in the industry, reach out to them, join different associations, any other advice that you have for college students, or to recent grads who are in the professions, because as you said, you were in that role helping develop and train employees as well. Any tips that you would have for a recent grad who's in a profession that they might not be comfortable with just yet.





23:32

Networking is key. You know, research came out two thirds of college grads struggle to launch their career. And the 1/3 that didn't struggle knew their major going in. No, was the right one and had at least one internship while they were in college. So if you are in college, and I even tell my students I said, when you're picking a college, find out what their internship opportunities are for that specific field. And if you are out of college, and you're still join those professional organizations, you know, network like crazy, just talk to people about their their jobs, don't get complacent. You just that network is what's going to help you propel your career, whether you decide you want to move up. If you decide you want to change your career, you know, God forbid, if you get laid off, go into LinkedIn post in groups that in your career field to stand out. Great advice.



Moira McCullough 24:31

What do you wish you knew before you attended college?



24:36

Well, honestly, for me, it would be like there were so much math and marine biology. Yes, that's the biggest thing. I mean, for me, college overall was a great experience for me. I got involved in sororities and such and it really allowed me to shine and grow. So I just make sure that you fully know what you're getting yourself into is the biggest thing before you jump in. Don't choose because without doing all the research,



Moira McCullough 25:03

is there any particular food or dessert at a college campus that you would recommend?



25:10

Chick fil a? I love their chicken sandwiches and their milkshakes. Actually, I love their milk shakes out of anyone.



Moira McCullough 25:19

Laurie, thank you so much for joining us today.





Laurie Genevish 25:22

Thank you. It's been a pleasure.



Moira McCullough 25:26

Thank you to Laurie for joining us today to discuss how students can use career assessment tools to learn more about various professions and the skill sets required to excel in those particular professions. Are you think about majoring in marine biology but you absolutely hate math? What is the job outlook and the median salary? Start the conversations early so students can plan accordingly. You can find all of our show notes and links to the helpful resources mentioned throughout our conversation on our website at collegescoops.com/podcasts. You can learn more about Laurie and My Ideal College at Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and My Ideal College. Please take a couple of minutes to rate review and subscribe to College Scoops. Thank you for listening to our College Scoops podcast. Our entire College Scoops team strives to make the college journey a little bit easier, less stressful, fun and tasty by sharing all the inside scoops we have curated along the way. We would love to hear from you about topics to cover and your ideas and everything college related. Reach out to us at collegescoops.com or follow us on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

