Women in Science 2023

International Day of Women and Girls in Science Day is February 11th 2023. This Day will mark full and equal access and participation of females in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Fields. QuantuMDx will mark this by showcasing a number of female employees within these roles across different areas of the business. We would like you to answer the following questions regarding your career to date which give insight into your particular career path into a science related role – many thanks.

Name: Anna-Maria Caridis

Q1. What is your current role in QuantuMDx and what was your career path into this role? (Include Qualifications).
I am a Research Scientist at QuantuMDx. My first degree was in Biochemistry, I then went on to do an MRes in Biomedical Science and a PhD in Biochemistry. My PhD focused on cholesterol trafficking in pancreatic beta cells and how this affects insulin secretion. Before joining QuantuMDx, I did a 2-year post-doc in the field of cancer research.
Q2. Can you explain what a typical day would look like, what your role entails and what you enjoy about your current role?
My typical day involves designing and carrying out experiments in the lab. I also spend a considerable amount of time in meetings where I often present data. I have been involved in all stages of assay development, from feasibility where the assays are first tested in the lab, all the way through to the acquisition of accreditation on the QPOC platform. I enjoy the collaborative nature of the role and the freedom we get, whilst at the same time staying focused and working within timelines.
Q3. Why do you think Women are under-represented in STEM disciplines?
Our society dictates what a typical boy and what a typical girl should enjoy and be good at. STEM disciplines are maths-heavy, and girls often think they don't have what it takes, "it's just not for them". I think boys and girls have the same struggles with maths and science, but boys probably try harder to overcome challenges because it is expected of them. In addition, I think that men get further in STEM subjects because they are more confident and believe in themselves, rather than because they have more to offer. STEM disciplines are also very competitive, and sometimes not very family-friendly, which makes it especially hard and therefore an unappealing career path for women.
4. What do you enjoy about working in science and what are your long term career goals?

I made the decision to study a biology-related subject when I was 14, after being inspired by an excellent biology teacher. I find the way living organisms work fascinating. I enjoy the problem-solving aspect of my current post and the difference we can make to the world through molecular diagnostics. I also find the collaborative nature of the work at QuantuMDx very interesting. Being new to the field of diagnostics, my long-term goals are to continue to deepen my understanding of the field and to gain leadership experience that will then eventually enable me to become a team leader.

Q5. What advice would you give to a female considering a career in science and where would you seek out career's advice, who would you ask?

My advice to females considering a career in science is to not underestimate themselves and to feel confident to ask for things they believe they deserve, such as a salary rise or a promotion. Employers are more likely to believe in someone who has confidence in their own abilities. When it comes to career's advice, I would show interest in scientists I meet in everyday life and ask them lots of questions, as they are the best qualified people to ask.

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