

Patty Lopez, Innovative Engineer

Her Legacy: Helping to break barriers for women in traditionally male-dominated professions

Patty Lopez was the first in her family to graduate from college; she now holds a PhD and works as a senior platforms engineer at Intel. Patti's career path first became clear to her when she was introduced to computers at her small New Mexico high school. In college at New Mexico State University (NMSU), she majored in computer science and developed a lifelong passion for bringing more women into technical fields and technology.

Patty went on to earn a masters' degree and was one of the first three women to get a PhD from NMSU. Through a fortunate connection, she was offered a job at Hewlett Packard (HP) as an imaging scientist, a position she held for nearly 20 years. Encountering some roadblocks in her work at HP, including becoming a mother, she left the company to join Intel in Fort Collins.

A turning point came for Patty when she attended a Grace Hopper Celebration and was inspired to actively advocate for Latina women to have careers in fields like hers. She co-founded Latinas in Computing, which began as a job-listing site and has become a strong community of support with the aid of the Anita Borg Institute for Women in Technology.

She has volunteered with the Anita Borg institute, the National Center for Women in Information Technology, and mentoring programs at NMSU. She won the Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards Corporation (HENAAC)/Great Minds in STEM Community Service Award in 2010 and co-chaired the 2013 Grace Hopper Celebration.

Patty devotes considerable time and energy toward educating and inspiring girls and women to venture into technical fields through posting and sharing images of women, particularly minorities, in science, mathematics, technology or engineering as well as engaging diverse speakers for classrooms. In 2017, she was one of four women recognized by the Brawny brand as smart, accomplished women who broke gender barriers, and her image was featured on Brawny paper towels in the spring of that year.

Patty has made and continues to make significant differences in women's lives.

"Women typically say, it was a team effort. Well, when you do that, you give away a lot of power. You can say, it was a team effort, and here's where my contribution was critical. I was key in recognizing X. You have to not only say yeah, I'm a great collaborator but this is the piece I carved out, that fit in."

Written by Barbara Fleming, Author, Coloradoan Columnist and Living Her Legacy Wordsmith