

## Women of CHK: Women's History Month Q&A



*Pictured left to right: Maggi Young – Regulatory Affairs Specialist,  
Lehne George – Manager, Geoscience, Abbey Hale – Completions Engineer*

### ***How were you encouraged to go into or decide to pursue a STEM career?***

**Maggi:** Several of my professors encouraged STEM careers due to potential for opportunities and growth. Personally, I was interested in joining the energy sector to be part of an industry that is constantly evolving and integral to everyday lives. I also like the idea of leveraging my dedication, empathy and creativity alongside the traditional skills associated with the STEM disciplines.

**Lehne:** I always loved science as a child and knew I would be some type of scientist. I had a very large rock and mineral collection, so I should have known geoscience would be my career path! My freshman year of high school I was encouraged by a science teacher to enroll in a STEM program at a local natural science museum. It was there that I took my first geology class which served as the catalyst for my future career.

**Abbey:** I had a physics teacher once mention that I'd be "missing out" if I didn't go into a science field, and I think that was the thing that made it an option in my head. I come from a family of CPA's and I knew I didn't want to do that, but hadn't quite decided what I wanted to do until my teacher made an offhand comment about it. I've always been a problem solver, and admittedly a bit nerdy, and there's no field quite like engineering to merge those two.

### ***What progress have you seen for women in STEM since you began your career?***

**Maggi:** Although there is much work to do, I've seen more school-aged programs where female role models are physically

present to expose students to first-hand professional experience. This is valuable to all students and encourages excitement amongst both boys AND girls.

**Lehne:** I have been encouraged in recent years by the sheer volume of STEM programs aimed at sparking interest in math and science in young girls. It's incredibly heartening to see elementary and middle school aged girls excited about subjects like geology and engineering. Additionally, since the beginning of my career, professional organizations like Women's Energy Network (WEN) have grown tremendously in popularity. This is encouraging because it indicates that now more than ever, women in oil and gas are seeing the benefit of coming together for networking, education and professional development.

### ***What progress can be made to continue to support women in the workplace?***

**Maggi:** This is somewhat topical, but the McKinsey & Company's article, Women in the Workplace 2021, notes that while women are making gains in terms of representation throughout all levels of management and showing up as strong leaders in the workforce, women are significantly more burned out than men due in part to the added stress and exhaustion from COVID. COVID highlighted the incongruent work-life balance that many face and I agree with the article that companies should take bold steps to address burnout or risk losing valued employees.

**Lehne:** More progress must be made across all industries to better support women who work. Robust parental leave, flexible working hours, and access to affordable, reliable childcare are essential for mothers in the workplace. Additionally, more

progress must be made to retain women in the workforce. This is of utmost importance now because the pandemic has had a particularly negative effect on working mothers due to school closures, childcare uncertainty, and other caregiving issues. The more companies can do to incentivize women to keep working and create a positive working environment for them to do so, the better.

**Abbey:** I think in any office scenario, everyone should be aware that people communicate differently, and keep that in mind when interacting with teammates, vendors, etc. For example, I am very straightforward person, which isn't an uncommon trait by any means, but seems to surprise people more than when it is a man speaking his mind. Preconceived notions about a person and the way they will communicate/act/work just add unnecessary stress and pressure, and we should all work to maintain open minds when interacting with new people.

#### ***How can men be better allies for #WomenInSTEM or in the workplace?***

**Lehne:** One way men can be better allies for women in the workplace is by mentoring and sponsoring women early in their careers. With so few women in senior leadership and technical roles, it can be difficult for women who are early in their careers to find mentors and role models within their organizations. There are so many talented and promising young women out there who would greatly benefit from someone guiding them in their careers, offering advice, and advocating for their advancement. When men step into these roles for women, the talent pool is strengthened and, in turn, organizations are stronger and more competitive.

**Abbey:** I encourage people in leadership to create settings where women are actively listened to and encouraged to give their opinions. The easiest way to know what someone is frustrated with is to ask the person directly if there is anything you can do.

#### ***Who is the most influential woman you know? How does she inspire you?***

**Maggi:** Professionally, Anne Bradbury, CEO – American Exploration and Production Council. Anne leads a national trade association representing the largest independent oil and natural gas exploration and production companies in the U.S. She is curious and relentless in her advocacy on behalf of our industry. On a personal level, my six childhood best friends — women who encourage each other in our personal and professional pursuits.

**Lehne:** My mom is hugely influential and has always encouraged me to work hard, be authentic and stand up for what is right. She had a very long and demanding career as a social worker all while raising three kids. She serves as an inspiration to me to be a good mom to my three kids AND have a challenging, fulfilling career.