



## Tammy Wharton

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:00:00] It's not just about teaching skills and girls so that they can get in these career paths that are amazing, but it's building a better community.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:00:12] Welcome to Learning Unboxed, a conversation about teaching, learning, and the future of work. This is Annalies Corbin, Chief Goddess of the PAST Foundation and your host. We hear frequently that the global education system is broken. In fact, we spent billions of dollars trying to fix something that's actually not broken at all, but rather irrelevant. It's obsolete. A hundred years ago, it functioned fine. So, let's talk about how we re-imagine, rethink, and redesign our educational system.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:00:47] This is Annalies Corbin with Learning Unboxed. And welcome back. I am excited as always, because we are going to have some more of our continuing conversations about the way that we can change the world by moving more girls, in particular, into amazing career opportunities, STEM and STEAM, and everything in between. And to join us today in that conversation, we have Tammy Wharton, who is the president and CEO for Girl Scouts of Ohio Heartland. And Girl Scouts of Ohio Heartland is a council that serves 20,000 girls in 30 Ohio counties. And that's just a wow factor. So, Tammy, welcome to the program.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:01:32] Thanks for having me.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:01:33] So, lots of folks are familiar with Girl Scouts in a sort of general sense, but I do want to sort of dig in a little bit. And I've always been very deliberate about sort of who and what we talk about on this program. And we have spent a lot of time this past year with this program leaning in to informal. And the things that the informal world of education and experience can bring to us and lend to us and sort of impact in the more formalized traditional sort of school or academic settings that we often think about when we contemplate learning, especially when we sort of get into all the STEM stuff.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:02:17] And so, Girl Scouts, like some of the other informals that we've been able to talk to, are having huge, huge impacts if we think about and leverage them and all the opportunities that there are. So, Tammy, I would like to start a little bit with, just tell us sort of about what you think about when you think about Girl Scouts. And why is it important both to you as a person, but to you as an organization?

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:02:46] Well, we're always talking about the relevance of Girl Scouts. And when people think about Girl Scouts, they always thought about the three Cs, historically. The cookies, crafts, and camping. And we try and change their minds to think about the three Cs of courage, confidence, and character, which are, it's our mission statement. And it's so important for those three Cs for girls to go into fields such as STEM and have the confidence to pursue the fields in ways that they haven't in the past. We talked, you said about leaning in for different ways of learning and we all know that many of us learn differently.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:03:22] And the classroom for me was not one that I excelled well in. It was more of the kinesthetic hands-on learning environment, which is what Girl Scouts is all about. Putting programs together in a way that girls want them and that they, sometimes, don't even realize that they're learning the skills that they're learning in the classroom. So, we're tying those skills together and teaching them and saying, "If you want to help someone, you can help somebody by learning robotics or learning engineering and many of the STEM fields and still accomplish what you want to accomplish." So, we do it in a way that it's specific for the girls.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:03:59] Let's talk a little bit because there's a part of the conversation, and you and I've had this piece of a conversation multiple times over the years. How do you ensure an organization such as a Girl Scouts is able to stay relevant? I mean, over time. And it's been around for a long time. So, clearly, it's figured out, as a big giant umbrella organization globally, how to do a lot of this. But on the local level, how do you maintain the relevance in a community that then allows you to do the amazing things that we're going to talk about that you do? Because lots of organizations struggle with that. I think Girl Scouts in many ways has done a better job than most with this, but it's still an ongoing effort.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:04:40] Well, one, it's been an effort over the years. And it's probably had its peaks and valleys over the years as far as individuals realizing what the relevance of girl scouting is. In 1912, when Girl Scouts was founded, we had an electrician badge. So, we've been into STEM, we've been into entrepreneurship. That little cookie program that we talk about.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:05:00] Yeah. That little cookie program.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:05:02] Yeah. And actually, it's the biggest social entrepreneurial program-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:05:05] Okay.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:05:05] ... for girls in the world.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:05:06] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:05:06] But it gets overlooked. And I think that that's the issue that we face. It's not one of, are we providing relevant programs, it's, are we branding it to the public, so they know the programs that we are providing? And giving them, I guess, the respect that they deserve in this world and how they meet the needs of today's girls.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:05:29] And again, it's an ongoing battle. But I think your point is really, really critical, is how do we help the public understand what this is today versus what it's not? And how to tap into it? And I think this is part of that sort of bigger social consciousness. And one of the reasons why on this program, and it's not at the exclusion of boys or any other programs, but we have dipped in and pulled organizations that are very specifically doing stuff with girls, with women, and minorities on purpose on this program.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:06:03] You know, as you said, it's really easy for this stuff to get overlooked. And I think it gets overlooked in the wake of all of this sort of social movement that's happening globally because no, I suppose most folks don't realize that the Girl Scout cookies is the single largest social entrepreneurship program on the globe. I mean, that's daunting and amazing and awing to say, much less think about.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:06:27] And it's an all-volunteer workforce, too, that's doing it. I mean-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:06:31] So, how many lessons could be learned from that if we really were to dissect it, right?

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:06:35] And it's amazing what our girls are doing and also, our volunteers. You can't do it without the support of caring adults. So, I don't want to forget them as well.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:06:45] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:06:45] But I think there's just so many different pieces that are going through my head as far as the relevance. A lot of individuals and our national CEO is a real-life rocket scientist. And she was the first Latino, and that's male or female, to get her systems engineering degree at Stanford University, master's in systems engineer. So, you can see how we're taking a pivot to more STEM careers.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:07:11] When you look at what's happening in the world, we're talking a lot about equity and we're talking a lot about women. And we know that the education of children are often predicated off of what the mother does. So, if we can get mothers in STEM jobs, which are good-paying jobs and get our girls in that workforce or that pipeline to get into the workforce, then think about the social changes that we can make because they're not worried about paycheck-to-paycheck.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:07:39] They're learning skills and really mastering skills that they've had all along, we just have to teach them in a way that they're understanding it. And boys and girls learn differently. So, I love that you're lifting girls up in this conversation. I've had many a conversations with CEOs in this community that are desperate for certain fields to be filled. And I said, if you're not getting to the girls in the formative years and we're talking kindergarten.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:08:08] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:08:09] We're talking third grade is when they're creating their STEM identity, which I know you know all the research for.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:08:14] Absolutely. Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:08:15] And so, if we're neglecting them in those formative years, we can't expect them to come around in high school or middle school and all of a sudden to say, "Oh, I'm good in STEM" or, "Oh, I'm good in math." And what does that really mean to them? But we need to teach them skills that they can fail at, which we say is our first attempt in learning.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:08:36] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:08:37] And then, they can get back up and try it again and try it again, because girls don't have to be perfect in this world. But that's part of that exploration process. And our programs are designed to be progressive programs starting at a young age, making sure that they have caring adults by their side, which are all things that research says are needed for success. And then, the other piece of the secret sauce is having women interact with our girls so that they can see it. As we always say, "If you can see it, you can be it." That, with the confidence, though.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:09:12] Right.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:09:12] Because if they don't have the confidence to begin with, they can't be anything. So, putting all of those pieces together, we call that our secret sauce, which is the Girl Scout leadership experience.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:09:24] And all of that made possible because, as an organization, Girl Scouts Global has a set of pillars that essentially, all the work that you do sort of rests upon. And these pillars, they're critical because they play not a role just in sort of your mission and vision, but your decision making. So, talk to us a little bit about the three pillars that you utilize, because that then gets us back eventually to the on the ground, the actual activities, the things that you are doing.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:09:56] And I want to be able to pull the lessons from the success with the activity and the inspiration and the hook, that engagement with those kiddos early on that then propels them to be a real rocket science and go off and lead Girl Scouts one day, right? That that is a progression that's possible, right? So, talk to us a little bit about the pillars and how you utilize the concepts from that in the decision making that you engage in.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:10:22] So, we're really focused on the programs that we're providing, because we don't want to be everything to everybody. We can't be everything to everybody. And that's why there's so many amazing organizations out there that also support girls and we look to partner with them. The pillars that we have, our STEM, which I'm sure we'll talk more about as we go forward, the outdoors.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:10:45] And I know a lot of people originally said, "Oh, Girl Scouts Camp", but they forget it now in today's world. They don't realize that Girl Scouts is all about adventure. Girls want to have adventure. They may be different. They may not be that different than boys, but we provide those activities. We also have that entrepreneurship program, which we talked about, which is coupled with financial literacy, because girls need to learn how to manage their money. And as they become adults, we know that that's one of the skills that a lot of women do not have or have not been experts in and need to be.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:11:22] And then, the life skills, the anti-bullying. Kids need to talk to each other, all kids. And with social media becoming as relevant today and the eight devices that they're on at one time, that's a problem. We talk behind screens. And so, those are key skills that we're not utilizing like we used to before these devices were developed. Not saying they're bad, but we need to be able to do both to make sure that we're productive in workplaces that are often multi-generational.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:11:52] Right. Right. You need to be able to look somebody in the eye and have a conversation with them.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:11:56] Absolutely. And not just like a two-word conversation.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:11:59] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:11:59] So-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:11:59] But it's tough. I mean, kids do struggle in that space, right? I mean, like you said, they have to grow competence and they have to practice. And the reality is they have to practice an awful lot of things in the business of growing up to be ready to go out into that world as that fully functional adult. So-

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:12:17] Absolutely. And I think one of the other things that research is showing is that this is the first generation that's been indoors more than outdoors. And so, think of the things that are going to happen because of that result. As a result of that, they're not all good.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:12:33] No, I hear you say that and all I want to go is, "Oh." That makes me really sad. And I thank you for that, because I've not thought about it like that. But that's a bit daunting to me to think about.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:12:47] Well, here's some other pieces that are always fun as we go out to camp and explore with girls for the first time. A lot of girls that are growing up in an urban center, we want to get them to the outdoors. We have a camp right here in Franklin County. And when they first went out there, they looked up at the trees and they go, "Are the trees real?" And we're like, "Are you kidding me? What are you saying?" And they're like falling down and leaves are on the ground and the branches aren't all pruned. We're used to perfect looking trees in an urban center.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:13:20] Setting. Right.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:13:21] And it boggled my mind. They don't know the smells of fresh-cut grass sometimes and the smells of the leaves falling. And just some of the things that you experience out at camp, they've not experienced. And some of it's cultural. We had a group of families, Latina families, come out and enjoy outdoor camping for the first time. When we say an outdoor camping experience, we don't throw girls into an overnight experience because it has to be a progression. You have to have a good first experience like in anything that they're doing in order to go for that second experience.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:13:57] And so, we had some girls that went to that day camping experience. And then, next, they went to a full-week of day camp. And then, just this year, five of the girls went to an overnight experience and had a great time. But just like all of our programs, they're very progressive, they start at introductions and then, move on to more advanced. I'd say also, our programs, one of the things, we talked about the Girl Scout leadership experience, that's what Girl Scouts is about. But the experience is in partnership with a lot of entities.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:14:31] Right.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:14:31] I know that we've had partnerships in the past.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:14:34] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:14:34] And that's what makes it so special. We always say powered by Girl Scouts, but we couldn't do it without great collaborators in our community. We aren't the experts on everything. When you talk about STEM, when you talk about some of the life skills, we need the experts to come in and help us. We'll overlay the Girl Scout leadership experience, but that's what makes Girl Scouts special and relevant today.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:14:59] And I think that then gets to one of the really awesome sort of initiatives that has been coming out of Girl Scouts. And to your point, it's actually been going on since the beginning, but we're putting new labels on it, right? It's that notion of the, does the work that Girl Scouts is very deliberately doing in STEM and by adding specific STEM badges, for example. For those who are familiar with Girl Scouts and the earning of badges, that's very important as part of the experience. And to your point, we have partnered, for example, with Girl Scouts on doing things like Minecraft, right?

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:15:33] Yes.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:15:33] And taking that and allowing the girls to sort of experience that component of it. And so, there's just so many different ways. So, talk to us a little bit about sort of the initiative as it relates to STEM. And what is the Girl Scouts, as an organization, really sort of doing and focusing with that? And maybe some of those stellar examples that I've heard you talk about before.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:15:58] So, we've released 150 badges recently. The majority of them in STEM. And we're talking about robotics. We're talking about engineering. We're talking about cyber security, hacking for good.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:16:10] It's awesome.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:16:11] It's incredible. And sometimes, it's daunting when people hear about these things.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:16:15] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:16:16] But imagine your smartwatch, your Apple Watch, your Fitbit, all of these different devices or your cellphone of today, if we do not have women around the table learning STEM skills and helping to promote and design these features, think about the jeopardy that the girls can be in. Their safety, for one. There's tracking devices with all of these items. So, how do we make it safer so that individuals that we don't want tracking us aren't tracking us for ill reasons. We are getting ready to release civics badges because civics is not in school as much anymore.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:16:53] In school anymore. Right, right.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:16:54] But who's going to look out for our national security? We want the women around the table to think differently than the men. And it's a complimentary thought process to bring everybody into the mix to look out for what we need in the future.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:17:10] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:17:10] So, those are just some of the badges, which are progressions. And in order to earn a badge, you have to master a skill.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:17:17] Right.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:17:17] And so, that's what makes those so specific. And those come from our national office. We also have journeys and these are some of the stories that I love. We have national partners. One of them being Raytheon. They partnered with us and they were working on some submarine designs. And they said, "Will you teach girls how to build boats in your race and that's how you do the program?" And our team said, "No."

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:17:40] No.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:17:41] That's not how you do the program. That's not how you get girls excited. Some girls will absolutely be excited with that. But other girls, not so much. So, our team went back and thought about how do we best do this? And they took corgi dogs, you know, the queen's dog with the little legs. And

you're talking about gravity and buoyancy when you're talking about building a boat. And so, you have to make your corgi dog float.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:18:06] So, the girls get to name the dog. And maybe this is a little grotesque, but they got to figure out how to keep their corgi dog from drowning. So, they create all these buoyancy and flotation devices to keep them afloat. And they learned the same skills. They learned them in a way that is designed specifically for them. And so, we get a great outcome. And then, we teach them as we're going along. Well, we're talking about the buoyancy, the gravity, and all those other pieces that they're learning along the way.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:18:37] Another example, which is my other favorite example, is there's a herd of elephants and their leaders are the matriarchs. So, of course, as a girls organization, I would love the elephants. And the matriarch elephant gets her leg caught in a snare. And in order to save the entire herd, they have to create a robotic limb for the elephant. And the creativity that girls come up with and they're helping, because that's what girls want to do. They want to help society, which is a great thing. They can do it through a lot of different careers. But why not in STEM?

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:19:17] Well, yeah, why not STEM? Yeah. I mean, it's in everything, right? And I guess oftentimes in this conversation, I always try to redirect folks back to that space, is that yeah, we talk about STEM. And at least in the US, it's because the Feds stuck a label on it.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:19:33] Right.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:19:33] And it's this great need. I mean, not to detract from it all. It is truly, truly this great need that we have not just in our country, but around the globe. And the greater diversity of participants, back to your point, means we have a better chance of asking all the right questions that we need to ask as things are designed and developed. But at the end of the day, there is STEM in absolutely everything.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:19:54] And the sad part is there's only 28 percent of women in STEM field.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:19:57] Correct.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:19:58] And that is not in the leadership.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:20:00] Right.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:20:00] So, we're roughly half the population and 28 percent in all STEM fields. And in some, it's like 3 percent, aeronautical engineering.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:20:08] Aviation, 3 percent.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:20:10] Aviation. Yeah.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:20:11] Yeah, yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:20:11] And so, you sit there and you go, "Wait a minute. What are we doing? When we talk about building a future workforce, if we're ignoring half that workforce, then we're not able to reach our best case scenarios for our workforce or for the companies that they work for or for our girls.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:20:29] And the reality of it is, too, and I think that your example of the corgi, in particular, sort of brings this home. And I pushed on it a little bit only from the senses, like the sort of next phase of that, you're getting the girls to engage from the get go, like you said, to come in and we're gonna show you how to build a boat. And a few girls will be excited about that, but many more will be like, "I don't really want to build a boat." And they don't know why they don't want to build a boat. And they don't even know why building a boat doesn't appeal to them. They just know, "I'm not really interested in that."

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:21:00] But the minute you turned it into, but we've got to keep this corgi afloat, so it doesn't drown, right? It was a game changer. And that is all about the engagement, right? And it's taking all to your point. All the same concepts in saying, "I'm going to throw a hook at this thing, so it will stick." Because if it sticks and you get all the way through to getting your corgi clear across the pond without sinking to the bottom and some tragic mishap of corginess, at the end of the day, then after that, you can have the conversation, "Now, let's build a boat."

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:21:33] And just building on that piece of it-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:21:35] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:21:35] ... having these activities that are not in a classroom, they're outside, they're hands on, just maybe, when they get into the classrooms, the concepts will connect. And that's what it is. It's getting those connections so that they can do the skills, learn the skills and then, connect the skills. That's what learning is all about. And it's not either or.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:21:56] Right. Right.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:21:57] It's and. And so, we have to do all of these different types of learning in order to really excel at these skills.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:22:04] And we see that over and over again. And I think that's a really, really important point that you make, that what is happening in that informal setting can be the catalyst. And it can be the aha moment. I mean, you want them to happen in both places, don't get me wrong, but sometimes, like you said, it doesn't. Sometimes, you just need to see that concept again in a different setting for it to finally all connect for you. And so, you know, the beauty of what I think happens and a lot of these informal environments, the reality of that is, is there's this awesome opportunity for informal.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:22:38] Not only to influence or to reinforce what's happening in the formal, but literally, to sort of help sort of transition. Especially right now, as more and more of the formal education, as we really think about what should education look like in the 21st century, this moment and moving forward, not like it was, right? But we're still wrestling with, if it's not like it was, but what should it be? And my encouragement to all those in those formal spaces is, look to the success of informal. There's a reason informal, A, that it's out there and it's so popular. And it's because the way it engages the learner.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:23:24] And research proves that.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:23:26] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:23:26] And that's the thing.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:23:27] Over and over again.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:23:28] Yeah. And so, I think a lot of people are like, "Oh, that's nice. There's extracurricular activities." But there is the research that says that girls, and they obviously are researchers in girls-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:23:38] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:23:38] ... but girls involved in extracurricular activities. And of course, Girl Scouts fare better not only in the present, but in the future. So, those instances that they've had benefit them for a lifetime.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:23:49] Right. Right. And it not just only benefits them, it benefits everything around them, right? Back to your point earlier-

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:23:57] And the community and-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:23:57] ... they're asking a different set of questions. They're asking for decisions to be made from a different perspective and point of view. And so, once again, you know, the greater diversity of participants in anything that we're working on is just going to lend itself to a greater place.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:24:12] And it's interesting because other research, and I love the research because it backs up what we're trying to do, it says that girls learn better in an all girls environment. It also says that boys learn better when girls are in that environment.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:24:26] Right.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:24:26] And so, you know, what is your objective? That's what you've got to think about. You know, are you trying to do programming specifically for girls so that they can excel or are you trying to help boys excel and create that community piece? So, you just have to figure out what you're trying to accomplish.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:24:42] And then, which resources you're going to draw on? And so-

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:24:46] Correct.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:24:46] ... let's talk a little bit about the resource piece, because I know that this will be a question that gets asked, especially for those who only understand Girl Scouts as this thing over here, back to your point, this extracurricular, this thing on the side. So what, if any, process exists to take Girl Scouts and enmesh and embed it in more formal spaces? And we haven't talked about this. So, could just be sort of a giant lob that I'm tossing at you, but that's an intriguing thing. How do we take the success of what Girl Scouts is doing? And I know, for example, locally, there has been some tangential conversations with school districts around, "Okay. What might that be?".

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:25:32] Because the reality is some schools are really, really looking for that engagement factor to be infused across what they're doing. And how can or should they do that? And whether it's a Girl Scouts or it's 4-H or some other great thing that's happening in the smallest community, how did you go about doing that? How do you craft the partnerships? Because back to one of things you said earlier, you don't do any of this stuff on your own because you need all these other folks involved in your ecosystem. So, how does evolving local ecosystem work?

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:26:04] Well, I love the analogy. We don't need to think outside the box, we need to recreate the box. And that means from the school systems to what we're doing, to what any organization is doing, it needs to be partnerships and we need to meet girls and youth where they are. So, it doesn't mean a one size fits all kind of an approach. And where Girl Scouts was in the past is very different than where we are today.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:26:30] And so, a lot of our volunteers, we deliver program through volunteerism and troops, but we also do outreach, we go into the schools, we do formal education. And now, we're looking to partner with different organizations because we don't want to be this type of organization that everybody stereotypes. We want to reach across all girls in our communities and populations. And so, it's important that we start partnering with other organizations in ways that we've not done before.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:27:02] We've done a lot of different programs, but we started an initiative called Dream Big. And it's powered by Girl Scouts. And I'm very intentional to say, it's powered by Girl Scouts and it's called Dream Big because it's as big as we can imagine. So, we're talking to school districts right now. And so, we're saying, "Okay, you have buildings and you have certain spaces, but you don't have 220 acres of outdoor space.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:27:28] Our girls are in school, most of our girls are in school during the school day, why don't we partner and make this part of your educational experience? The outdoor experience, the hands-on experience during the day and then, we use it on the weekends when our girls are able to utilize it." But it's really thinking differently. It's not, "That's mine. That's yours." How does different assets become ours for the betterment of the community?

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:27:54] And that's what Dream Big is. And I said earlier, we don't want to be the experts in everything or the experts in girls and how to provide programming specific to girls that they're going to react to. But if we can couple with organizations that are experts, PAST Foundation, Battelle, and I'm saying for profits, nonprofits, institutions, and create the programs that are specific to our youth, then we can create a lot of solutions. Workforce development solutions. That's big right now.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:28:26] And we have to think further out, too. I know that a lot of times, we're used to instant gratification, but we're not going to get instant gratification in the workforce. So, how do we grow our own experts and keep them in that pipeline from kindergarten through 12th so that they're going into the fields that are those in-demand jobs. Whether it be a two-year education, four-year education, trade school, it doesn't matter, but we have to make sure that we're keeping them in that pipeline throughout the entire school times.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:28:57] We do. And just to be really clear with our listeners, so Dream Big is not just an idea or a concept. It's tied to a place, but not limited by place.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:29:09] Yes.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:29:10] Right. So, share just a little bit about the Dream Big concept for our folks, because it's a brand new initiative. I know it's bright and shiny. You're just launching it out. And so, help folks understand what are the components or the key pieces of it? And then, how might folks tap into that?

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:29:30] So, to back up, Girl Scouts of the USA, which is our national headquarters, they put out an initiative to put 2.5 million girls in the STEM pipeline by 2025.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:29:40] Yay!

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:29:41] And so, that's exciting.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:29:42] Yes.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:29:43] That's where the STEM badges came from and the journeys that we've talked about.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:29:47] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:29:47] But what are we doing locally and what kind of programming are we partnering with to provide for girls locally? What are the needs locally? They're very different than when you're doing something for a national group. And so, that's where Dream Big came out of, we held a national conference in 2017 and had 10,000 people come to Columbus. And it kind of whetted our appetite to what can we do next and more for the girls that didn't get to participate in that week-long of activities?

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:30:17] And we went to a STEM camp in Texas and said, "You know what, we could do something like this right here in our camp in Columbus." It's in Franklin County. There's a lot of population right here. It's one of the few places that the population is growing in our city. And there's a lot of needs. And so, we laughed and I love Texas. They've shared a lot of different things with us. And then we say, "Texas does it big and we're going to do a better." I joked with them, but they were on the bleeding edge of figuring it out because they've been open for a year now.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:30:52] And they've shared all the great things that happened and the challenges so that we can be on the leading edge. So, I'm grateful to our sister councils in Texas, in northeast Texas, that helped start this initiative. And that's where Dream Big came out of. And it's how do we create a living laboratory where we have activities happening? We have scientists on site and we have a lot of individuals coming and utilizing that property or we take the programs out to the schools so that they can learn about, it's a lot of STEM pieces.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:31:25] It is. It's a lot of stuff. I'm really excited about it, because I can't wait to roll up our sleeves and play. Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:31:30] Well, we talked about urban settings and getting fresh vegetables, that's huge, the food scarcity, and everything. What if we teach our youth how to grow vegetables growing up and the hydroponic piece of it so that they can have fresh vegetables no matter where they live?

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:31:49] Right.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:31:49] And so, there's a lot of partners that are doing that already in the for profit sector. You can think of a couple of them off the top of your head. So, how do we bring them in so that they can help us develop our programs and then, we take the programs out to the girls and to the youth. And then, we can also fuel food pantries and help others. So, as you said earlier, it's not just about teaching skills and girls so that they can get in these career paths that are amazing, but it's building a better community.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:32:19] It is. And at the end of the day, that's really, really critical because one of the things that we know very, very much already, especially as it relates to Gen Z is that yes, it's the first generation that spent more time inside and outside, that still blows my mind to me, Tammy, but also, it's a

generation that very much needs what they do to be important to them. And I say important and not about them. It's not about the world has to be about me that we're actually seeing a nice shift finally, right?

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:32:53] Right. Right.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:32:54] So, it's not that. It's really that it has to be and it is more than just a social cause. I mean, this is a group of folks that care about social justice, they care about equity, they care about inclusion.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:33:06] Sustainability.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:33:06] Sustainability is everything.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:33:06] Yeah, our environment.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:33:07] They care about the environment in ways that we haven't seen in a really, really long time. And so, it's a generation that wants community. And maybe that's the way to really sort of think about it. They crave community and it doesn't even have to be community in the traditional sense. They seem to have a knack for crafting community based on the diversity and the resources and the things that they have in ways I've not seen kids do in a long time. So, it's intriguing to me.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:33:34] Well, I'm blessed to work with a lot of the girls on different programs. And getting the girls' voices in there is so critical because that's how we know what they're interested in so that we can build the programs around those pieces and parts. And we're thinking about programming differently than we ever have before and we have to think about it in multifaceted level, because what do our companies need in the future? And what do the girls want of today? And how do we bridge that gap so that we're teaching skills, we're working with collaborators to accomplish all of those pieces, so that we're, in essence, filling their buckets? Both through skills and through their personal social society pieces that they want to make better, make the world a better place.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:34:22] And the other thing, too, that's really interesting and I think we have to be mindful of, and I'll use this sort of as the mechanism that leads us down our wrapping sort of our conversation today, is so a wonderful colleague and well-regarded futurist Heather McGowan, I was in Santa Fe with her a couple weeks ago, listening to her talk about the work that she does around workforce and that the future of work is learning.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:34:45] And I agree wholeheartedly with almost everything I've ever seen Heather working on. And one of the things that she was talking about the other day that I thought, "Holy moly, man, we need to make sure that we do not lose sight of this." It was the reminder that the kids that we are serving today, right? That their work life expectancy. So, their contribution, their actual intellectual and social contribution into the world we live in via their work is as a timeline that has them working solidly and contributing through their mid-70s.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:35:24] Wow.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:35:25] So, think about the fact that when we were in school, right? We were working towards a notion that our work life ended at mid-50s. There's 20 more years of working productivity for these folks. And we're still functioning in a system that's not preparing our workforce to accept and be a working workforce into that space. And so, we're suddenly finding ourselves with this group of folks that still have a lot

to do and how to do it meaningfully. And we're crafting this entire generation that is going to be thinking about work very differently than we've ever thought about it before.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:36:06] When I think about how far technology has come, I mean-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:36:09] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:36:09] ... I think that's one of the biggest changes in our lifetime-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:36:12] Yeah

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:36:12] ... that we've seen. And so, by the time these youth that are going into the workforce are 70, how is the workforce going to change and how are we going to keep up with all of those changes? So, while they're working to that point, are there bricks and mortar buildings that they work from? Who knows? Are we teleporting at this point? I'd like to do something about that traffic out there. So, maybe that'll be resolved by the time they're 70, I don't know.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:36:37] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:36:37] But we have to think about, again, do we meet the youth where they are today? But also, think one-eyed to the future, because it's not going to be the same that it's been. It's going to be a very different world of work as well. And so, how do we make sure that we're bringing girls and boys to the table so that we can get the best of the best in our communities and resolve a lot of these issues that are out there, societal issues that I think this generation is going to help solve?

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:37:06] Oh, I think absolutely. And I think it's intriguing because they are truly thinking about the world very differently. One of the episodes that we've done was an interview with a gentleman by the name of Russell Stevens, who was from the Two Oceans Aquarium down in South Africa. And one of the most remarkable things that he said in that episode, Learning Unboxed and then, it's still sort of haunting to me, but I think also indicative of the same conversation. He has a 14-year old daughter, right?

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:37:37] So, right in the mix of this Gen Z group we're talking about, who said to him, "You know, dad, you're going to die of old age. I'm going to die from global warming." So, this generation is thinking about the fact that the clock is ticking for them in a way that it's been a very, very long time in cycles of human evolution and generations that we have. And they have a very different endpoint in mind. And they are, "We are going to save the planet", right? They're going to-

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:38:10] And they're going to-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:38:10] Think about the complexities of that.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:38:13] ... resolve cancer.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:38:13] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:38:13] They're going to cure cancer.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:38:14] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:38:14] And it's amazing how many strides have been made in all these other medical challenges. I believe that that is probably true, because I think that we will see a cure for cancer at some point or at least, some of the some of the cancers. And I'm hoping it'll be a Girl Scout that-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:38:30] That does it?

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:38:31] ... does that. Of course. And then, says, "Yes, look what I learned. I got my start making antibiotics in a camp program way back when with some of the other medical centers around town that helped create the program."

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:38:43] I got myself a pharmacy badge, who knows, right?

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:38:47] There you go. That's right. And who knows what those badges will be of the future?

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:38:49] Exactly. And we can't know. In reality, you're right. The rate and pace of technology and change right now, it's not that things haven't always been changing, it's the rate and pace-

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:38:58] Correct.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:38:58] ... is such that we've never seen before. And so, it means lots of things. And Girl Scouts will be right in the thick of things, I have no doubt.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:39:06] And we'll be reaching out and partnering with all of the entities here, too. Because again, we can't make the community better-

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:39:12] Yeah.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:39:12] ... by ourselves. And again, we'll say powered by Girl Scouts, we'll overlay the Girl Scout leadership experience, but what do they say? It takes a village. And so, it's going to take a village to resolve the problems that we have and the challenges that we face. And I believe that we have the youth to do it.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:39:30] We do. And they're awesome young women.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:39:33] Absolutely.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:39:34] Thank you so much, Tammy, for being with us today.

**Tammy Wharton:** [00:39:37] Thank you for having me.

**Annalies Corbin:** [00:39:42] Thank you for joining us for Learning Unboxed, conversation about teaching, learning, and the future of work. I want to thank my guests and encourage you all to be part of the conversation. Meet me on social media at Annalies Corbin and join me next time as we stand up, step back, and lean in to re-imagine education.