My Own Experiences with STEM

When I entered medical school nearly three decades ago in Korea, female students weren’t just judged against others in their class, but also against each other. With very few spots for women in post-graduate residency programs, where we stood in our class and in relation to one another were both valued metrics. It created competitive intensity that I had not experienced before, and makes me truly appreciate how far women have come—how far I have come!

For me, being a woman in STEM means that I can do what I enjoy doing—satisfying my intellectual curiosity and being able to do this work and get paid for it! Not being able to do what I enjoy doing, simply because I was a woman, would have been quite upsetting for me.

So, I would say to those who have found their footing within STEM, consider reaching out to others who are trying to find their way in. And if someone reaches out to you, make time for them.

I’ve been super lucky, and I am so grateful to be where I am now in my career. At this point in my career, people don’t really care about my gender; they care about my qualifications and skills as a lawyer. I’ve worked with clients at the heart of the response to COVID-19, from clients active with therapeutics, to vaccines, to even offering advice regarding the mask-supply chain.

I work on integrating artificial intelligence and machine-learning platform technologies to new drug discoveries and surgical robots. I also help clients develop sustainable alternatives to meat. I am grateful to be working with all of our amazing clients, including pro bono clients, and for the small role that I’m playing in helping them. Even if nobody knew my name or what my role was in a particular instance, I’d know that I was able to contribute strategic, thoughtful, and meaningful legal advice. That is good work!