



Hard Work and Courage

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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When my granddaughter Janaya graduated from high school in Saskatoon the school gave her a one-thousand-dollar scholarship for university. She is intelligent but also has an amazing work ethic and invests a lot of time into her studies. Intelligence plus hard work are a good formula for doing well.

Even though she played the piano beautifully and was a good artist, she decided that she wanted to study engineering. Not everyone encouraged her in this choice as there is an occupational gender bias in the field. In fact, statistics indicate that less than ten percent of registered engineers in Saskatchewan are woman.

Janaya's age could have held her back as she entered the program at the University of Saskatchewan right out of high school.

She didn't come from a wealthy family, had been afraid to apply for scholarships at first and knew that she would have to work to help fund the education.

What she didn't lack was determination. She worked in a breakfast restaurant and then figured out that taking a mixology course would allow her to earn better tips in the service industry. She found some summer employment in a greenhouse type setting.

And all the time she was in classes she worked and studied and worked and studied.

Finally, in her early twenties she was just about ready to graduate with a degree in Engineering, but she couldn't attend the convocation ceremony. You see she had found a job with a tractor company and had created a plan with her employer to travel to Europe in order to engineer a project for them which would help her qualify for a Master's in Engineering degree.

Janaya headed off to Belgium for three months by herself! I can't really tell you what she did for the employer because frankly I don't understand it (I'm not an engineer). What I do know though is what I learned through her regular posts. Every weekend for three months, Janaya would have an adventure and her blogs were filled with photos of the many countries that she visited. Now remember this is a twenty-two-year-old student with limited cash, employer expectations and assignments to complete.

She's back in Saskatoon now and writing up the required paperwork to complete the two-year degree that she is expecting to earn in one year. Oh, and don't think that she is planning to rest just yet. Her mother recently informed me that Janaya is considering making an application for a doctoral program.

I remember asking Janaya a couple of years ago what the long-term goal would be. At that time, she said "aerospace engineering"! Don't know if that will happen but, in the meantime, she is in the very small group of female engineers in Saskatchewan on her way to the Master's in Engineering degree. And she has toured Europe!

The next time you find yourself saying "I can't do this" think again!

Thanks, Janaya, for your wonderful example. You are an inspiration to all of us.