**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Welcome to “The Business of Doing Science” podcast brought to you by Bagamian Scientific Consulting. On this podcast we discuss different aspects of pursuing science related careers and just how science is actually done beyond the bench. So stay tuned to find out more.

Welcome to "The Business of Doing Science". I'm Karoun Bagamian, and I am joined by my co-hosts, Lindsey Laytner and Heidi Bolduc. In this episode, we're excited to welcome Lynn Griffin, who will share her remarkable career journey from population genetics to her current role as a principal scientist in the medical devices industry. We're eager to hear about the experiences and insights that have shaped her path.

Welcome, Lynn. Can you start by telling us a little bit about yourself?

**Lynn Griffin:** Thanks for having me. My name's Lynn Griffin. I am currently the principal for our scientific affairs group in electrophysiology at Boston Scientific.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Great. Did you always think that's what you would do? Or did you have other ideas before?

**Lynn Griffin:** No, for sure. So many of the jobs that I've had since graduate school are things that I had really no idea that I could do or that I would do. I think as a graduate student, especially at Emory, I think that we were exposed a lot to jobs in infectious diseases, being so close to the CDC campus. We were exposed to your traditional lecturer or professor track, but I think that we didn't have as much exposure to what positions in industry would be appropriate for people in graduate school in the sciences.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah, let's talk a little bit more about that time. So let's say you graduated from our program, you have your PhD in population biology. What was next then for you?

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah, so I did the traditional route. So I did my three years of postdoc at Emory also. After that, actually during graduate school, I met my now husband. And while I was a postdoc, we were trying to figure out, what's the next step of our lives together look like?

We both had family on the West Coast and being in Atlanta, we knew that we wanted to come back. So every year or so we would say, okay, "What jobs are you applying for?" "What jobs are you applying for?" And to really align two jobs in the same place, when you have two different, two same careers-- it's hard, period, regardless of what you or your partner does.

And so at a certain point, when I was nearing the end of my postdoc, we just made the decision that If he finds a job in a place where we want to live, we're going there. I'll finish my postdoc, and I'll find something when we land.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah. Thank you for telling us about that because I think that's really common for a lot of people. And I know that was an issue for me too-- where I want to live, you want to live where you want to live and finding your own job and then two jobs in the same place makes it really difficult.

**Lindsey Laytner:** It can definitely be a huge stressor, yeah.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yep.

After your postdoc, what did you do next?

**Lynn Griffin:** We moved from Atlanta to Santa Barbara, California. And this was a place we wanted to live. And that's a struggle too, right guys? Because if you're moving with a partner or with a family, you not only want to find a place where you guys can both move together, but also ideally a place where you actually want to live.

And then also, to add into that a place that you can afford to live.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** Is also a really big deal. So, we moved out there, my postdoc had ended shortly after we moved, and I was pregnant with my second child. I had my first child when I was a postdoc, and I was in a position where I think a lot of moms are, where you feel like your brain's not working correctly.

I think some of you know about that.

**Lindsey Laytner:** I know about that!

**Lynn Griffin:** And you also feel like you're not really marketable.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** I think that is an unfortunate reality. I moved out to Santa Barbara about five months pregnant. If I'm interviewing, people are going to see that I'm pregnant, right? This was before remote jobs.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** And that was a really big struggle for me. And when my son was born, I did not have a position by that time. I actually spent about a year and a half not having a job. And that was really hard because I stayed home with our two kids, and I felt like my husband got to go to his job every day, take a little vacation.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Right?

**Lynn Griffin:** And it was so stressful for me. My parents are Vietnamese immigrants and we were always raised to, okay, get educated, get a good job, make a lot of money so then you can be comfortable. And I wasn't in that position. I was at home doing what I perceived at the time to be very little in terms of contribution. And also it wasn't what I wanted to do. It was really, really difficult. So it was a really difficult time.

And Santa Barbara is not really known for its industry. So I ended up applying for a position as a lecturer at UCSB. And this is, I know that there's like the research professor position, but there's also lecturer position, which is also pretty common, but maybe not as well known to us who take that graduate school route because we're all mentored by people who do research.

But I became a lecturer and I ran courses to help support our Intro to Bio students. Our Intro to Bio students at UCSB had an incredibly high dropout rate from the major. And many of them weren't graduating within four years. And a big hurdle for that was Intro to Bio. And so these courses were intended to support those students to succeed within the Bio major.

And after a year, while I was at UCSB, a friend of mine had encouraged me to look into SciComms-- that's science communications. And she had her own business and what I didn't realize as a graduate student was that apparently there are labs out there that have enough money that they do contract out some of the work.

It made so much sense! And whether that's work in data analysis or work in writing. There's also some people who may not speak English as a first language, and so, they need support in writing. That was something that always came really easy for me as a graduate student. And so, she threw me a couple of projects and said, "You know, just try it. I know you've got two babies at home. You've got this lectureship position. Life is feeling like a little bit of a struggle for you, but I think this would be a really great fit."

And I tried it, and I really liked it, and I felt like I was good at it. And so that was my first transition to being like, "Okay, maybe I can do this. What jobs can I apply for?" And so that led to me applying for a lot of jobs. I think that's one thing that's really hard. I think as a graduate student, especially you are used to for lack of a better phrase, like, winning, like, you know, you, you, well, I mean, I guess, right, so graduate student,

**Lindsey Laytner:** Actually, that probably tracks.

**Lynn Griffin:** Maybe that says something about my experience as a graduate student.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** I love it though, that's hilarious.

**Lindsey Laytner:** And also perfectionism. And you're just, like, you know that you can do it. So you just, you aim for it and typically get it.

**Lynn Griffin:** You get a lot of support, people rally around you. So my graduate advisor was incredibly supportive. And not to say I didn't have bad experiences in graduate school, but my graduate advisor was really supportive. I felt very nurtured, and I felt that I had a really good cohort of students around me to help me succeed.

And yeah, I failed a lot. Karoun knows that. I cried a lot.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Who doesn't in grad school?

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah. That builds you into the person that you are. So, there's no shame in that.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah, for sure. Now I forgot where I was.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** No worries. So, you're talking about getting experience in Sci Comms and then applying for a lot of jobs.

**Lynn Griffin:** Oh, applying for jobs.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah. Everyone's favorite topic.

**Lynn Griffin:** You know what though? I have gotten so used to applying for jobs all the time.

I was talking to my sister about an interview process and applying for jobs . And she gave me some advice and I was like, "I'm not sure if I can take advice from you. You've had the same job for like almost 15 years now." And then to give myself my own like credibility, I was like, "I've had four jobs in the past 10 years." She was like, "I don't know if that's a good thing or not."

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** It's certainly more common now, that's for sure.

**Lindsey Laytner:** I think it's the norm now.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** It is the norm now. Most people do change jobs. I mean, your sister's in a unique situation, and she still likes her job. I think that's a miracle in itself. Either way, that's awesome.

She got the golden grail or whatever. Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah, that's uncommon to find a job that you're going to want to stay at considering all of the changes that can happen in a job. You're going to be faced with applying for jobs and a lot of jobs and frequently. I think, especially now, everyone's like, the pace of industry is moving so quickly.

**Lindsey Laytner:** I think sometimes people just outgrow the positions, too. So it's good to always keep that in mind, too. That sometimes it might be your time to actually to move on.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** That's right.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah, it's true. So, after I was a lecturer, I worked in Sci Comms with Amgen, which is a company based out of Thousand Oaks. At the time, my kids were still really little, and that commute was 45 minutes at least each way. And that was really hard. I made it work for a little over a year, but in the end, it wasn't working with my life.

So how it was with like trying to coordinate my partner and moving to a place we wanted to move to. It was the same thing. So, how can I find a job that meets what I need and what my family needs right now?

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** And then, the job I had after that was a remote job. Thank God. Uh, so that was, changed everything, right? My first remote position was 2017, and I have not worked in an office since then.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Hell yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** So, COVID transition, not a problem because I was already there, but like you were saying, Lindsey, that first job that I had was with a company that does evaluations of medical technologies. And so, all we're doing every day is writing reports, and we didn't need to be in an office, and the whole company was remote. We kind of knew how to do it. We knew the drill. And that position was one that I did grow out of. That was our job is to write reports, comparing this new technology to our standard of care, and literally just iterating that for each new technology. And there's only so much you can grow in that, even though the demand doesn't really evolve.

So I evolved, but that job remained the same. And after that, I went to go work for Edwards, which is a heart valve company based in Irvine. And I also did Sci Comms there. And that was super fun. It was super fun to get back into research.

I think Sci Comms can be sometimes just the writing support, but at least with that position, a lot of it was the research itself and coordinating with our statisticians, understanding what important questions to ask, designing those studies with the data that we have, or prospectively informing studies.

And that was really interesting. That kind of got me back into more like primary science pursuits rather than, I guess what I did before was really more synthesis of the current clinical data landscape.

So, after Edwards, I moved to the position I'm in now that marries that strategy with evidence.

So our company... we just launched a new cardiac ablation tool earlier this year, and this is the first time that it's been available on the US market. It's been available in Europe for three years. And now introducing it into the US is a very different economical landscape. It's a very different treatment landscape, and understanding how to navigate those challenges and use scientific data to address the challenges and influence physicians and payers is part of my position now.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah. Sounds pretty awesome. It's mixing a lot of skills, and a lot of knowledge together. Which kind of leads me to my next question. So, the skills that you're applying in your job today, did some of those come from your degree, right? Because this is something so different than what you were doing then, which is by the way, the behavioral genetics of songbirds, correct?

**Lynn Griffin:** Yes.

**Lindsey Laytner:** A wee bit different.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Uh huh. Yeah. Just a little bit different, right?

**Lynn Griffin:** I think I've heard this in your other episodes, too, is that in graduate school you learn to think and you learn to read, and you learn to be critical of your work, of other people's work, and to ask the questions that will lead you to meaningful answers to address something that's not known, right?

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** That's right.

**Lynn Griffin:** So I think that skill for sure, being able to read a paper and grab whatever I need from it in just a couple minutes, I think is very important.

I think another thing that I learned in graduate school is not just that quick reading of a paper, but also that deep reading, where you compare studies and maybe you weren't involved in these studies, but your job is to say, okay, what can we critique from here? What was done well? What was not? And to be able to say that for a scientific study. For example, if you look at the way certain clinical trials are designed, let's say we have a product and we have our first big randomized trial, and another company also performs a similar randomized trial with their product, but their endpoints are designed differently.

And so you can really begin to understand how you can manipulate the endpoints so that the data can say one thing over another, right? So if we define failure in one way, you may bias that finding towards one product over another, and it's really important to me as a scientist to be able to see that and communicate it because as somebody who works for a company, I feel like my responsibility as a scientist is to speak very openly about that and to say, maybe our endpoints have not been designed well, or other people's endpoints haven't been designed well, but it's not a matter of pointing it out and saying, oh, you did this wrong. It's a matter of let's discuss what this actually means, like what meaning can we take away from this data and what meaning can't we take away?

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** In this case, it sounds like all data analysis and comprehension and synthesis skills from grad school has come in really handy for your current job. Are there other skills that you had that you think apply and helped you excel at your job, which I know you are because you're awesome.

**Lynn Griffin:** PowerPoint.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Mm-hmm

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Hey, I think sometimes people don't think about how important presentations can be. Yeah.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Microsoft Office Suite.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yes.

**Heidi Bolduc:** No, never underestimate the power of PowerPoint, because as a trainer, I know how to do almost anything in PowerPoint.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** That's good to know. I'm like,

**Heidi Bolduc:** Because think about it, I'm building trainings in there, I'm presenting trainings in there, there's all these little tricks you learn along the way.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah, totally.

**Lynn Griffin:** Oh yeah. PowerPoint and Excel.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah. Actually, I remember that. I actually always remember your presentations because mine, I know back then were not very beautiful, but yours were always pretty great. Actually, me and her were comparing our presentations the other day just for fun to show each other. Look, look what I did.

**Lindsey Laytner:** I love that.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** It was just funny.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah, so you think about, I even think about like weird things like, do you remember how PowerPoints used to be all blue with the yellow font? And then if I see anyone use Times New Roman, I'm just like, this person has got to be like, like 80 years old, I hope none of you guys use Times New Roman. But then I feel like in graduate school, there was a transition to like black writing on white slides.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** Don't know if it was like a regional thing or what.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** And then I'm sure you know this, Heidi, with like corporate stuff, they want you to use like specific branding. And so they have the standard slides. Some of them are on like the slide master, and then, you have to figure out how to change those.

**Heidi Bolduc:** And it's like, here's the font we want you to use, here's the exact color it has to be, here's the logo. Yeah, our marketing team is very specific about that. I think part of the reason is because they paid an outside company to design the new logo, the new colors, the new everything. So they're like, we have to use it guys.

**Lynn Griffin:** Oh yeah. Yeah. We have, and Edwards was like this too. Boston has a whole brand team, where we want this to be consistent, right? It's really bad if you're using different company colors for a scientific presentation versus marketing. It's not really bad, but it just doesn't look cohesive.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** It doesn't look professional. Yeah, they want it to be consistent across everything.

What are some soft skills or personal characteristics that you think help you in your current job?

**Lynn Griffin:** So, in my current job, I do a lot of crossfunctional interactions. This is all corporate lingo, guys.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** I love it. Teach us. Teach us. I like learning kind things.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah. I'm like, what is that?

**Lynn Griffin:** it means that because I'm the point person for determining our scientific strategy. For example, I primarily work on a product called Ferripulse, and we have data from clinical trials. We have data that is going to be published independently. So physicians might want to know, "Hey, how does it perform against this competitive product?"

We know that there are data that are going to be published with our product. And so how do we take what is known, what we don't know, and what we would like to know, like what the company itself is interested in investing in, how can we take that and communicate that as our strategy, both internally and externally?

How can we communicate to physicians that we still are committed to doing basic science to understand the disease and disease treatment, while we're also trying to develop products to meet the patient need.

So, I do a lot of talking with our upstream strategy people, the people in the field who are talking to the physicians, people who are our representatives to get physicians engaged with research with us, either at the R & D stage or at the commercial stage, where a physician may say, "Hey, I've got this research idea. Would you be interested in funding it?"

I interact with a lot of different people. And I think probably the biggest soft skill for me is listening to people and asking questions and trying to understand what they're thinking before having a reaction to it.

I think I've learned that it's been really important for this position because I'm dealing with people coming from so many different backgrounds.

I think when I was in Sci Comms, where the goal is to publish a paper on this topic, the people who you interact with are a lot more focused, but it's more important here for me to listen because I'm interacting with so many people who I don't know 100 percent of what they're doing every day. So, giving that time to understanding different people's positions.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Super cool. Yeah, well, as I'm sure you guys can tell, Lynn's always been a very personable person, too, so it probably comes in pretty handy...

**Lynn Griffin:** oh man.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** in this job.

**Lynn Griffin:** man, politics, you guys, there's always going to be office politics and just like knowing, you know what, sometimes people just need somebody to listen to. If they're complaining to you about somebody, they don't want you to do anything. They don't want you to go tell that other person, try to solve the problem. Everyone needs an outlet.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Just let it roll.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** that's right.

**Heidi Bolduc:** I would say I experienced that a lot being a trainer, too. Because I'm constantly, I'm going to what we call subject matter experts, to build the trainings. Yeah. And then they're trying to explain all this to me, and this is what we need to focus on, and this is how we use the software. I really have to just kind of sit there and ask a lot of questions and figure it out to help me build the best training I can.

**Lynn Griffin:** And you probably think about what audience you're talking to when you have training. And the same for me. So, when I'm talking to a physician, how we talk is very different from when I'm talking to a marketing person or when I'm talking to our economics team. So it's always important to keep someone else's perspective in mind and how they receive the information that you're trying to communicate.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Were there any skills or knowledge or something else that you wish you had before you started this current job?

**Lynn Griffin:** I think probably more patience. Karoun, you know I'm not a patient person. I like things to happen the way I want them to happen when I want them to happen.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Don't we all?

**Lynn Griffin:** I think sitting in discomfort was not a skill that I had before.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah, interesting.

**Lynn Griffin:** And so...

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Now you're able to do that more.

**Lynn Griffin:** I think so. I think having more exposure to challenging situations personally and professionally and just being like, it's okay, you don't have to do something about this, I was always like, raised, like, be proactive.

I think probably a lot of people who went to graduate school are those kinds of people.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** But just knowing that there are times when it's okay to have inaction and sometimes things will sort themselves out, I think is a better skill to have for somebody working in a larger company because you really can't triage everything.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah. Your brain might explode while trying. Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Do you think there's a particular degree or trajectory that could help someone or get into the job that you have?

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah, so I definitely know for our Sci Comm and Sci Affairs teams, everyone on our team has a PhD. So for sure that, but I have been in other companies where that's not the case. However, our team is actually quite big. I think we have for our broader cardiology group, we have more than 15 writers and scientific affairs people. And that's important. I think clarity in science communication, of course, is important.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Being able to do that-- being a good science communicator, basically through writing and orally, too. Do you think that's important?

**Lynn Griffin:** Absolutely. I think that I speak a lot with physicians, and I think some people get really nervous about that. I think it also depends on what your past experience is. I know people who've been treated really poorly by physicians, I know people, or clients. So, I think just having a thick skin too, and just having that confidence in yourself and just putting yourself out there.

Like I was saying, even with applying for jobs, just putting yourself out there and just being ready for people to say, " You know, you're not the right fit" or nothing. Most of the time people say nothing. You don't get a response. And still feeling like, Hey, I can still do this. I can still put myself out there even if I haven't gotten a response from the last 20 applications I've submitted.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah. What is your typical workday like?

**Lynn Griffin:** My workday today-- I just recorded an event earlier this week. I have to deal with, okay, who are we going to get to pay the physician who did our event for us? I am working on slides for an event at Cleveland Clinic next week. I had some physician calls to coordinate what they wanted to talk about. I had a call with our health economics team to talk about some recent publications in the literature and understand from their perspective, what are the important nuances between what was published and what has been previously been published. So, basically a lot of calls.

So, my job, and you'll find this with different companies, is that some are a lot more meeting heavy than others. Some days I don't have meetings. And what I'll do on those days is do background research. So I collect all of the publications that involve our device. I help support physicians with analysis of their own small data sets. So it's actually really, really diverse. I might work on something like filling out my, for my own knowledge, what our data landscape is and trying to think about how we can fit in a data communication strategy based on what's out there and what data are coming down the line.

It's actually quite, quite diverse.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Do you like that?

**Lynn Griffin:** It's super hectic, but I do like it. I think a lot of it is... it's so much fun thinking about a really complex clinical evidence landscape and identify what is missing and how we can get those data or how other people are looking at the data.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** So, how would you describe your work style?

**Lynn Griffin:** If you think about my work style and the demands of my job and then how our company is structured, especially because our product just launched. There is a big demand for immediate attention from everyone. So, there are of course these little things that I can answer with 10 minutes effort or like 30 minutes effort. And then there's medium sized projects. So I think of my projects as like immediate stuff, medium stuff, and really large, broad stuff. And I try to make movement on those every day. Actually, the immediate stuff has to get done. I just do it. And there are definitely some days when I just do all immediate stuff and it's exhausting.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah. Sounds like it. Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** But you get stuff done, getting stuff done. So, but yeah, I think the hardest part is dedicating that time to the really big, deep thinking projects. And I have found that in some ways the only way that you can do that is to tell everyone you're not available.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah, time management.

**Lynn Griffin:** And you do it on your own schedule.

**Lindsey Laytner:** That's smart.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** That makes sense. I have similar experiences myself, actually, even though what we do, it's different.

**Lynn Griffin:** Or you wait till the last minute, and then you have to do it all in one night.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** What advice would you give to somebody getting into this line of work?

**Lynn Griffin:** I would say to always keep trying. I think it can be really discouraging. I've met, I've talked to a lot of people who are trying to break in and I just say, "You know what? All you need is that one first job in industry." And you would be surprised, you know in graduate school where it's like, funding begets funding.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** And you're like, okay, but I need to get funding for it, like, I need to get to the first step.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah, you're like, how do I do that?

**Lynn Griffin:** I feel the same way about jobs. Once you get that credibility of somebody has hired you within industry. So, even if you're doing it as a contractor, just any kind of work to get your foot in the doors, that's all it takes. It's just one, one experience.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** What are the traits that would make someone a good fit for the job? And this kind of ties back on what we were talking about , the type of job that you have.

**Lynn Griffin:** I think critical thinking, absolutely. Being able to look at data and get a feel for it in a fast way, I think is important. And to also be able to change your perspective. So I know that scientifically I will look at certain questions and I'll say, this is a very scientifically interesting question, but I also work for a company. And that company wants to know, how are we going to serve the most patients? Which is also an interesting scientific question that can be answered in a lot of different ways. And so having that flexibility in changing your perspective, I think is really important. So changing your perspective and thinking critically.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Gotcha. Can you think of any ill fitting traits?

**Lynn Griffin:** You know what? I don't think that there's ill fitting traits, right? I think that there's certain traits that might make you more like you should apply for a different position.

So I've definitely talked to some people where they have a science or engineering background, and they want to communicate data in a certain way and I'm like, you're a marketing person.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yes, it's a very good point. Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** There's a place for, I think, I really think, that there's a place for everyone.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** I agree. It's true because...

**Lindsey Laytner:** It's about finding that place, right?

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Different types of approaches and thought patterns and, maybe, personalities respond differently to different jobs. So that totally makes sense.

Is there anything you would have done differently? Looking back on your trajectory.

**Lynn Griffin:** Oh my gosh. If I had done anything differently, I don't think I would have ended up here. And I really like where I'm at.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** I feel like that happens a lot. It's interesting, like a lot of our guests, because even though the path might be challenging or there's a lot of left turns or something like that, but ultimately whatever you learn during those experiences brought you to where you are. It's the same for me, too.

**Lynn Griffin:** I think like no one would choose to have postpartum depression or no one would choose to be unemployed and trying to find a job for nine months, but man, that, it really sucked, but I learned a lot about myself. I grew a lot.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah, it's true. Challenges-- personal or work challenges-- you often learn the most during those times. Although it could be painful, right? Yeah, totally.

**Lynn Griffin:** But I think that's good for anyone who's struggling at the moment, because you know you'll get through it.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** And there's to be learned from it.

**Lindsey Laytner:** And I think it's great that you bring it up and that you're like an example for everyone that, is listening, myself included. You can make it through that little season in your life or whatever, you know, it's not the be all end all. And you actually may end up somewhere where you never thought you were going to even be, and it's going to be really great for you. And you're going to really like thrive and excel and do great. So I think that's...

**Lynn Griffin:** There's good things. There's always good things coming.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah. So like a beautiful silver lining.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** What do you think is next for you?

**Lynn Griffin:** Oh, I'm not planning on leaving this position anytime soon. I really just love it.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yay.

**Lynn Griffin:** I think because I joined right before a product launch, I'm seeing how the evidence landscape is evolving as that product becomes incorporated, and it just changes. The data that you see before a product becomes available is totally different from the data that you see when a product is ramping up in use. And then once use is established, it will be really interesting. There's a lot of players in this market right now. And so it'll be really interesting to see in one year, in three years, what the dynamic between the different competing technologies ends up being. I think it's really exciting.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** That is going to be cool to watch that, yeah, in real time.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Also knowing that you're doing something that's benefiting people, too, benefiting patients, right? And I guess also probably making things easier for the clinicians as well. So it's like really cool.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah, you hope so, right?

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah. You hope. That's like the goal, right?

**Lynn Griffin:** You hope that the physicians like the product. And that it does end up treating more patients. I have not worked on a product that has been pulled or anything like that. And so I imagine that's probably really hard. If you work on a product that has had like a recall or a product that had like negative clinical trial data. I can imagine that would be really difficult.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Well, one thing I was interested in is, for those that are interested in the position, I know you said everyone has a PhD for the most part, it's kind of a prerequisite. But do you see that it's mostly like bench science PhDs, or it's people that have clinical experience, or is it, you know, people with math degrees or a chemistry degree or like English degree. What's the variety of degrees, I guess, is what I'm trying to say.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah, so, of the team whose degrees I know about, I know of people who've done physiology type degrees, or I also know somebody on our team who has a physical therapy background. Most of the team has actually cardiology, like preclinical work, and I think part of that has to do with our cardiology is based in Minneapolis, and there are a lot of opportunities there for cardiology work.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Okay. Yeah, that's really interesting. Good to know for, I think a variety of reasons. Yeah.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** In your case, you have a non cardiology degree, but you did work at another company that also had a cardiac product.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah, all of my industry experiences have just, this isn't even on purpose,

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah, that happens!

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah, have they all been cardiology focused, or...

**Lynn Griffin:** I think this goes back to once you get in in an industry, you gain momentum, right? So my first position was with Amgen working on a PCSK9 inhibitor for treating hypercholesterolemia. And that's cardiovascular disease focused, but I did not have that background.

But then all of a sudden, when I'm applying for Edwards, they're like, "Oh, you have a cardiology background." And I'm like, "Yes, I do. I do have a cardiology background." And then I get that job. And then the next job is with the cardiac ablation. And they're like, "You have a cardiology background." So now all of a sudden I have a cardiology background.

**Lindsey Laytner:** So it's all building on each other. So I guess that kind of shows you can jump into other things. You just need that one break, like you mentioned, like you need that one position to kind of kickstart.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah, I do know when people are hiring from industry , I think it can be tricky hiring out of graduate school. I think part of it, is that working in such a, I think they call it a matrix environment , where you are interacting with a lot of people on your same level, but you don't actually have any authority over them. I think that can be challenging for academics.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** I think that's worth talking about, actually, because that's what people are always concerned about.

**Lynn Griffin:** But I think that's the thing though, is that, you know, my friend said, "Hey, work on some of these smaller projects of mine, and now you have experience." So then I was able to come to Amgen and say, "Hey, I have experience working with publications. That was the job that I applied for and eventually got, was doing publications.

And so I could at least say, "Hey, I've got this like side hustle that I've been doing that makes me feel compelled to do this as a full time job."

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** That was enough, you know.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** I was going to ask you that. I was curious to see how that first transition happened. So that's really interesting.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah. I think that first transition is really about selling yourself and getting your foot in the door. So really saying, "Hey, these experiences that I have, they're legitimate." I might be doing a small project for a friend and that's how I perceive it. But in reality, I can sell that as, hey, somebody actually paid me to write a or to support their journal submission, which is what I would be doing in a Sci Comms job.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** That's right. Yeah.

**Heidi Bolduc:** Yeah, and that's kind of a good segue for the question I was going to ask because I was just thinking like, especially since you work from home, you said you kind of did a job for a friend originally. Do you know of people that work in your industry that do it as like contract or part time?

**Lynn Griffin:** I don't think I know anybody who is doing contract work, but I do know of recruiters who are constantly asking me if I want to do contract work.

**Heidi Bolduc:** Calling you.

**Lynn Griffin:** Honestly, I, for a lot of people who come to me that don't have experience, that's where I refer them. Now, you have to be at a certain point in your life if you want to take on contract positions.

Actually, I've done that in the past. You know what? I'm like, I've done so much stuff. I can't even remember everything I've done.

**Heidi Bolduc:** Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** But like when recruiters contact me, I don't do this as much now because I don't have as much time, but I used to respond to all of them. And I would always listen to what they would pitch.

A lot of times these are things like, can you dedicate 30 hours a week or 20 hours a week? And the issue generally is for my friends who don't work as contractors is that they need health insurance.

**Heidi Bolduc:** Yeah. I mean, obviously there are risks involved if you do, consulting, contracting work, whatever. But I was just thinking based on what you told us, it sounds like the type of job that could lend itself to that if someone wanted to get into it that way.

**Lynn Griffin:** Yeah, absolutely. I definitely think that's a great way to explore what opportunities there are. And I think if you have health insurance, then it is a low risk way. I'm really lucky because my husband has health insurance for our whole family. So the reality is I don't need to find that. But that's just it's a really unfortunate reality, and I think it affects women more that we can't have that. That freedom, like we don't always have the resources to make the decision that's best for us due to like systemic factors or just... I don't know, it's just how things are.

**Heidi Bolduc:** And it's not even just health insurance, too. It's PTO, it's dental, it's vision, you know what I mean? Because like, you either get the full package working full time or you don't get anything.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** And that brings us to our final and fun question, which is, name three people currently or in history that you would like to, in your case, I believe, have a Pimms cup or a Gimlet with.

**Lynn Griffin:** Oh, man. You know what? You know I listened to all of your Season 1, and then I was listening to everyone's answers to that, and then you told me you were going to ask me a different question!

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** I didn't say that. Nope, I'm always going to ask that question. I actually said that you're going to have time to think of it, but that's great. So, whatever it's working out.

**Lynn Griffin:** You know, I didn't think of it, because I didn't think you were going to ask me that question. Oh, my gosh.

**Lindsey Laytner:** She wants to have drinks with us. We all need to go out.

**Lynn Griffin:** I know, yeah...

**Lindsey Laytner:** I can finally drink again. So that's good.

**Heidi Bolduc:** we have to do is find a conference that kind of involves all of our industries loosely.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Or have a podcast retreat.

**Lynn Griffin:** Oh my gosh, podcast/drinking retreat.

Oh my gosh, Karoun, I really didn't think of any answers to this because I feel like so many people have like science crushes, and I don't really...

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Someone said Amelia Earhart. That was Tara.Tara also said, which I thought was really cool, brilliant one was somebody from ancient Egypt, which I thought was pretty cool. yeah. I'm like, that's a good one. To hear about those times.

**Lynn Griffin:** Man, I remember somebody had said something about their parent who had passed away.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** That was Caryn. Yeah.

**Lynn Griffin:** And I was like,

**Heidi Bolduc:** That's a good one.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** So, mine would just be Prince, George Michael, and David Bowie.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Hell yeah!

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Just kidding. Maybe one of them, but not all three.

**Heidi Bolduc:** Prince, George Michael and... all at the same table.

**Lindsey Laytner:** I could see Karoun going with all of them, like..

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** They were my favorites that all died within one year of each other.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Glad you guys could make it today.

**Heidi Bolduc:** And then you, just look at them and you go, okay, we're going to draft the most epic song ever. And it's going to get like all the Spotify hits.

**Lynn Griffin:** Oh my god.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** That's true.

**Lynn Griffin:** Who would I have drinks with?

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** It could also be for fun, you know, like it could be anybody.

**Lynn Griffin:** I would choose my friends, my friends who I don't get to see.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Which is totally fine.

**Lynn Griffin:** Then I would choose all of my graduate school friends, which is more than three.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** I love it. That's okay. We'll take it.

**Lindsey Laytner:** To have everybody in the same room again, the same city, the same local bar.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** I love that.

**Lynn Griffin:** That's the crazy thing. You know how many of those people are actually professors. Because we think we all get trained to become professors. I'm sure I know somebody from our graduate cohort that is a professor.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** The majority of both of our classes, no. Because actually, the reality is that it's like truly less than 1% or something. We said that in the first episode.

**Heidi Bolduc:** From my cohort, it's zero. Like there was two that were kind of like headed towards that trajectory. And then they both went into industry.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** The reality is when PhDs first existed or were, you know, whatever the purpose was is different than what they are for now. There's no way that everybody that gets a PhD can be a professor. It's impossible.

**Lynn Griffin:** I think if you are dedicated to science and you join industry, I think that never goes away from you. Like that scientific perspective and having that critical mind, that doesn't go away. If you join industry, you do get to see your work meeting a patient need, and I mean, these are real things. Like my mom has AFib, and I work on AFib. And so when I can ask her, "Hey, how are you feeling?" And when I talk to her nurse who gets transmissions from her rhythm recorder, like I can speak more, knowledgeably to it. And so that's meaningful to me personally.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** We actually have another friend who worked for a pharma company and learned a lot about something that his grandfather had, and it made him help make sure that his grandfather was getting the best treatment, you know, so yeah, we don't even think about those things and it's nice to be able to, for sure.

And a lot of people that move out of academia say that a lot of times that they're looking for seeing the real world impact sooner , because it takes a while when you're doing basic research, because that's just the nature of it Right? So I think a lot of times for people who want a more immediate...

**Lynn Griffin:** something tangible.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah, tangible outcome.

**Lynn Griffin:** I think companies are really good about doing that, too, is like highlighting the ultimate goal is treating patients. And so I think most companies will have some kind of like patient awareness events, where you can meet patients who've been treated, whose lives have been changed.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** That's really interesting.

**Lynn Griffin:** Certain companies will get like celebrities who have a disease and then they become like that spokesperson or something. So, I mean, it really does change lives. And I think when it affects somebody who you are close to, It takes on like a different meaning. And then you think about all of those people who are working to address other diseases that other people have, and they have loved ones that are also trying to support their family.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** For sure.

**Lynn Griffin:** It's just surreal to go from basic science to seeing these products actually implemented and changing people's lives.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Yeah. That sounds amazing.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yeah, so interesting.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** So thank you so much, Lynn, for being on our show. This has been a really amazing conversation.

**Lynn Griffin:** Well, thanks for having me, guys.

**Lindsey Laytner:** Yes, thank you.

**Karoun H. Bagamian:** Thank you for joining us and listening to "The Business of Doing Science" podcast. For more information on our guests and access to career development resources, please click on the link to our website below. And remember, you can also visit the website to learn more about how Bagamian Sci can help you do science.