

# WE hosts mentoring reception at Selfcare Summit

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The panel (l-r) was Virginia Pigeaire, business lead, West, at the Emerson Group, Paul Gerner vice president of drug/beauty/financial services/optical/health and wellness at H-E-B and Casey Huth, sales manager at Hello Products. The panel was moderated by Alison Castillo, director of industry relations and sustainable living at Unilever (r).

INDIANAPOLIS — WE, Empowering Women to Advance Wellness, hosted a Wine and Mentoring reception and panel discussion at the GMDC Selfcare Summit 2019 Conference here. The event was sponsored by Navajo Inc. and L&R Distributors. The panel included Casey Huth, sales manager at Hello Products; Paul Gerner vice president of drug/beauty/financial services/optical/health and wellness at H-E-B; and Virginia Pigeaire, business lead, West, at the Emerson Group. The panel was moderated by Alison Castillo, director of industry relations and sustainable living at Unilever.

WE was created to convene, connect and encourage women leaders in the wellness landscape. Its mission, “Women enhancing the future, developing across generations, and advancing health and wellness,” supports its goal of building stronger women executives across the industry.



Pigeaire said its important to utilize your network.

The diverse panel looked at different facets of mentoring, offered advice and shared their personal experiences.

“The best piece of advice that I could give is to utilize your network. All of us have a lot of people that we know,” said Pigeaire. “What you need to do is understand what you’re looking for and then think about the folks that you know within your network and reach out to them. Don’t hesitate to start a conversation for those that are being asked. Many will be honored and humbled that they’re asking for your advice and make time for that. I never hesitate to ask for or offer advice, even if it’s somewhat unsolicited at times,” she adds.



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Gerner said that the thing that's important to understand is that anybody who's in a leadership position is a de facto mentor. "The question you really have to ask yourself is, are you a good mentor or a bad mentor? H-E-B has formal as well as informal mentoring programs. I was very blessed to be in a formal mentoring program with Bob Loeffler, who was our former president and chief operating officer. What really resonated with me was how down to earth and how real he was. I think what was really important was we set some ground rules on the front end, and the ground rules were along the lines of anything we said in there was private and was not to be repeated. It was brutally honest at times in both directions. I think I helped to educate him a little bit, and he certainly educated me."

Castillo pointed out that Huth is cochairing the next generation board in the WE organization. Huth said that this event was her first time on a panel ever. "My mentor since day one has been Kim Sines, my boss at Hello Products. One of the most important things I learned from Kim is to understand the importance of your own strengths. Coming fresh out of college, I had no idea. You think once you graduate college you're supposed to have everything aligned. You're supposed to know what you're going to do, how you're going to succeed what your future is going to look like. But that's really not the case. One day, Kim sat me down and we took a 'find your test' and if you know Kim Sines, you have probably taken a test like this before. Even though it was still early on in my career, it really, really helped me define exactly who I am as a business woman today."

Pigeaire said she spent a number of years with Kimberly-Clark Corp. "During that time there was a gentleman named Tony Dunning, and he really established a culture within the company was all about being indispensable. That was a piece of advice that I really took to heart. When you think about being indispensable, you need to think about of your life and of your career. It is about being indispensable to your family and friends, obviously, but also to your retail partners, to your client partners, external partners, as well as your internal team. And if you can do that, then you're there as a resource for them, and you're also constantly evolving yourself. Continuing to be indispensable would be the biggest piece of advice that I've gotten in my career," she said.