Five Minutes With Llanie Ranzer Nobile

By Wendy Dwyer

A perfect day for Llanie Ranzer Nobile is one when the light goes on for a student and science becomes exciting, ever-changing, delightfully complicated, and compelling oh, and one where Elvis Presley’s music is providing the soundtrack.

This powerhouse in biotechnology, loving spouse and supermom is the University Department Chair of Biomedical Sciences and Biotechnology at Keiser University, introducing hundreds of students to the endless opportunities in the fields of science and opening their eyes to the wonders of chemistry. And while this is unquestionably a vital and challenging position, Llanie believes that her job as a parent is even more difficult and important in the grand scheme of things.

When asked about the presence of women in the field of biotechnology and science, she matter-of-factly explains that half of the students in her program are females, and she won’t be surprised when women really take over the field of science.

Llanie says that her own introduction to science was a pivotal moment in her life because of two high school chemistry teachers, whose names and lessons she still remembers. “Mr. Rod Larsen and Mr. Fred Savage,” Llanie recalls, “made chemistry class fun and easy, and I loved every minute of it. They provided the foundation and believed that I could do it, and because they believed in me, I believed in myself.”

Teachers who believed in her continued into college as professors and mentors opened doors and encouraged her curiosity and passion for research. “My graduate school principle investigator was Dr. Russell G. Kerr, and I had the best mentor (who is still my mentor to this day), Dr. Lory Santiago. She was there to guide me during my PhD program, and I still turn to her.”
Llanie says she sees the doubt and insecurity in her chemistry students now, and she knows that they often need encouragement - that, even though something isn’t totally clear at the moment, it may click the next time around. She understands that it’s so easy to give up, but it’s so much more rewarding to keep going and enjoy the journey.

She encourages that exploration not only in her students, but in her two children, as well, saying that her daughter loves science and athletics, something that Llanie and her husband, an environmental scientist, encourage equally.

“My favorite quote is from Eleanor Roosevelt,” she says. “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.”

For Llanie, who feels that females are definitely stepping up and being well represented in the field of biotechnology, it’s all about one thing a lesson she hopes to transit equally to her college students and her own young children. “Have enough confidence in yourself to believe you can achieve anything, and you will get it done.”