



Bonnie C. Hong
 Director, International Programs,
 Nuclear Science & Technology



Education: MEngr, systems engineering, University of Idaho; Executive MBA, Boise State University; BS, computer science, University of Idaho; AS, nuclear engineering, Idaho State University

Company Name: Idaho National Laboratory

Industry: Energy

Company CEO: Dr. Mark Peters (Laboratory Director)

Company Headquarters Location: Idaho Falls, Idaho

Number of Employees: 5,000

Words you live by: Be dependable, take responsibility, communicate effectively, follow through and deliver, and pay it forward.

Personal Philosophy: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." –Maya Angelou

What book are you reading: *Talking to Strangers* by Malcolm Gladwell

What was your first job: Cashier (age 7) at my dad's restaurant (unpaid); Intern at Microsoft Corporation (paid)

Favorite charity: Intermountain Therapy Animals, Wreaths Across America for U.S. Veterans, and Hospice of Eastern Idaho

Interests: Therapy animal team visits, dog training, bicycling, and classic cars



Careers Aren't Always Linear ... and that's a Good Thing

When I was in junior high school, I delved into software engineering and computer programming. Identifying a root cause, devising an approach to resolve issues, articulating it in another language—all while understanding how it fit into the bigger picture—intrigued me and inspired me to pursue an undergraduate degree in computer science.

My career at Idaho National Laboratory (INL) has given me a plethora of opportunities to make the most of my computer science degree. I installed a new system for in-core experiments in a research reactor, initiated and established a counterintelligence and cyber intelligence program that became a model for the U.S. Department of Energy national lab complex, identified / tested electrical grid vulnerabilities, and now am the director for international nuclear

programs. Each new position has provided me with opportunities to learn more and grow as a leader, colleague, and professional.

Understanding strengths and weaknesses, discovering new experiences, and being willing to grow and learn could and should guide career choices and decisions. Not all career paths are linear. The twists and turns lead to exciting growth opportunities. Humans are not linear, so why should careers be?

Throughout my career, my mentors have given me recommendations and advice that helped me during challenging moments. Here's my advice to students and those already in the workplace:

- Take advantage of learning and growth opportunities, including any formal education program a company or organization offers, professional

development and training, and working in other divisions.

- Be open to new experiences and opportunities. Do not dismiss them because they appear to be outside your field of study or are in a different division or department.
- Look out for one another—be kind, patient, and respectful to others.
- Be willing to not only share your knowledge with colleagues, but also to listen and learn from them. This is important to building strong teams and achieving results.

Working at the INL offers unlimited directions for careers with a mission that is important to the world: To discover, demonstrate, and secure innovative nuclear energy solutions, other clean energy options, and critical infrastructure.