

By [Amy L. Dickson](#)

Blinkers Tim, Jessica, and Kristina all decided to spend a Saturday in May at Benaroya Hall knee deep in t-shirts and wristbands, surrounded by inspired young women. How did this happen? They chose to volunteer at [Girls Can Do](#), an event designed to encourage young women to have big dreams and pursue them, for their Blink Community Days.

What is Community Day?

Blink UX encourages all its employees to take one workday a year to volunteer at any charity or organization of their choosing. It's really special that we can pick any organization that matters most to us as individuals, whether it's supporting a cause that is close to your heart or working a day at your church. The only rule is that you must share what you did with the rest of the staff.

Why does Blink UX have a Community Day available for everyone?

Community service falls right in line with Blink's core values (empathy, authentic, collaborative, and integrity), so it's natural to encourage employees to be actively involved in our communities. Sometimes it's not easy to give to a charity financially, but giving time is something everyone can do (especially when you would have been at work otherwise!). Blink makes it easy and simple to give back.

Maria Coryell-Martin

Girls Can Do event inspires volunteers, too! By Jessica Munsey

For the past few years, Blink UX has made time to host small events here in the office for local girls to learn about jobs in the tech industry. As a tutor and a mentor to girls of all ages, it was really a pleasure to take part in two of those events in order to share my story and advice with young women looking for inspiration. So, when Karen revealed her plans for a large-scale event to get girls of all ages to think big, I knew I had to be a part of it.

Karen found some amazing women to share their terrific stories of challenge and achievement. Their main unified message was quite simple: Don't be afraid to believe in yourself, work hard, and go after your wildest dreams. Women and girls left the event smiling with renewed inspiration. Many said they couldn't pick a favorite speaker because they loved them all. Others said they couldn't wait to chat with particular speakers in person at the end of the event. Everyone asked if we were hosting another event next year, because they knew someone who would benefit from attending.

As a volunteer, I also walked away inspired. What I loved most about Girls Can Do is that the event itself is an embodiment of Karen's message: Dream big, do what inspires you, and make great things happen. Karen had a big dream of holding a large event to inspire girls, so she worked hard and made it happen. There's no doubt in my mind that she succeeded in making a difference.

It's really a wonderful thing to work with people who share your values — to work for a company that takes tangible steps to better the community.

Jessica at GCD

Jessica greets attendees at Girls Can Do 2014

From behind the lens of my camera by Tim Bridgham

From behind the lens of my camera I was able to take away more than just images from the Girls Can Do event. I heard a great message of pursuing your passions, work hard with a positive attitude, and know that the possibilities are limitless. While I was not the target audience the event was designed for (I'm a late-20's Male), I was still impacted by what I heard. I hope to spread that same message to the people in my life and maybe one day to a daughter of mine.

The best kind of way to spend my Saturday by Kristina Knaus

I volunteer a lot. You always feel good after you volunteer; you always have this warm "I gave back" feeling. When I finished volunteering at Girls Can Do however, it was more of a "Wow, I think I might have just helped change some lives" feeling. That is a feeling I could get used to.

Karen's idea for Girls Can Do was to have an event with nine amazing women telling their stories to try and inspire young girls to have big dreams and achieve them. I feel she can safely say she achieved her goal. I am so proud to work at a company with a CEO who is so passionate and headstrong: Not only is she leading a UX consulting firm with 50+ employees, she also plans uplifting events for girls in her spare time.

The women who spoke at Girls Can Do inspired me and I was well above the target age. At 24-years-old the world is still pretty terrifying, and hearing success stories is always nice. These women all had some kind of obstacle they had to overcome, and they not only overcame their obstacles, they pole vaulted them. Kristin Laidre thought she was going to be a professional ballerina. After three foot surgeries that dream was pretty much dust, so she decided to become a marine biologist. Now she gets to hang out with polar bears. Coleen Christie was terrible at reading aloud; she went on to become a news anchor that reads aloud for a living to millions of viewers. For me, knowing these things makes all the difference. Everyone has something they could let hold him or her back, but to become great you can't let those things control your potential.

After the event it was heartwarming to see all the girls line up in the lobby to get autographs and have their questions answered from the speakers. I saw Catherine Crosslin writing affirmations for girls and members of Seattle Reign soccer team offer to come show a local soccer club some new tricks. Getting to see so many young girls excited about their futures and truly believing the sky is the limit was the best kind of way to spend my Saturday.

Kristina sells commemorative t-shirts

Kristina poses with a commemorative t-shirt at Girls Can Do 2014