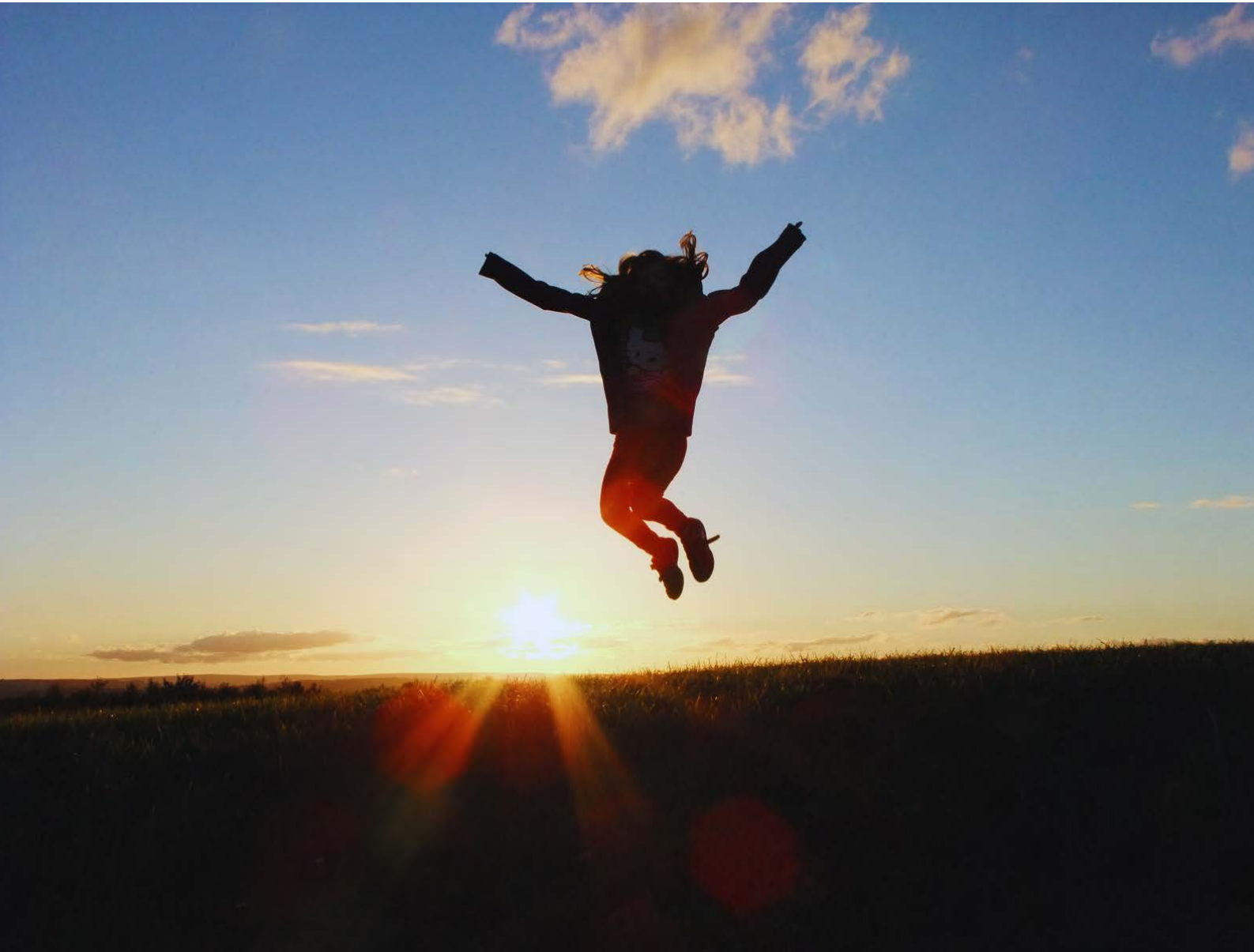


SEPTEMBER 2022 | J22 - FALL EDITION

# WIL MAGAZINE

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES



MEET THE WIL-SPARATION TEAM

HOW WE STEP OUTSIDE OF OUR COMFORT ZONES || WIL HIGHLIGHTS

# WIL MAGAZINE

## **Managing Editors**

Ana Arias Nava  
Bahar Elçin Kavak

## **Creative Directors**

Ana Arias Nava  
Bahar Elçin Kavak  
Karla Pons

## **Guest Editors**

Aayushie Pareek  
Aparna Raturi  
Ira Banerjee  
Liliia Kalimullina  
Melanie Juruena  
Bhavya Shah

## **Guest Contributors**

Anna Dragina  
Chenyu Wen  
Mariana Arnaut  
Neha Khattri

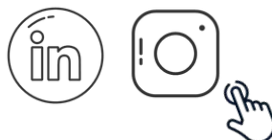


WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP



WIL is an official professional and social club within the HEC Paris MBA Program.

1 rue de la Libération  
Jouy-en-Josas, France 78350



# IN THIS ISSUE



- 01** FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK
- 02** MEET THE WIL-SPIRATION TEAM
- 03** A WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR IN HEALTH  
TECH
- 08** BE COMFORTABLE, BEING  
UNCOMFORTABLE
- 14** NAVIGATING THROUGH MBA WITH KIDS
- 19** ALWAYS MOVING FORWARD
- 22** WIL HIGHLIGHTS



## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Readers,

We are excited to share the Fall Edition of the WIL magazine.

In this edition, the WIL team wanted to reflect on the many professional and personal challenges that arise when outstanding people decide to step outside their comfort zone – may it be pursuing an MBA or starting a new company. Our aim is to celebrate the ‘wins’ in addition to the learnings that come from ‘not-always-winning’.

This edition marks a new term which includes a new WIL team. We wanted to take this opportunity to thank Tejal Pradhan and her team for running the club for the past few months. Events such as mini-treks to Station F have been inspirational and educational. We aspire to continue raising the bar!

The incoming team of ten individuals hailing from nine different countries and with work experience from various industries is eager to continue representing and supporting the interests of women in HEC Paris MBA. We built our ABC pillars on: Amplifying our strengths, Building partnerships, and Challenging stereotypes. We strive to make the program a more inclusive and supportive environment that ensures the best experience for all the students.

We look forward to working with you these next few months.

ANA ARIAS NAVA  
PRESIDENT  
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP CLUB





# MEET THE WIL-SPIRATION TEAM

**What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?**

*A great Arabic proverb "The earth trembles but doesn't fall" in other words don't worry everything will be fine (Dany SAADE)*

**What is your comfort food?**

*Mexican soups  
(Ana ARIAS NAVA)*

**If you could instantly become an expert in something, what would it be?**

*Persuasion :)  
(Lilii KALIMULLINA)*

**Where we can find you on a Sunday afternoon?**

*Having a nice brunch with mimosas  
(Aparna RATURI)*

**What's the craziest dare you ever took?**

*1,000,000 non stopping abs  
(Karla PONS))*



**There are now 25 hours in a day! How do you spend your extra hour?**

*prepare another to-do list for the coming day! (Bahar Elçin KAVAK)*

**Any hidden talents? Torn skirt or pants? New outfit? I'm your person!**

*(Thandiwe MKHETSHANE)*

**Do you have any nicknames that you like or you hate?**

*Kuttus  
(Ira BANERJEE)*

**Tell us a strange habit you have:**

*The incessant need to clean. Everyone who comes to my room finds it pretty strange  
(Aayushie PAREEK)*

**Do you have any pets? What are their names?**

*Melanie JURUENA  
I have 5 dogs (1 Philippine native breed, 1 chihuahua, 3 dachshunds) - Cinnamon, Nachos, Choco, Churros, and Pancake!*

# A WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR IN HEALTH TECH: MARIANA ARNAUT

Mariana Arnaut  
interviewed by Ira Banerjee

*In this issue, we met Mariana Arnaut who launched Healnergy, a startup in health tech in January 2022, aiming to improve the access and quality of supportive care for cancer patients, and discussed the challenges she faced on her way.*

## **How did you come up with the idea of Healnergy and how is the entrepreneurship journey till now?**

I will take one step back and share what I was doing before my MBA which will introduce my current journey.

I was working in strategy and innovation for 7 years before my MBA and lived in many countries in Europe and in the US, because of my previous role. Even though, I loved innovation and coming up with new products and services for various industries such as oil & gas, manufacturing, etc. I was getting tired and bored of working in big corporate organizations.

On the other hand, I was super passionate about wellness and wellbeing in general. I used to do a lot of personal development, exercise, and activities to evolve as a better person, and curious about how to live a healthy life. When I joined MBA, I had an idea of merging the two passions together – innovation and wellbeing. I was very focused from the start that I will create my own start-up and the MBA kind of gave me the opportunity to take a pause and think about how to do it.



I started researching, first about people like me in demanding careers and how to incorporate wellbeing and health into the lifestyle. But soon found out that there are already many apps in this space and so shifted my research towards chronic diseases and how they impact us. In the start-up world, there are so many new innovations providing solutions to chronic diseases. I got a bit overwhelmed thinking I may not be able to add any value add.

At this point I started thinking about cancer, I have seen people very close to me dealing with cancer or have died because of it.

There are hardly any platforms that talk about this monster due to the high death rate or because of the nature of the disease in general. I started interviewing a lot of patients, doctors, and therapists and listening to their challenges, and eventually came up with the idea of Healnergy.

# Healnergy

## **Which aspect does Healnergy focus on – physical wellbeing or mental wellbeing of the patients?**

I think physical and mental wellbeing are intertwined. Healnergy is a complete wellbeing app focusing on non-medical treatment. The main goal of the app is to improve the quality and access to wellbeing methods that patients can use to improve their lifestyle and manage their symptoms. These are usually called supportive care and therapy which patients can manage their symptoms and side effects caused by treatments with – like consulting a psychologist, or a nutritionist, doing specific sports, activities, therapists for managing pains like acupuncture.

## **In your LinkedIn posts, you talk about both your struggles and successes very transparently. Could you talk more about it how you decided to share both sides of your journey?**

Since the start of Healnergy, I have consciously made it very public. Further to this, I am working just by myself which is also lonely because I am not used to working alone, so I started using LinkedIn as my refuge to ask for help and connect with people.

I still don't have an MVP (minimum viable product) and still prototyping the solution. I know that I am going to fail sooner or later, I have already failed; there will be things that will not go as per my plan or some things for which I am not going to get answers. I felt that it is important to talk about it, this is a public journey and it is not only going to be all positive things. When you become an entrepreneur, there are going to be super good days but there will also be awful days and there are so many obstacles that you fight with almost every day.



from Healnergy website

### **Do you feel it is important to share failures?**

Yeah, I think it is important to talk about them because it is such a normal thing. People are too scared to talk about their failures or what didn't go well, and it is important to normalize it. It's normal to not win everything you do, very normal to fail. Also, there is more to it. Whenever there is any learning, I try to share it which might help the next person when they start their own company. I also read a lot and follow the journeys of other entrepreneurs. I try to talk with people on the same journey as me because these are the hardest times and are somewhat a lonely journey so it's better to talk to someone who has been through it.

### **When you started with Healnergy, where did you get your support from? How was it in HEC and any other support group that supported you?**

I am generally an extrovert, so I am comfortable reaching out to people and this kind of saved me until now. And I reach out to other entrepreneurs, people who work in the same industry (in health, health-tech) and build a relationship so that I can reach out to them on a weekly basis to talk about what is going on.



One of the hardest things is to think through by myself, it's easier for me to think and design while discussing with someone. So, I ask a lot of my friends to talk about a specific problem. For instance, when I was designing the product, I reached out to a friend who is a product owner and then approached the same way for other areas like finance, pricing, etc. I basically have identified people with specific knowledge and they are my go-to people when I need to brainstorm out loud.

At the same time, I also have a coach who is following my journey and to whom I can reach out with the silliest of questions. I did the entrepreneurship specialization and also the entrepreneurship project and got introduced to this coach during the specialization, who works in the healthcare start-up space.

"When you become an entrepreneur, there are going to be super good days but there will also be awful days and there are so many obstacles that you fight almost every day"

### **Did you face any challenge as an (woman) entrepreneur?**

I don't think of myself as a woman entrepreneur, but as an entrepreneur, so the fact that I am not labeling myself I am not seeing any issues. I can just say that don't label yourself, just go for it, and don't let anyone label you. I did not face any additional challenges as such.

### **Any last thought you want to share with the readers of the magazine, especially who want to pursue entrepreneurship?**

A simple piece of advice would be "just go for it", try it, you won't lose anything. The worst thing that can happen is that people might answer you "No". And "No" doesn't hurt that much. I am very instinctive by nature, and I just ask people for help or to discuss.

For example, I was looking for two interns this summer and they are non-paid roles, the internship itself is super short (5 weeks) but very interesting.

In the beginning, some of my friends were very sarcastic saying why would someone want to do an internship with you, which is unpaid, but I didn't look that way. I thought people will learn from this experience and will be a value add for them. And I ended up receiving more than 10 applicants in just a few weeks. And I felt amazing because that means that what I am doing is inspiring people and that's the best value addition my journey could have had. But it also shows you just continuously try.

I don't think myself as a woman entrepreneur and think just an entrepreneur, so the fact that I am not labelling myself I am not seeing any issues as a woman entrepreneur.



# BE COMFORTABLE, BEING UNCOMFORTABLE



NEHA KHATTRI

*interviewed by Aayushie Pareek*

*Read about the challenges of our alum Neha Khattri, and how she secured internship and job in big tech firms like Google and Facebook.*

**Moving to a new country can be overwhelming, what were some of the challenges that you faced and how did you overcome them?**

It was my first time moving out of the home. I had always been with my parents (even during my undergraduate and master's degree years, and even while I worked).

For me, it was a choice between ISB (a leading Indian business school) and HEC Paris. Thankfully I was encouraged to take up HEC Paris by my family as well. Relocating from my comfort zone to HEC Paris, a place away from Paris (in the suburbs) was a huge lifestyle change. From working and being protected, to having to learn something new, including a new culture and not just one, but different cultures of people who are all on your team. HEC Paris does make it comfortable for you initially, with things like banking, transportation, etc, and provides the means to connect with your team and peers.

The high note is that everybody's in the same boat although most people come from different countries and yet, we are all moving in the same direction. Honestly, not a lot of people talk about it, but I wouldn't be surprised if everybody's like, "Oh my God, okay. I need to restart. I need to find a new set of friends. I need to think about jobs. I need to think about grades and all of that!"

Apart from moving out, the biggest challenge for me was finding friends. You need to not just have friends: to collaborate on projects, case studies, or to ask for advice from someone knowledgeable, but also a set of friends who are almost like family. You want to be leaning on somebody who is going through the same experience, whom you can talk to, or have a shoulder to lean on, they become your ecosystem.

There was a moment, and I'm not kidding: I wept in my room and didn't know how I was going to make friends. This was just a few weeks in and was a part of my personality. I was somewhat in the middle of being an extrovert and introvert and there are days when I can chat up with people and get to know people more than on other days.

Another challenge, I felt was that there was some pressure (self-pressure), where I felt that I had to connect with people outside my own Indian community. It's often hard to find common issues to connect with in the beginning, but over time, things change. Soon I felt comfortable knowing that it's not just me, who leans back on my Indian diaspora, but most people lean back on their own communities. Lebanese with the Lebanese groups, Brazilians with Brazilians. That took some pressure off me. But having said that, it took a little while, (maybe a month or so) to actually find some people, whether through French classes or other projects. But initially, it was overwhelming to go through so many changes at once.

### **Is it okay to not have an internship during the summer?**

We all have these ideal parts in our heads: (i) do 2 internships between 4 semesters because it helps open a network and find a job; (ii) get a pre-pre offer or something. I can't remember what they were called!

I did an internship, so it's hard for me to say whether if I didn't do one, would I still be where I am.

However, I will say that all pieces fall together. Eventually, each person creates their own story to find a job, and each person finds their way. For instance, you can choose to take a break for a while. It's all about the story I've made: What are the skills I talk about to come back into the workforce? It's on you to figure out how you paint your picture. And, we all have a talent for storytelling.





## **Not everyone has clarity regarding his or her future goals, how did you figure out what you wanted to pursue post MBA?**

Great question! Things fell into place for me to some extent. But if I were to look back and give somebody advice, I would say: You should lean on your personal strengths. You should know who you are, and what you enjoy in your personal life. For example, I am an operational person. I love the execution. And this is true in my life. I wake up in the morning and want to do things! And have a list of things to do! chop, chop, chop.

That's the kind of work I do today. I love it because I think that's my DNA. So I would advice you to figure out : (i) who you are; (ii) what your day looks like; (iii) what you think about it; (iv) what matters for you.

## **Are you more of thinker? Do you read an article and start thinking about, what does the French economy look like five years from now, or you look at an article and say, what is the process for presidential elections in France?**

I'm very intrigued by that. Like how does it work? Where do people come to vote? Try to figure out what you're passionate about, but what is your strength functionally, and above all what is your strength?

And take that into the kind of job that you're looking for in the future. And again, internships are so "loosey, goosey" . It's hard to tell what you'll eventually end up doing. Be a little more oriented towards full-time job thinking.

Second, think in terms of industry as that helps with functional skills. Here, the more you read about the industries, the more you learn from peers in those industries. Ex: I enjoy reading about fashion. Maybe I'm interested in the fashion industry. Don't worry about what people think. Do what you want to do. It's easier said than done, but if you own your own decisions, you will be happier about your own decision and not just please others.

That's the combination. A few undergrad folks who've connected with me, I've recognized that what has worked for them is knowing their strengths; reading, and talking to people about the kind of jobs they are interested in. Internships are so 'loosey goosey', you don't know what you're getting yourself into. I did a Google internship and am very grateful for that.

The work I did there, I was able to convince people that it was great for my next job. But it was not the only thing that mattered to people.

First, you need to get into the door and then figure out the stuff it's about. Which goes back to, what are your personal strengths? What do you really enjoy? Which industry?

With an MBA degree, you can change function, industry and/or geography: just be clear on what you can. For example, for me, I came from banking but my work was operational and I used to interact with customers. So I was able to spin the story and say, I've done sales, even though I haven't done sales and that's what helped me get my next job after my MBA. It all goes back to storytelling!



### **During your time at HEC, how did you deal with the uncertainty regarding the job situation?**

There's no recipe for success. My philosophy is to do the best you can! (I know, it sounds cliché). Eventually, if it's meant to be, it will be. I've had some challenges in my career, but when I look back, I feel that I am in a great place right now. Even some of those obstacles worked in my favor to bring me where I am.

With respect to finding an internship, you have to do your hard work, ON your own. It's your own career, journey, and path. And obviously, it's challenging: You have to network, make applications, and find LinkedIn contacts. I've been one of those people who 'sucked' at networking. And to some extent, I am still bad at it, especially randomly reaching out to people, it's definitely challenging. I recognize that there are people who are good at this and are like hustlers (let's just call them hustlers), but it's challenging for the rest of us. However, you have to put all your energy and effort into finding an internship, there is no other way,



Image by vectorjuice on Freepik

You have to know that it's okay if things don't work out sometime. I had folders of 50 to 100 companies that I would apply to. To stay on track, you customize your CV, check with somebody, and it was all very difficult.

However, put in the effort, but be fine, knowing that things might not work in your favor. Have an alternate plan B and above all be flexible, especially if you're a little unsure of what you want to do, if you're not very clear, just go with that mindset.

I am going to learn with whatever internship I get if I get it. Take one step at a time. People who know what they want five years later from now and can backtrack, good for them! I would not be surprised if most aren't sure of what they want. I did not know what I would be doing, and guess what?: I love what I'm doing right now. It's a journey, haha a jungle gym.

## What are your key takeaways from the program?

First: Pushing yourself. Being uncomfortable, knowing that being uncomfortable is fine because it pushes you to think beyond the way you think or the way you do things.

Second: If you are comfortable as a person talking to more people, it just brings so many diverse perspectives to the way you think about things, the way you solve case studies, and even just the way you plan an outing to Paris. Why is this person thinking this way?

Third: This was more personal and maybe just where I come from. Grades don't matter. Focus on figuring out how you're going to get a job and work towards it, but enjoy the journey. Be laser-focused on the outcome of the business school so that you get a job in the area that you want. And the second, enjoy the experience. And while you are thinking about how to get that job? What is a job I want? Your networking and applications. While doing so, enjoy the experience of meeting people, the diversity, going to Kfet, going to Paris, and traveling Europe.

Because once you look back and if you haven't done the things you love, you haven't enjoyed that one and a half years that you have. You will regret it. I am not kidding. You will regret it because this time will not come back.



Image by pch.vector on Freepik



# NAVIGATING THROUGH MBA WITH KIDS

CHENYU WEN

*interviewed by Bhavya Shah*



*An inspiring story of Chenyu Wen, MBA candidate at HEC Paris class of 2023, gives us an insight about how she beautifully strikes a balance between being a wife, a mother of three kids and a student at the MBA program.*

**What were your thoughts when you decided to do the MBA? What helped you to make this bold move?**

I don't think it was a very tough decision... after many years of work, I really wanted to acquire new experiences and meet new people - MBA was a good option to do it. However, the most difficult part for me was figuring out how to balance my study and my family, because I knew

that an MBA wasn't an easy journey and would require a lot of engagement and preparation, and hence I would need a lot of energy.

I felt it was important to share my true feelings with my kids and family, and then go ahead and try it out. So, I discussed it with my husband and kids. I asked my elder one, "You see, you are in school, right? Mummy also wants to go back to study. What do you think about it?" And she said that it was cool! I also told her that it would mean that in the mornings and perhaps evenings she would stay with a nanny, and sometimes I may come back late or be gone for the weekends.



Image by rawpixel.com on Freepik

Gladly, she said, “We can try it. If I am not happy, I will tell you”. If it would have happened, we would readjust. With my second kid, I did not give details. And the youngest is just a baby, so it was fine. I remember it was challenging initially, especially on Wednesdays when French schools do not work. It required a lot of planning and scheduling with the nanny to be done. But eventually, we managed to cope with the hectic schedule and worked around it, and things are working out fine now.

### **How did the university support you in the decision?**

Before applying I talked to HEC’s marketing manager of Asia region, and I was very inspired. She seemed very open and after my interaction with her, I felt that the MBA is doable. HEC indeed has a great spirit when it comes to diversity. If you have the desire to do an MBA, they encourage you to try regardless of your background.

### **How are you dealing with the pressures of raising kids and doing an MBA at the same time?**

I often talk to my family, whenever I see a challenging schedule. I tell them beforehand so they are prepared. I let them know what is happening with me because that way it is easier for them. Kids don’t like uncertainty. They understand my emotions when I explain them. Maybe, they don’t understand them fully, but at least they know that mummy is late the other day or not with them during the weekend due to a specific reason.

## What about your husband? How does he support you?

My husband is someone who truly understands and accepts what I want to do. Also, he knows the program is just for 16 months and it is a great investment of time. Thus, during this time he takes a bigger charge of kids – he really loves spending time with them. We also learn a lot of things together; for example, we have attended the Montessori program for teaching kids. It has taught us a lot. Generally, we both make an effort to truly understand each other, so I also support him in what he wants to do.



## Can you tell us more about the Montessori program?

I would love to share this experience as I think everyone can benefit from Maria Montessori pedagogy system. I believe it is strongly applicable not only to kids, but also to all people and organizations. It really helps me to understand human psychology. For example, my second daughter was sometimes crying – she is usually tough to manage. Some parents would punish a kid to let him/her know what the correct action is.

However, according to the Montessori method, parents are encouraged to understand why kids act the way they do. So, I tried to talk to my second daughter about this and I learnt that she had tried to get my attention many times, but I hadn't responded. When I learnt this, I decided to spend a full day at a park together and this helped a lot. We wanted to make her understand that no matter how busy we are, we really love her.

This could help a lot even at a workplace, especially when someone is low on motivation. It is good to know the reason why people act the way they do, and people are always more motivated once they feel more understood. They feel more psychologically safe and better assured.

## **What are your mechanisms for coping with difficulties? What would you like to share with other women who may experience similar struggles?**

I would say that I take time to understand myself and a situation happening. I try to reflect on why I feel the way I do: is it external or internal? If it comes from the outside, I try to understand why someone would have acted the way they have or why something has turned out that way.

The first step is to understand this at an emotional level, as many of our reactions are very emotional. I spend some time on it – I cannot immediately switch to logical reasoning.

Only as a second step, did I come to consider what is happening rationally. Being a Christian, I believe I have some power in myself. I pray a lot and read the Bible. It's a very important aspect of my life to have such tough moments, as they are the best times to learn something new. Life has its peaks and troughs but the key is to try to understand why it is happening and then work on it. I also have a lot of self-belief, I feel like I can go through things with my family, friends, and myself.

## **Even without kids most of us at the MBA struggle to find time for all our activities. How do you prioritize?**

First, the most important is to make a choice. You just cannot do everything. What I do is, I really set my family to be my main priority and MBA studies – my second one. I think it is important to make a priority list and be clear about it. I think it is okay for me to not attend all the parties; for some, surely, I need to make an effort.



*Image by asrulaqroni on Freepik*



Second, I ensure people around me understand what I am doing. For example, last time I went to Paris for a networking event, and I was going to come back late. So, I told my kids about it one week in advance. When I let them know beforehand, they can plan something to do with their daddy. This once again addresses uncertainty, which makes kids afraid. Generally, sharing your situation with all stakeholders, even with classmates, really helps when you have such a tight agenda. Planning and transparency are really what is needed.

And the third last thing is trying to be efficient. I often start working only at nine or ten PM since before that I need to put my kids to bed. But when I work, I completely switch off all distractors; for instance, I keep my phone away in the other room or I use the time when I commute from Paris to campus to finish a lot of my admin work.

### **How do you feel about not attending so many social events, and how do you handle FOMO?**

Haha, yes, I understand completely. I don't think I can attend parties much, but I do set up one-to-one meetings with people, like lunch or coffee; it is a good way to connect with people and it allows me to remain more flexible at the same time as it is much easier to schedule one-to-ones. I do try to come to some social events, but I believe that personal meetups work better for me.

### **What is the toughest time you had so far on this journey? How did u deal with it and what did u learn from it?**

For me, the toughest part was to keep my mind open after having worked in only one sector (automotive) for many years. For the stats and marketing class, I saw some similar things. And then when you know something already, it is challenging to accept other points of view. This was very empowering for me, you always should keep your mind as a blank paper and be ready to absorb new ideas, and not hold on to only what you know. I really learned a lot of new things, especially the principal of why we do a lot of things in business. It is easy to say keep an open mind, but it is not easy to follow it.

# ALWAYS MOVING FORWARD



Anna Dragina  
*interviewed by Ana Arias Nava*

## **Quick Facts about Anna**

**Name:** Anna Dragina

**Nationality:** Russian

**Last city lived in:** Moscow, Russia

**What were you doing prior to starting your MBA at HEC Paris?:**

Working at L'Oreal as a CSR & Sustainability manager for 5 years.

## **What has been the most unexpected challenge of moving to France and HEC?**

Adapting to the culture as well as working with such a tight schedule, which I was not expecting. When I had conversations with alumni of the MBA, they mentioned that you really learn to manage your time during the program. I thought that since I had already worked for an international company, I knew how to do this, but it has certainly been more demanding than I originally anticipated. Everything new for me here in France adds to the challenge. For example, I really had to create a new social life, manage my family and take care of my dog, attend to admin and also try to squeeze time to take care of myself. Back in Moscow I had a routine and I knew what I was doing; at work, some projects could go on without me or with minimal guidance from my side but here my full attention needs to go from one place to another since I am still learning and getting used to living here.

## Is this the first time you live abroad?

Yes.

## Is this the first time you have had to build a new network of support away from home?

Yes, and this has been quite a challenging aspect of my new life here. I don't have my full family here or my long-time friends that I could usually rely on without reservations. It has been quite overwhelming to build new relationships and a new network from scratch, it takes time to develop a strong link with people and to feel comfortable relying on them and knowing that they will support you in what you do.

For me, the main change has been not having family here. For example, I got an internship here in Paris, but I didn't know I needed to commute to the internship every day and this is not accessible for me as I have limited mobility. This highlighted the feeling that I am missing my support network which could help out by driving me there. Now I have to find a solution – this is quite specific to me and no one on campus can really help me with this on a daily basis, I need to find a solution on my own. To be honest, I am not sure if it is a factor in building a new network or if it is the fact that this is a new place for me and I am still learning my way around. So far the solution is that my husband and I will drive my car from St. Petersburg, as it seems this is the only solution in order to have access to a car on campus.



## **How do you deal with the additional mental burden to have to coordinate and anticipate the inaccessibility of buildings/places to attend events?**

My approach is that: whatever happens, happens. I just get mentally prepared for this. If something happens, I try to find a solution. If I find a solution, great! If not... well it happens. You can't dwell on this. You have to focus on continuing to move forward.

## **If there was one thing you could change on campus to make your life easier, what would it be?**

For me, a constant direct connection from campus to Paris would be the main thing. The metro is not accessible for wheelchairs and taking buses requires changing a few times and this is quite tiring. Only buses, RER, and taxis are accessible for me, but clearly, taxis are prohibitively expensive to use on a daily basis.

## **Do you think your experience differs much from other MBAs? If so, what do you think is the main difference?**

I don't think it differs that much, but some events are a bit tougher to get to. I was really enjoying my first months on campus in January and February, but then the war in Ukraine happened and the prospect of home got very far. This has affected my experience here as we are worried about our family and what will happen next. I think this is what has affected my experience the most so far.

## **Is there anyone you admire or who inspires you?**

I have been inspired by (almost) all the people that I've met – especially here at HEC Paris. I try to find beauty in all the people that I meet and so far it has been easy on campus. There is always someone interesting, with an inspirational story as to how they ended up here. Listening to each and everyone's story really makes this experience special. I can confirm that my friends inspire me the most.





# WIL HIGHLIGHTS



**HEC Paris Women in Leadership Club is proud to welcome Bank of America as our partner!**

*"...In 1919, Charlie Merrill hired Annie Grimes, the first bond saleswoman on Wall Street..."* That was the pioneering move from Bank of America toward building an equal workplace back in these days. Today, with more than 40% of female managers, Bank of America is committed to improving the gender balance and encouraging career development and support for female colleagues.

We are proud to be associated with Bank of America, which demonstrates its active efforts to expand and support opportunities for women not in their workplaces only but also out in the world!

**Stay tuned for events and collaborations between Bank of America and HEC Women in Leadership Club!**

# WIL HIGHLIGHTS

## VIRTUAL EVENTS

### BAIN & COMPANY

The first virtual event of the year was on 30 June 2022.

**Bain & Company** launched the 7th edition of the **Women Lead to Inspire MBA Fellowship** at HEC Paris, which is open to the HEC Paris S22 Women interested in a consulting career in Europe, the Middle East, or Africa.

During this event, we learned more about the program and requirements and had a chance to ask our questions directly to the Bain&Company team.



On 2 August 2022, Amazon hosted the **Women in Business - MBA Insights** virtual event. The session was followed by a Q&A, and we learned more about the Amazon MBA Launch program in the EMEA region.

# WIL HIGHLIGHTS

## WOMEN IN AMAZON LUNCHTIME EVENT



On 5 September 2022, we joined the "Women in Amazon" lunchtime event that was held by Amazon Launch and Amazon Pathways teams.

This stand-up buffet lunch was a unique opportunity for those who want to hear more about the Amazon programs and interact with program representatives.

We would like to thank Amazon for this lovely event!



# WIL HIGHLIGHTS

## LADIES' MIXER EVENT

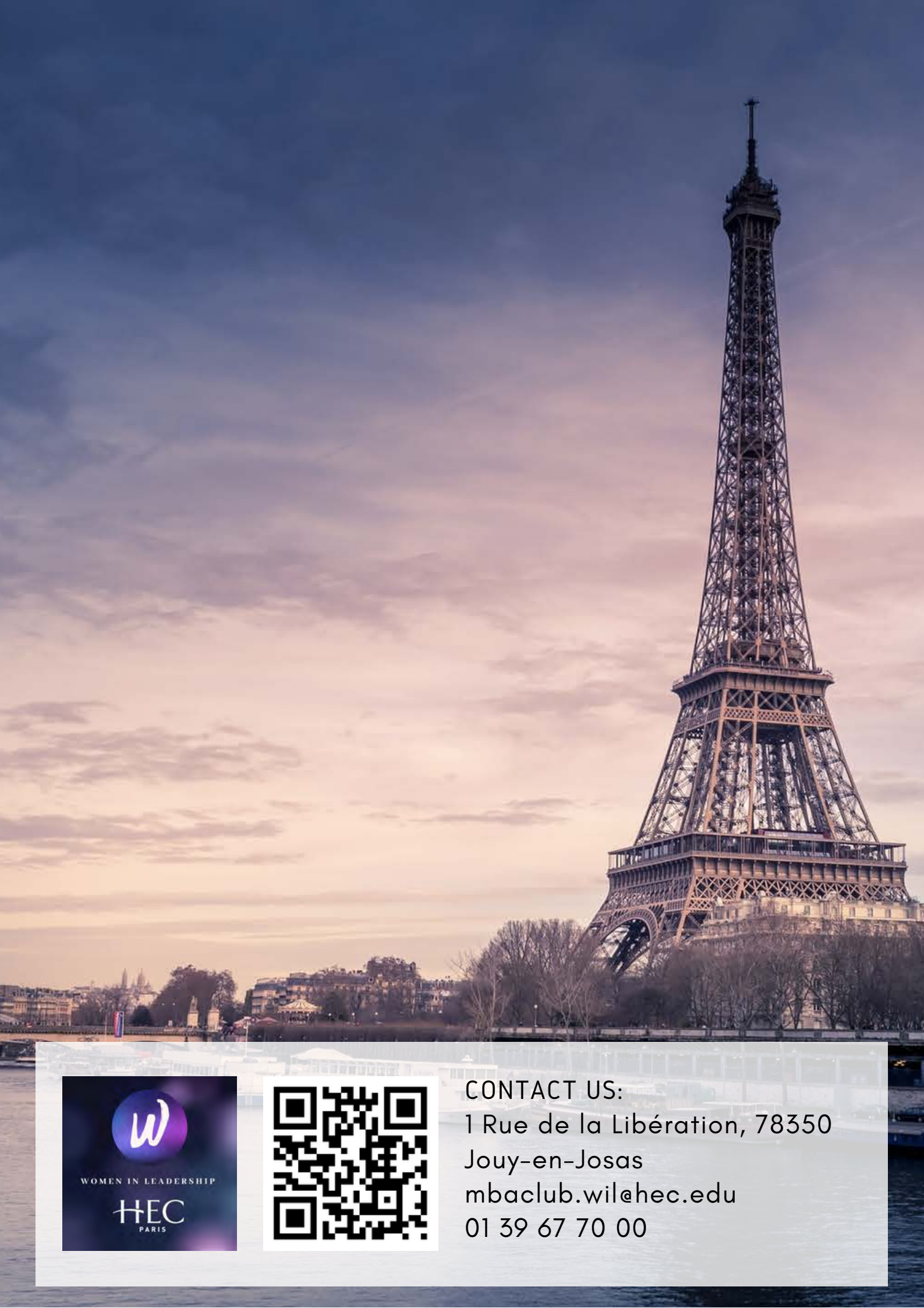


We welcomed our dear S22 friends with our first ladies' mixer event on 8 September! Patti Brown, the executive director of the HEC Paris MBA program was also with us.

It was a great opportunity for all of us to get to know each other better, and spend some good time together!







CONTACT US:

1 Rue de la Libération, 78350

Jouy-en-Josas

[mbaclub.wil@hec.edu](mailto:mbaclub.wil@hec.edu)

01 39 67 70 00