

MY CAREER STORY

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Meet Carolyn McKecuen

Entrepreneur
and executive
director of the Take
Our Daughters and
Sons to Work
Foundation



One thing led to another...

I have had lots of careers over the years and they all had one thing in common. They always involved helping people in one way or another. I started my career as a surgical nurse where I helped people needing help in a medical way.

When my children were small, I decided to take a break and did something completely different. I set up a pottery studio and started sculpting caricatures of people. I even did sculptures for celebrities like the world famous chef, Julia Childs.

One day I realized that if I could manufacture and sell my art, then I could help other people do it to. I eventually set up a co-op, called Watermark, to help low-income women sell their crafts. Hundreds of women joined the co-op and we sold their crafts all over the world.

It was so exciting to see these women become self-sufficient. This work took me places I never expected to be. We made products for famous fashion designers, big New York City department stores, and 100s of other companies. I also traveled the world teaching other people how to set up co-ops like ours.

Making opportunities for other people...

Watermark was more successful than I ever dreamed possible and I worked with some wonderful people. I even won a Genuis award from the MacArthur Foundation for coming up with such a creative solution to the problem of poverty.

My next career was to take on the role of executive director for the Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Foundation. This organization helps students get big ideas about their future careers. Every year students visit the workplaces of employers to find out more about career opportunities. Last year, this included more than 40 million students in the United States and 80 countries around the world.

It is wonderful to help so many young people. One of my favorite stories is about a young girl who participated in the event one year and had to do a report in her class. She told her teacher that when she grew up she wanted "to be Carolyn McKecuen."

Go to Work!

April 23, 2020 is the official Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work day. Millions of students around the world will visit the places where their parents, neighbors, or other trusted adults work. It's a great way to get ideas for your future career.

Your parent or teacher can find out more about how to get involved by visiting <https://daughtersandsonstowork.org>.

Your Career Clues

What big goal would you most like to accomplish in your future work? Write your answer here:

CAROLYN MCKECUEN'S CAREER CLUES:

I always knew I wanted to help people and all my careers have let me do that in different ways.

My best advice is...