# SST Podcast S2 - Episode 7 - Lisa Templeton

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Welcome to Going Online with Oregon State University Ecampus.

I'm your host Eddie Rodriguez, the Student Engagement Program Manager with Oregon State Ecampus.

I'll be giving you the lowdown on resources and tools for online learners across the globe.

Ecampus serves more than 13,000 online learners each year through over 100 online degrees and programs. Let's get into it.

Welcome, everybody!

Welcome to another episode of Going Online with Oregon State University Ecampus.

I'm your host Eddie Rodriguez, the Student Engagement Program Manager here at Ecampus and today I have a very special guest.

Somebody who I've been really looking forward to bringing on to the podcast to get to know them sort of on this level in terms of just hearing about their experiences.

They're somebody you know I've admired for a long time given their leadership so I'm just really excited if you can't already tell but today I have the privilege of introducing you all to the Vice Provost of Oregon State University's division of Educational Ventures, Lisa Templeton.

And for those who don't know who she is I'll just read a little bit of her bio here just to kind of give you a bit of context so for all you listeners.

So, Lisa leads a dynamic team focused on growing OSU's national and international work as an innovator in the delivery of education.

Lisa and the division work in partnership with colleges across campus to offer in demand academic programs and alternative credentials through the use of different modalities including online and on-site as well as emerging technologies and pedagogies.

With a focus on quality under Lisa's leadership since 2008, Oregon State un-- University Ecampus, part of the division of educational ventures, has established OSU as a national leader in the field of online education.

Ecampus currently offers over 100 online degrees and programs and has nearly 15,000 online students enrolled.

Lisa is active nationally in the field of online and continuing education and has served in numerous leadership roles. She is the past president of the University Professional and Continuing Education Association.

So, without further ado, Lisa, how are you doing today?

[Lisa] I'm doing well, thanks so much Eddie for inviting me. I really appreciate it.

[Eddie] Yeah, really really excited to have you and yeah maybe just to start us off and get to know a little bit about you yeah do you mind introducing yourself maybe a little bit more?

Even like where did you grow up? Your educational background and you know did any of that influence you and kind of lead to your involvement within the online learning landscape?

[Lisa] Yeah, great no I'm happy to share so I grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio so I am a Midwesterner, and after I graduated high school I attended the Ohio State University-- I had to put that "the" in there and did my undergraduate there.

After I graduated, I spent most of my 20s moving around and living in some different areas across the United States, and ended up also living in Toronto, Canada, and really working in the field primarily in marketing.

At the time, I had a boyfriend and we decided to get married and he was a PhD student at Oregon State University.

So, when we got married we said you know "I'm living in Canada, you're living in the U.S. why don't we get together?" and so we moved to Corvallis, Oregon and it was really different.

It was the kind of first small town I'd ever lived in. I'd been living in Cincinnati, I lived in Fort Worth, Salt Lake City, DC, Toronto, and then I came to Corvallis, Oregon.

So, it was a big adjustment but I've really learned to love this community and this University.

So, I got a job at Oregon State University focusing more on marketing and I had a couple roles but then I moved to a unit that was called distance and continuing education.

And it was a really small unit and our focus was primarily on continuing education and I laugh because distance education at the time was faculty driving a distance.

You know, teaching a class in Salem or in Bend, there wasn't online and so when this whole internet came to be we really made a concerted effort to start teaching our classes and developing our classes and delivering our classes online.

And because we are such a small unit I found myself as you know on the leadership team of this distance continuing education unit but really engaging more in course development and working with faculty and I was definitely feeling out of my comfort zone. Some imposter syndrome like I don't know anything about online pedagogy and teaching and learning.

So, at that time, I decided to go back to school and I went on and got my Master's in adult education and I really focused on online education and that was huge.

So, for me I think I have a pretty unique background where I have this kind of marketing side, this where I kind of grew up really understanding markets and then I have this adult learner side, understanding adult learner and learning theory and online pedagogy.

So, it's I think a unique background to have you know both education and the business side but I think it really lends itself well to being in online education.

And so, as the unit evolved and changed many times with many different names my position has evolved and changed and I'm thrilled that I have spent over 20 years working for this division and really proud of the team that we have now and what we've been able to accomplish and really grow and lead in the online education realm.

[Eddie] Yeah, wow I appreciate you yeah just giving us that full insight into your journey. I mean it's awesome to kind of you know hear that you were in a lot of different places and then you know, ultimately, hopefully fell in love with Corvallis because you know you now been here for so for so long.

I, again, still imagine probably that transition was maybe a bit of a shock, especially if you're kind of in those bigger cities and you know larger urban areas it's a diff different pace.

But I really appreciate you highlighting your background in terms of that marketing piece but then also the adult learner education.

You know, as someone who I want to say relatively new because I've now been here for a few years but you know one of the first things I learned coming into Ecampus and sort of you know online education is we do have a lot of adult learners.

And so I imagine kind of in some ways probably really being at that forefront at that time with that background probably really you know helped you kind of yeah continue to develop ideas and you know kind of evolve within your work too.

[Lisa] Yeah, I think what's great is I was one of our students, right? When I went on for my Masters in adult education I had two young children, I was working full-time, and I was a student.

So, you know Eddie because you work with our students all the time, these are busy people. They're juggling a lot in life very similar to what I was doing.

They're working, they're raising families, they're caring for their you know adult family members, whatever it may be so being able to have the flexibility of online learning and fitting in when they have time for it in their day is really important.

So, yeah I think having that background and also being an adult learner myself has really lent itself well.

[Eddie] Yeah, yeah absolutely I can totally see how it probably has just informed a lot of the you know different initiatives and you know programming efforts and just all kinds of support that has happened yeah to just better aid our students in their journey as they're trying to navigate everything.

One of the things you were also talking about is that you know the division has gone through a lot of different name changes, iterations, and rightfully so, right?

Things have changed, technology has changed, you know but for listeners who aren't familiar what comprises the Division of Educational Ventures?

[Lisa] Yeah, so in August of last year, 23, the provost developed this new division called the Division of Educational Ventures and it is really exciting. I think it's a game changer for Oregon State University and I know I have a lot of peers around the country like "Huh, what are you doing now, Lisa? What does this look like?"

So, really this division is charged with creating new and innovative educational pathways to an OSU credential.

At OSU, we've been offering degrees for over 150 years, right? We've offered Bachelors, and Masters, and PhDs and we're still going to do that but what else should we be offering at Oregon State University?

What does a modern learner need? Maybe it's not a degree. Maybe it's something else.

So, part of the division is looking at alternative credentials.

We are really focusing on some micro credentials, we're looking at you know what about a micro Masters or what about other types of alternative credentials? Stackable degrees? So we're really focusing on the area of alternative credentials.

Additionally, in this division, we are looking at ways to save students money; access and affordability are really a high priority for us.

So, in that realm, we're looking at corporate and workforce education as well.

And what's exciting about the work we're doing in corporate government workforce education is we're creating collaborations with corporations and entities, government agencies, to be the online education provider for their employees.

And what I love about this is these organizations that we're collaborating with are funding either partially or fully their employees' education so this is a way to help students graduate with no debt or less debt.

So, it's been a really exciting growth area for us to work in corporate education.

Another thing we're doing, another part of the division is a open educational resources unit. And, in this unit, we're working with faculty across the university whether they're teaching online, on-site, in Bend, to help them if they want to incorporate open educational resources into their classrooms.

So, that means free textbooks possibly, discounted course materials, and again the goal is to save students cost. Last year students saved over $4 million by our faculty adopting open educational resources in their classrooms.

So, we have on top of that, we have also moved to our division, I think something really interesting and it's called "The Center for Outdoor Recreation Economy" and so that's a part of our division.

As you know, Oregon the outdoor rec is a big part of our world and our economy so we're creating programs, educational programs with different entities within the outdoor recreation world.

And, an additional unit in our division is an Ecampus research unit and this is really exciting.

With our research unit, we are conducting new research in online education. Our research team works with faculty across campus and we have a faculty fellows program.

We're working collaboratively to develop research and online education and the research we're doing here is informing the entire online education world-- I know we have peers across the country who love the research that's coming out of our research unit.

So, that's been really exciting to be able to grow that area as well.

And, finally, Ecampus is part of our division and it's the biggest part of our division.

We are diligently trying to grow in demand online new degree programs and support students, our almost 15,000 students who are enrolled in our degree programs.

So, those are the units across the division. It's been really exciting. It's been fun to bring in some new units and to have some additional targets but it's a lot.

We've got a lot going on but it's all really good stuff and we're really excited about the growth of the division.

[Eddie] Yeah, no wow you know when you lay it all out like that it's pretty extensive and, honestly, it's really exciting to see all the you know different work that's happening in these different units and you know as somebody that's in one specific area like it's nice to see that a lot of these other units are sort of doing work that is in response to what I feel like our students are saying, right?

When we especially, you know, you mentioned things like affordability and access and often that comes up about like gosh how can I how can I even afford you know online education or how can I make this work?

And so things like the open educational resources for you know students who maybe can't afford textbooks and being able to access free textbooks that's I mean that's huge.

So, really exciting that we've grown and branched out like that in sort of direct response to what our students are saying.

Kind of the other thing that's been coming up for me and as I kind of look at this next question is so obviously looking at your work and you know your leadership and all this... in leading the division of educational ventures what are some exciting opportunities and unique challenges you've encountered that distinguish online education from traditional modalities?

[Lisa] Yeah, that's a great question, Eddie and I think at Oregon State University I'm really proud of our University and that we offer a variety of delivery modalities, right?

Students can swirl. They can take campus courses in Bend, they can take campus courses in Corvallis, or they can take online courses and I love that.

Some universities don't do that, you know, the campus based students take campus courses, the online students take online courses.

So, I think this is a big distinguisher for us is that we make all of our courses available to all of our students.

Whether you take a course online or on site, it's going to have the exact same learning outcomes so students hand swirl. You can be a campus based student.

One term you need to go home, something's happening with your family you can still continue to take your courses at home and switch to be an online learner.

I think there are some definite differences though in online courses and site based courses.

I would say one of the big differentiations is what I always tell students is to be successful in an online course you have to be self-motivated.

Really, you know in a classroom on campus, you got to show up at that 10 a.m. class, you know you got to go, you go for that hour, and you leave.

Online there's a lot of flexibility about when you log in and when you log off so you really have to be self-motivated, regimented to make sure that you're able to kind of manage that. That flexibility that's given to you as an online student.

I think on the positive side, one of the things I love about online learning is more time on task.

The example I always say is and I'm sure you did this in your education as well. Have you ever been in a classroom where a faculty member is you know standing up front and you're sitting in the back and they say something and the person next to you crumbles a piece of paper or coughs and you're like "huh?"

[Eddie] Yeah, haha.

[Lisa] You know, I missed what they said.

[Eddie] Yep.

[Lisa] That's gone. So, what I love about online learning is that you know that day you were stressed out and you were thinking about an issue or daydreaming or whatever it may be. Not that you ever did that but me I would daydream sometimes.

So, what I love about online education is if we, and we do a lot of videos, short videos; 15 minutes of a faculty member talking. If you didn't get something or missed it you can watch it again and again. If you didn't understand a word that the faculty member used you can go look it up and then turn the video back on.

If there's an assignment or an activity in the class and it was a tough one, do it again.

So, I love that there's more time on tasks that you're not limited to that 50 minute or that hour class and I think that's really helpful for a lot of learners to have that flexibility.

I also love I think what's been going on in online education is all the advances that technology has enabled us to do.

I you know when I talk with the course development team or they show me a course I'm blown away at what we're able to do online now.

I mean things that we couldn't do three years ago we can do now so we always you know are focusing on those learning outcomes.

We're not about bells and whistles like let's just put a technology or something in it because it's cool.

It's really about the learning. How are we going to help students learn in an online class and how are we going to help them achieve those learning outcomes of the course? And it's just the technological advances have been just amazing over the years.

So, I guess I'd say finally online education isn't for everyone and again kind of ending where I started was that's why at Oregon State University we have options.

Some students really prefer online learning and good for us as the land grant institution to provide that off option for learners who prefer this modality or need this modality and good for us for also having site-based programs for students who enjoy and prefer that modality.

So, it's really I think a student center approach to offer options and letting the student pick the modality that works best for them.

[Eddie] Yeah, no absolutely. Well said, and I think something that was coming up for me as you were just highlighting some of the differences and kind of unique you know opportunities that students have that are online is flexibility, right?

I think that's the word that comes to mind and something I think we also hear from our students is being able to you know kind of sit down and that time on task that you're describing and to really just kind of chip a away sort of you know when they can but still of course adhering to all the dates and deadlines but just kind of in that that maybe comfort of their own space where they feel like they can probably perform at their best.

You know, granted right you were also saying it maybe it's not for everybody but being able to offer that is so huge for our students to have that flexibility who are again are having to probably juggle a lot.

One of the things too that I'm just curious, again, I mean there's just so much going on in that process of you know even delivering an online course and offering all the support mechanisms for our students to be successful.

Have there been any in your kind of leadership role any challenges with any of that or any just kind of unique opportunities that have allowed you to like "oh yeah let's change this for our students to you know do better within their you know coursework" or anything like that? Is anything coming up for you?

[Lisa] So, we're always evolving in this organization and learning from our students because we have such a great student success team that is talking to our students you know frequently, daily.

We're learning a lot about what the students need and because of this we've been able to change University policies that really weren't effective for online students.

So, it's really important for us to hear from our students because we're an organization that is growing and we are willing to advocate for our students to make sure that what we're delivering for them works.

Again, when you take a traditional site-based Uni--University and turn it into also an online universities there's some pieces that don't translate perfectly well.

So, over the years that we've been doing this we've been identifying those policies or where there's those points that like "ah that works well for a site-based student but that really doesn't make sense for an online student."

So, it's absolutely been a priority of mine to make sure that this University creates system, and policies, and support that is effective not only for our traditional students but we're also thinking of online students.

And I think what's been really great, Eddie is because I have been here a while just to see the culture change at OSU.

It used to be when we started Ecampus we weren't necessarily at the table for big policies. It was more secondary, right? We've got this huge number of campus students and we got this small population of online so they were thinking I think we were thinking as University primarily as you know the needs of the campus student.

Well that has totally changed. As we're growing and our students we have a significant student population there is not one discussion, one table we're not at Ecampus so I think it's been really great to help the university kind of think about this cultural shift of having you know on-campus students and online students and they're both a priority for OSU.

[Eddie] Yeah, thank you Lisa. That's yeah that's helpful to see that yeah there's you know a lot of work going on to yeah as you know potential barriers or challenges come up that you know we do have dedicated team the student success team that is listening to those concerns and finding ways to either change policy or influence you know the thoughts of you know other campus partners who maybe haven't thought about the online learner.

So, that's great to kind of learn and hear that that work is happening.

Shifting gears a little bit, Oregon State University recently launched a new strategic plan and I think you were referring to that early on in your introduction.

"Prosperity widely shared with some exciting goals like every student graduates." I'm curious could you share more what this goal means?

[Lisa] Yeah, I mean what a goal. Every student graduates. I think as people read it their jaw kind of hit the floor thinking "what?"

But you know what if you think about it this is bold and we have a bold president who I have such great respect for and she wanted a bold strategic plan.

And when people start a degree you know I say they want to finish the degree and graduate in general, right? That is their goal they don't often say "I want to come to a university and not finish my degree, be in debt, and not have the benefit of a degree."

So, what if we at Oregon State University had the mindset of every student graduates?

And that's kind of really what it is. It's not necessarily a metric because we know there's going to be some students who don't graduate from Oregon State but what if we have the mindset that every student graduates.

You know, if Oregon State isn't the right place for them and they end up at another University and graduate, great!

But we want to do what we can at Oregon State University to help that student graduate and I think just even putting this in the strategic plan has faculty and staff all across the University talking about this and thinking about this and that's the point.

We really want to focus on student success and helping our students graduate and meet that gold.

So, I love this. I know some people may not love this so much but to me I think, again, this mindset of we're here to help our students graduate and achieve that goal is critical.

[Eddie] Yeah, I know I'll be honest I think when I first heard it too I was like "oh gosh, every student graduate? How are we going to do that?" but as I learned more and as I've heard you know from you and other folks across campus, it really is kind of about being invested in the student and making sure that you know we're supportive of whatever they feel is best for them.

You know and so as you were saying you know if that means you know having to finish their degree elsewhere or maybe taking some time and then coming back... that that's okay and that we're going to be here for them no matter what and support them along their way.

So, yeah I definitely love this goal as well so it's awesome to see that. We've kind of put it out there now.

[Lisa] Yeah.

[Eddie] Another question that's been coming up for me that I was curious to hear from you and you were, again, talking about it early on you know with the rise of online learning institutions have recently started implementing you know micro credentials and, again, you talked a little bit about it but could you explain further to our audience what a micro credential is and why the division has invested in this?

[Lisa] Yeah, I love talking about one. This is really a fun part of our job. It's kind of innovating and creating, again, new pathways to an OSU credential.

So, we know that not everyone has time for a degree and we know that not everyone has the resources for the degree but we know there are a lot of people out there who need to upskill and reskill and that is really the thought behind micro credentials.

Oregon State University, as you know, is the Land Grand Institution and part of our mission is access.

We want to be accessible to the people of the state and now with online beyond the state but how do we make Oregon State more accessible for those who don't want a degree for whatever reason it is?

So, the thinking behind micro credentials is what if we create a new credential. Not a degree but it is still Oregon State University faculty, it's still Oregon State quality but it's a smaller credential and what we have defined "micro credentials" at Oregon State and every University who's doing this is defining it a little different which is problematic.

But, at Oregon State University, we you're saying three courses that are for credit courses that are bundled together in a theme and the student, once they complete it, they're awarded a digital badge and that is a micro credential at Oregon State.

So, it's faster, it's three courses, it's less expensive because it's only three courses, and what I love about them is they're stackable into a degree.

So, again, if you a learner adult learner working you're like "ugh I really need to reskill in an area so I can get that promotion but I don't have time for a whole degree" a micro credential might be a way to go.

You start off with just those three courses. If you had a really good experience you like the learning you can embed those courses into that degree.

So, we're really excited. We've been in pilot mode just kind of trying this. We have over 40 micro credentials that we have been offering and every term the enrollment has increased since we started doing this.

The problem we're having is that there's really lack of awareness. You know, people don't generally say "oh yeah I know what a micro credential is" when they're out there and hire ad we know so our phenomenal marketing team is doing, you know just great work trying to build that awareness of what micro credentials are? why they're valuable and letting people know that Oregon state is offering them.

But I think it's going to be a really important part of our portfolio. I think if we fast forward five years from now it's going to take us a little while to get there. I think micro credentials are going to be more mainstream and very popular.

[Eddie] Yeah, wow no yeah I was thinking about, again, what you were talking about earlier in terms of like the affordability and access and I feel like with the introduction of micro credentials in some ways it's kind of addressing that too because it's opening the doors for you know folks who are wanting to continue their education but maybe aren't ready either to commit to a full degree or as you were saying maybe they're in a position where they're really just needing that you know micro credential or that credential to get to that next step in in their position.

So, it's great and great that they're stackable too to again kind of continue to build and maybe get to that full degree if that's kind of a goal of the student later on so that that's awesome.

Now, with that though, it seems like there's obviously more things coming on as the division is growing so for our audience who's interested you know in terms a little bit about behind the scenes of online education you know how does the University or division maintain and ensure the quality of online education?

[Lisa] Yeah, yeah another really good question. So, not all online education is the same so I want to say that and I also want to say we are not Zoom University.

So, those of you who during the pandemic just watching a faculty speak via zoom and think that's online education well that is not online education at Oregon State University.

At Oregon State University, we take a lot of pride in the quality of our courses and we put significant resources into development of courses.

We have at Oregon State University a faculty member that is determined by the academic college so they have an OSU faculty member who is the content expert the subject matter expert and then on the Ecampus side we have instructional designers who understand best practices in online pedagogy.

And I think our secret sauce is we partner them together and what they do is they design the course together so they start with the learning outcomes and they do backwards design.

So, if we're saying this is a business 101 course we teach on campus, how in the world are we going to teach it online? Well, together they designed the course and Oregon State University Ecampus has an award-winning stellar multimedia team.

And the way we design our courses is that instructional designer and faculty members they're designing the courses if they need a video or they need an animation or an activity that faculty member, again, let's use that example is that business faculty they might not know exactly how to do a online animation video, etc.

So, we have a great multimedia team to support in that course development process so it's really a full service support for faculty and not many universities do that. A lot of universities have that faculty member kind of just building it on their own and I think that is really as I said kind of our secret sauce is having the quality faculty member and this whole team of instructional designs, multi instructional designers, multimedia professional building these courses together.

[Eddie] Yeah, no that's great. I appreciate kind of highlighting a little bit of that work that's being done because it really kind of feel like highlights the commitment to that quality aspect and making sure that you know courses are being delivered well.

[Lisa] Yeah, and what the team really focuses on is interaction.

Again, we don't want this. We don't want to take what doesn't work on campus and put it online which is a long lecture so what our courses try to do is have three forms of interaction in them.

So, we try to have as we design a course the students interacting with the faculty member within the course first. Second, would be the student interacting with other students and, third, would be the student interacting with content.

If we can do all three forms of interaction we've got ourselves a quality course so that is really the goal is to have these courses engaging and interactive and often you know I think there's sometimes more interaction in an online course and there isn't a site based course.

So, we've really I think just mastered how to design a quality course with our academic partners within the colleges.

Yeah, absolutely one thing that that's coming to mind too as you're kind of describing all that work is I imagine that you know there's also just a lot of thought going into you know the kind of accessibility piece to you know being inclusive because you're I imagine having to meet the needs of obviously a lot of unique learners.

So, with that, my next question is, you know diversity is a key consideration in education so I'm curious how does the division address the needs of diverse learners and create an inclusive environment?

[Lisa] Yeah, this is really important to all of us at Ecampus. We recently created an inclusive excellence strategic plan with this goal of how are we going to help create an inclusive environment for our very diverse students and what kind of student resources do they need?

We have you know students who live all over the country from different backgrounds with different challenges. We have students who are living in foreign countries while they're taking their courses and how do we help them feel like you know if you're living in Maine or you're living in Taiwan, how do we make you feel like a Beav, right?

How do we help create a community? A sense of belonging when we have such diverse students of varied ages and backgrounds?

And, I think one of the exciting things we did was hire you Eddie! We felt like it was really important for us to have someone on point to help us think about student engagement and so I imagine you viewers have heard what Eddie does over the years but he is just stellar at his work and he is our students engagement program manager dedicated to building new initiatives and partnerships.

He's working with our cultural resource center, with the tribes, with alumni networks really to help with that sense of belonging so I think it's the work you're doing is really critical and I want to give a shout out to our entire student success team.

We have success coaches. Not every university offers this service. This is a free service for our learners really to help them with any challenges they have, help them navigate University from a distance.

It's hard to navigate a university when you're here on campus, especially some people who haven't been in school for 20-30 years. This could be challenging to come back.

Some have never been to a traditional University, they're first gen students. A lot of the terminology we use is foreign to them so really we have this dedicated team.

This has been a priority of mine to have a team, a growing team, here to support students because, as we said, our goal is every student graduates and if we aren't here to support the students it's not going to happen.

So, we've dedicated a lot of time and resources into this and it's pretty critical for our division of educational ventures.

[Eddie] Yeah, well I appreciate the kudos and couldn't agree more on the work that's being done within the student success team and all those really kind of involved because it is a team effort and everyone's committed to making sure everyone feels like they're a beaver, everyone feels like they belong, and they have those support networks in place to be successful.

[Lisa] And I love how you all have. I'm really excited the work that you and the team have done to give our students access to things five years ago they didn't have access to.

So, some of them I know we have student clubs that they can participate in, we have an Honor Society now that our students can be a part of.

We just created a ways for our students to have access to the Honors College and be Honors College student. What else am I missing? You know this more than me.

[Eddie] Oh gosh I mean there's a lot I mean even just the recognition right of students who make the honor roll, for example, we've started you know mailing out some just some little things I don't want to give it away for anybody who maybe hasn't made the honor roll yet and is planning to in the near future but there's some stuff we send out.

So, yeah I mean there's just been a lot absolutely and you know it's been exciting to partner with like the cultural resource centers and offer some of the life programming.

Something that yeah we just hadn't done you know a few years back as he were saying so.

[Lisa] And then the work you're doing with the tribes-- I'm all of a sudden taking charge sorry, Eddie but let everyone know because the work you're doing with the tribe is really important.

[Eddie] Yeah, I know thanks for putting me on the spot Lisa I appreciate that! No but you're absolutely right I mean one of the other things here is our travel communities initiative which really started out as, in some ways, as an effort to, one, I feel like rebuild our relationships with our Oregon tribes given kind of the history of you know at times maybe not following through with certain things and commitments and so really kind of being able to take a step forward and be like "okay, we're here we want to be you know supportive and helpful in any way we can."

And so it really started off as kind of building the relationships to really kind of formalizing you know partnerships to you know for any of their students who were wanting to get pursue a degree online that you know they had a direct point of contact through me as the as a former success coach and now student engagement program manager in helping them navigate the admissions process, to the onboarding process, to just you know addressing any concerns and really kind of being intentional with that.

To then, again, partnering with some of our on campus resources like our Ina house which supports a lot of our tribal and indigenous students both on campus, to online, to now some of our alumni networks and partnering with them to you know get students connected to you know a potential industry if they're looking for a career later on and so getting connected with folks who come from their communities but are potentially already in in the workforce.

So, really kind of just building some bridges there so yeah to even just different scholarship opportunities. So, I mean there the list can kind of go on but yeah there's some few things happening.

[Lisa] You and your team do amazing work so thank you for that and thank you for answering the question better than I could've.

[Eddie] Yeah so I know we're coming up at time and I only have a few more questions and so the next one.

In your role, how do you see the division of educational ventures contributing to the overall success of the University?

[Lisa] Yeah, in many ways. As I mentioned briefly before, I think our access mission is critical and I think for us the people that work for the division of educational ventures I think we all believe strongly in this. This access mission that we want learners no matter where they are to be able to have access to an Oregon State education.

So, you know you live in eastern Oregon you're not going to be able to come to Corvallis for a 10 a.m. course.

So, what we have really done is we've taken you know the best of Oregon State University and are delivering it in a more accessible way for diverse learners.

So, that I think has been just, you know, always important to us and that's kind of where we started this division.

But I think for me what wasn't expected but what we have done is we've I think created better learning for all OSU students by the work that we do at Ecampus and in the division.

I'll give an example. There was a faculty member once who I was working with and he was told by his department that he had to develop an online course and he didn't want to.

He said there's no way I can get my content to the students in an online environment if I'm not looking at my students and they're not looking at me and seeing my facial reaction, there's no there's no way we're going to be able to achieve the learning outcomes.

But, he had to do it and so he went through our training program and all faculty went through the training program and worked with our instructional designer and our multimedia team and built the online course. He offered it and after the first term he offered it he wrote me an email and he said "wow" he said "I had more engagement in my online course than I've ever had in my site-based course" and he said "Lisa can I use some of the multimedia that the team developed in my site based course?" and I'm like please.

You know we're one OSU so if we can take what we're doing the hard work that the team does developing the courses online and also use it on campus well then students are getting a better learning experience no matter where they're taking our courses.

So, I'm really proud of the fact that I think the division has improved learning in courses. I also am really proud of the fact of the entrepreneurial spirit of this unit that we think a little differently than many units on campus like let's try a micro credential, let's try a stackable degree.

So, we're really kind of thinking and that's I guess the word the venture side. Let's try some new things.

So, I think it's really important that the university has the traditional programs and structures but has also a unit like us out there kind of thinking differently and pushing back on some things and trying some things and some we know won't work.

You know some of the new programs and initiatives but some will and again they'll meet the needs of the learners and that's what we're really focused on.

[Eddie] Yeah, wow, very exciting and yeah that's awesome, Lisa. Thank you for sharing and you know to come to a close here my last question; can you highlight any recent milestones or achievements of the division that you're particularly proud of?

[Lisa] Yeah, so many I don't have the time. I'm so-- first let me say I'm just so proud of the team, right? I hope you agree but I just feel like the division of educational ventures is a great place to work.

We've hired the right people so that's what I'm really proud of. I work with people who are smart, dedicated, creative, fun every day, and the team has been the success.

We've had a lot of people who've made this their home for their career because of the Innovative work we're doing and the mission of what we're trying to do is to bring education to learners, making Oregon State more accessible.

So, I'd say I'm particularly proud of the team here. That is one thing and what we've been able to accomplish in all of our various units within the division.

Some people don't like rankings and some people do like rankings but I am proud of the fact that US News and World Report has ranked Ecampus as, for online education, as the one of the top 10 providers in the country for 10 years in a row.

No other university, public or private, has been ranked in the top 10 for 10 straight years other than us and this year we were ranked number four.

So, that is a point of pride, again, if you don't like rankings I understand but that does feel good because, as I said, we have such a creative talented team where we're working really hard.

People are putting in a lot of hours to develop these quality courses and programs to create new innovative programs to support our students so we're working hard and it's really nice to be recognized for the good work.

[Lisa] Yeah, I couldn't agree more with you, Lisa. I truly believe yeah we do have some of the best people here at the division working and doing some incredible thing so, but, with that, I can't thank you enough for coming on.

I really appreciate you answering these questions, giving us a little inside look into your work and your leadership so I appreciate your time.

[Lisa] My pleasure, thanks so much for inviting me, Eddie.

[Music]