

IGNITE & INSPIRE SERIES

Brand Innovation and Personal Branding

Tuesday, September 24, 2024 | 4:30 - 6:00pm | BBC 032

MODERATOR

SPEAKERS



**Rangapriya
Kannan, PhD.**

Dean, Lucas
College and
Graduate School of
Business, SJSU



**Yolanda
Canny**

Founder, "Girl,
Take the Lead!"
Podcast



**Meredith
Obendorfer**

Executive and
Strategic
Communications
Director, Autodesk



**René
Siegel**

Former Partner,
Armanino LLP

Panel
4:30 to 5:00pm

Workshop
5:00 to 6:00pm

Don't miss your chance, register by September 13!
Space is limited!

sjsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3eNnxf6tojlmG6



SJSU | LUCAS GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF BUSINESS

Speaker bios:

Yolanda Canny

Founder, "Girl, Take the Lead!" Podcast

Yolanda “Yo” Chavez Canny was in marketing leadership positions for over 42 years. This fueled her passion to found the “Girl, Take the Lead!” podcast in 2021 which is now globally ranked in the top 10% of all podcasts.

Most recently she added a retail store component to her podcasting efforts. During her career she had 2 “C-suite” positions as Senior VP Global Marketing, Pilkington Barnes Hind, and Vice President Sales and Marketing, The Tech Interactive. Her career included consumer marketing positions in beauty in NY, medical devices & hospitality in the Bay Area. She has worked in 23 different market segments and launched over 90 new products domestically and internationally. She was the first in her family to go into business and her drive to achieve came from her father’s Mexican American roots and growing up in a bi-ethnic family. She received her MBA in 1978 when few women were in Business Schools. She has been given many opportunities to lead by women who have gone before her and she now wishes to repay that forward by helping all women lead!

Meredith Obendorfer

Executive and Strategic Communications Director, Autodesk

A consummate storyteller, Meredith Obendorfer has 20+ years of experience in corporate communications and public relations in the technology industry. Currently Director, Executive Communications at Autodesk, she leads both external and internal communications for the global software company’s Office of the CTO, working closely with technology leader Raji Arasu to drive and deliver her executive platform to investors, Board of Directors, customers, and employees.

Prior to her current position, she led executive communications, strategic customer communications, and analyst relations for Autodesk’s construction business, initially entering the role at PlanGrid, which was acquired by Autodesk in 2018 for \$875 million.

Meredith has handled PR for some of the biggest powers in tech including Facebook, Medium, Hearst and Oracle, as well as aggressive upstarts that were then acquired by Google, LinkedIn and Apple. Recognized as one of the top 100 global tech PR executives by a leading trade publication, Meredith has a B.A. in Sociology and Women's Studies from University of California at Santa Cruz and has completed extensive MBA coursework at San Jose State University. She is mom to a rambunctious toddler and in her blink of spare time, is also an outdoor athlete.

[René Siegel](#)

Advisor and Former Partner, Armanino

René Siegel has built a career on helping people and businesses unlock their full potential. A natural entrepreneur, connector, educator, and advocate for women, René's influence stretches from boardrooms to classrooms.

As the founder and CEO of Connex, René spent over two decades helping tech leaders tackle critical marketing and communications challenges with expert consulting services. In 2021, Top 20 consulting firm Armanino successfully acquired her company, and she most recently served as a partner in the Growth Office. Along with building relationships across industries and deepening connections in the Bay Area, René also championed Armanino initiatives such as The Bridge for the advancement of women leaders, Volunteer Vacation committee, and coached thousands of employees on personal branding via LinkedIn and social media.

René is passionate about empowering college students and giving voice to underrepresented communities. For seven years, she was an adjunct professor of Strategic Communications and is currently a member of the Dean's Advisory Board at the Lucas College and Graduate School of Business at San Jose State University. René remains committed to shaping the future of her profession while embracing her newest chapter—pursuing passion projects, amplifying remarkable stories, and mentoring the

next generation of leaders. By far, her greatest achievement is the creation of three amazing humans

Moderator:

[Rangapriya Kannan](#)

Dean, Lucas College and Graduate School of Business

Rangapriya (Priya) Kannan is the dean of the Lucas College and Graduate School of Business and a professor in the School of Global Innovation & Leadership. Her research primarily focuses on how individuals achieve innovation within limited resources using creative resourcing and reframing. Kannan's background includes expertise in leadership to affect strategic change, designing interdisciplinary programs, employee development, alumni and community outreach, and creating inclusive work environments. Her educational background includes a PhD from UCLA Anderson School of Management and degrees from SJSU, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, and the University of Bombay.

