

Transcript of Peggy Matson, Electrical Engineer

The coolest part about my job is... I get to invent the future!

I'm architecting with a team, because it's so complex, the next generation of wireless broadband technology for public safety.

Motorola has a lot of firsts. Every space shuttle that's gone up in space has had Motorola communications. Motorola made the first police radio, put the first police radio in a car.

Now we have really a new technology, called broadband, that can bring video and maps and all sorts of hazardous materials data to a firefighter or to a police officer in the field that they can't get today.

As a team we're creating something that's never been created before and one of the things we get to protect that is patents; and I have three patents myself.

In my household—now it was pretty traditional household—there would be something to put together. My parents would buy something from the store and I would always want to put it together and take it apart and my mom was always, "don't do that," you know, "you're a girl," right? And I'd do it anyway.

I had an insightful career counselor that said "Hey, you like math and science you should consider engineering," and I said, "What is that?" And so that opened my door to an opportunity. Engineers tend to be loyal, honest, straightforward people; people great to work with, whether men or women. In order for me to love my job, and I want to love my job, I need to learn. I need to be learning every day. I need to be contributing every day and I need to work with people that I enjoy. The challenges that we have today—where we really need engineers—is in helping with our environmental challenges. You know, robotics is this huge area where there is so much that can be gained from robotics.

Engineering is a fabulous career for men, for women. Learning something new every day, contributing to something really practical and important to our society. It is a fabulous career and I could not imagine doing anything different.

My advice to you is to get to know yourself really well. Understand and appreciate what you do really well; continue to build on that, that's your strength. Also, identify what you are not so good at, but you really need to be good at and work on it and in the process—it's not always going to be easy—in the process be kind to yourself.