# Transcript: IT Podcast – Ep 71 – MSitm student success story with lavender boyles

*The following transcript is a verbatim account of the video or audio file accompanying this transcript.*

Speaker #1 (Narrator):

WGU's IT audio series, flexible, portable, profound.

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

Hi, and welcome to our podcast. This is Lavender. I'm a Program Mentor in the MSITM program, Master's of Science, Information Technology Management. With me today is Stephanie, one of my students working in the MSITM program. She is getting ready to graduate soon and has some experiences to share and advice to others in the program. Welcome, Stephanie. I'm glad you could join me today.

Speaker #3 (Stephanie):

Thank you for having me Lavender.

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

You've been great to work with. I really appreciate the effort and the time you've put in. I know it probably hasn't been easy. But would you mind just talking a little bit about the challenges that you've had during this program?

Speaker #3 (Stephanie):

Yeah, sure. I think for me one of the main challenges was overcoming the fact that I don't have a background in technology, my BS is in psychology. I did take some business courses years ago that have been helpful in applying the information. But really I came into the program with basically no technical knowledge. On a personal family level, as any parent is aware, the pandemic has proved particularly challenging. Beyond that, I personally have experienced my own challenges that I'm hesitant to share, but hopefully will be encouraging for other people, and that's that process of a dissolution of a 16-year relationship and other subsequent court and custody issues that come along with that, so that's proved some challenges and definitely has forced me to really overcome some more emotional things. But I really think that it's important to point out because I want to remind people that it's important that we take care of ourselves and continue to do things for ourselves regardless of what's happening. That we're important too, especially as parents, it's easy to forget that. I've also been actively searching for a job during this process too, which as anybody knows is very time-consuming. I have been out of the workforce for about a decade. I don't really have a whole bunch experience from prior to leaving the workforce and with everything that's going on globally and economically, I found that it's more difficult than possibly it would have been prior to the pandemic. But I'm hopeful that by completing the program that more opportunities will open up for me.

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

Wow, okay, that is a lot of challenges, and you have been very successful in this program. That just shows you've prioritized, you've taken care of yourself, you're taking care of your family, you're planning for the future and it takes work and organization, but you're successful in this program and that says a lot. Everyone has challenges, everyone has different levels of challenges, so kudos to you for rising to meet the challenge and being successful here.

Speaker #3 (Stephanie):

Thank you.

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

We're still in the job search process, so you probably haven't seen benefits to your career yet. But hopefully, as you're looking, you're aiming for jobs in this field. Do you want to tell me a little bit about what you're looking for or what you're going to do after this program is done?

Speaker #3 (Stephanie):

Yeah, definitely. I have seen some benefits in regard to interviews. I gained so much confidence in interviews that when I first started looking, I absolutely did not have and just the ability to have technical communications as well. Some of the jobs that I stay and focused on really are just general IT jobs. I know that with the completion of the program, there is some state IT management jobs opportunities that will be opened up to me, that would be really beneficial. Working for the state obviously has a lot of benefits, a lot of positive attributes to it. With this program, we have the opportunity to take the cap M, which opens up project management opportunities and those are quite abundant. I'm excited about that. I'm excited about the opportunity that being an IT has for working remotely and the flexibility with that as well.

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

Awesome. This sounds like you've gained a lot, even at this point. That's great. Now tell me a little bit about what's unique about WGU. Has WGU provided something that, I don't know, that you may not have seen elsewhere or tell me about that.

Speaker #3 (Stephanie):

As we know, WGU is a competency-based program, which I just think is absolutely amazing. I think that I have learned so many practical skills from the program that can be applied anywhere. It's not just the specifics of what I'm learning about, but the overall experience that is gained. Because of my education with WGU, I trust and believe that I can put the skills I've learned to use in any professional situation regardless of what the job title is and figure out how to tackle anything that's required of me. I've learned a lot technically speaking, and I feel competent in technical communications. But I also know that I can apply what I've learned at WGU, the soft skills anywhere and succeed.

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

Yes, definitely. My final question, what advice do you have for someone who may be struggling with this program?

Speaker #3 (Stephanie):

I'd say to just stick with it, try not to take too much of a break. Breaks tend to have an adverse effect on success and don't get too caught up. For me I was worried that I wouldn't understand something, and there was even a point where I made one simple thing so big and so much more complicated. Luckily, I had the instructor and I contacted him and it was such a simple thing, but I got so in my head about it and so overwhelmed that I made it impossible. Once I talked to the instructor and I found out the solution and he helped me work through the problem. It just was like, why did I make that such a big deal? But thankfully, everyone at WGU wants to see us succeed and do whatever they can to help us get through their program and are so supportive, but it's just important that people stay focused. I think micro goals are important and reminding yourself, or what I did was remind myself my purpose, why am I doing this? What am I trying to accomplish with this? What am I hopeful that the outcome will be?

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

Wow, that's great advice. I really appreciate it. Well, thank you for coming today. Hopefully people listening will get something good out of this and learn that despite barriers, despite obstacles, you have a good opportunity here. You've got a lot of support here and wish you all the success in the future. It's been awesome working with you, Stephanie. I really appreciate you.

Speaker #3 (Stephanie):

Absolutely. Thank you Lavender, you've been such a great source of support for this whole program and I appreciate it.

Speaker #2 (Lavender Boyles):

Thank you.

Speaker #1 (Narrator):

WGU, a new kind of you.