Brought to you by HIMSS WA Women in IT and Student Engagement Committees:
"Pick the Brain of a Female CEO in Tech" ft Lekshmi Venu,
CEO and Cofounder of Major Boost
March 7th , 630pm- 730pm

Current Career:
Tell us about your career journey - what led to you getting your role in Healthcare Technology?

Healthcare Technology has been a natural evolution as I've always had data-driven, leadership roles. I began my career in pharmaceuticals, life sciences and health insurance. Most recently, I was a general manager at Amazon and led a team of product managers, data scientists, designers and engineers. I held P&L responsibility and had ownership for an AI product. I left Amazon to bring the potential of AI to small businesses.

Tell us about founding MajorBoost- How did you make the jump to starting your own company?
- What problems does MajorBoost solve?
- What other teams or departments or entities do you typically interact with?
- How do you see your company evolving to continue to solve problems in the HIT space?

MajorBoost uses conversational AI to make phone calls easier. Despite all the APIs and software in healthcare, a significant amount of communication happens over phone calls. In fact, providers' phone call volume has increased over the past three years. Walk into any doctor's office, and you'll see someone with a phone in hand. US providers spend $11B a year simply waiting on hold with insurance. Providers don't have enough staff to handle their call volume, especially patient calls.
MajorBoost helps staff get more tasks done per day. The phone is HIPAA compliant and secure, but it is disconnected from other data sources and doesn't have automation features. MajorBoost brings the power of data and AI to phone conversations, enabling staff to double their phone call volume per day. By using automated speech recognition, MajorBoost understands the questions being asked and utilizes data to answer those questions. Calls are transcribed and data from them can be searched.
Typically, we work with billing or revenue cycle, patient access, database managers, etc. MajorBoost could work with any organization that has telephony. This can include insurance companies, health systems, and all the businesses that serve them.

According to a report by the National Center for Women & Information Technology, in 2020, women held only 19% of CEO positions in the technology industry, while men held 81%. These statistics show a significant gender imbalance in leadership roles within the tech sector. As a female CEO in the technology industry, can you share some of the challenges you have faced throughout your career?

Women have great leadership skills and potential, but are often overlooked for interviews and promotions. I've been directly told that I can't have specific jobs because I am a mother, I'm married and my name sounds different. We can't change all these biases. The important thing is to keep going, continue to invest in yourself and challenge yourself. Align yourself with solid leaders. Create your own opportunities.

Prepping for the Healthcare Tech Industry:

Are there skills/certifications you would suggest students learn to be qualified for positions in the healthcare tech field?

Healthcare is complex, and the ability to communicate clearly is very important. Focus on crips communication. Critical thinking skills are key. Healthcare is an evolving field that changes every day, so have a growth mindset. Always be ready to learn.
Of course, data analysis, software and AI are valuable in healthcare, and I think robotics has a lot of potential.

Students/folks seeking roles in Healthcare Tech keep hearing about developing soft skills- communication, problem solving, negotiation skills, confidence etc.- to make themselves more marketable in the health industry.
- What role do you see soft skills playing in career advancement and how can students best market their soft skills?

Soft skills like organization, communication, prioritization and developing talent are what make great leaders. In an interview, you can showcase these skills with behavioral responses. Frame up your answers by giving Context, stating the Action that you took, and sharing the Result. I call this the CAR framework. Then explain what made it hard. Maybe there were dozens of team members in different time zones. Maybe there were conflicting priorities or dependencies that you had to navigate. Sharing the challenges, how you thought about them and how you led through them will showcase the soft skills that matter.

What are the other key learnings you'd like to share with students or aspiring tech founders- advice?

Focus on your strengths. They'll take you farther than shoring up your weaknesses.
Raise your hand to take responsibility. Stepping up to challenges makes you a leader.
Take risks.   Getting out of your comfort zone forces growth.
Network and help others along the way.
Have fun. Enjoy what you do.