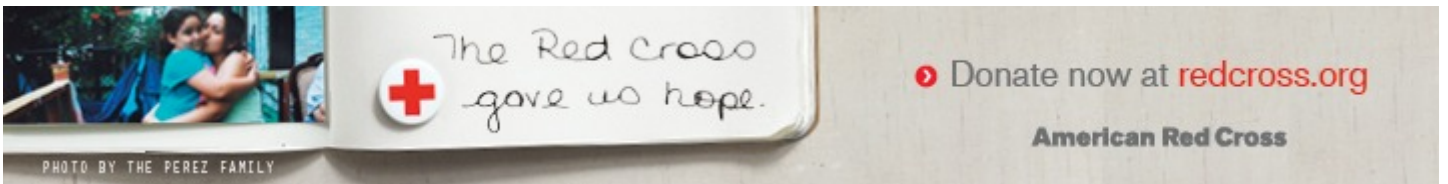




DANIEL APUY / GETTY IMAGES FOR STELLA ARTOIS

Running Water Is Changing These Women's Lives In A Way You Never Thought Of

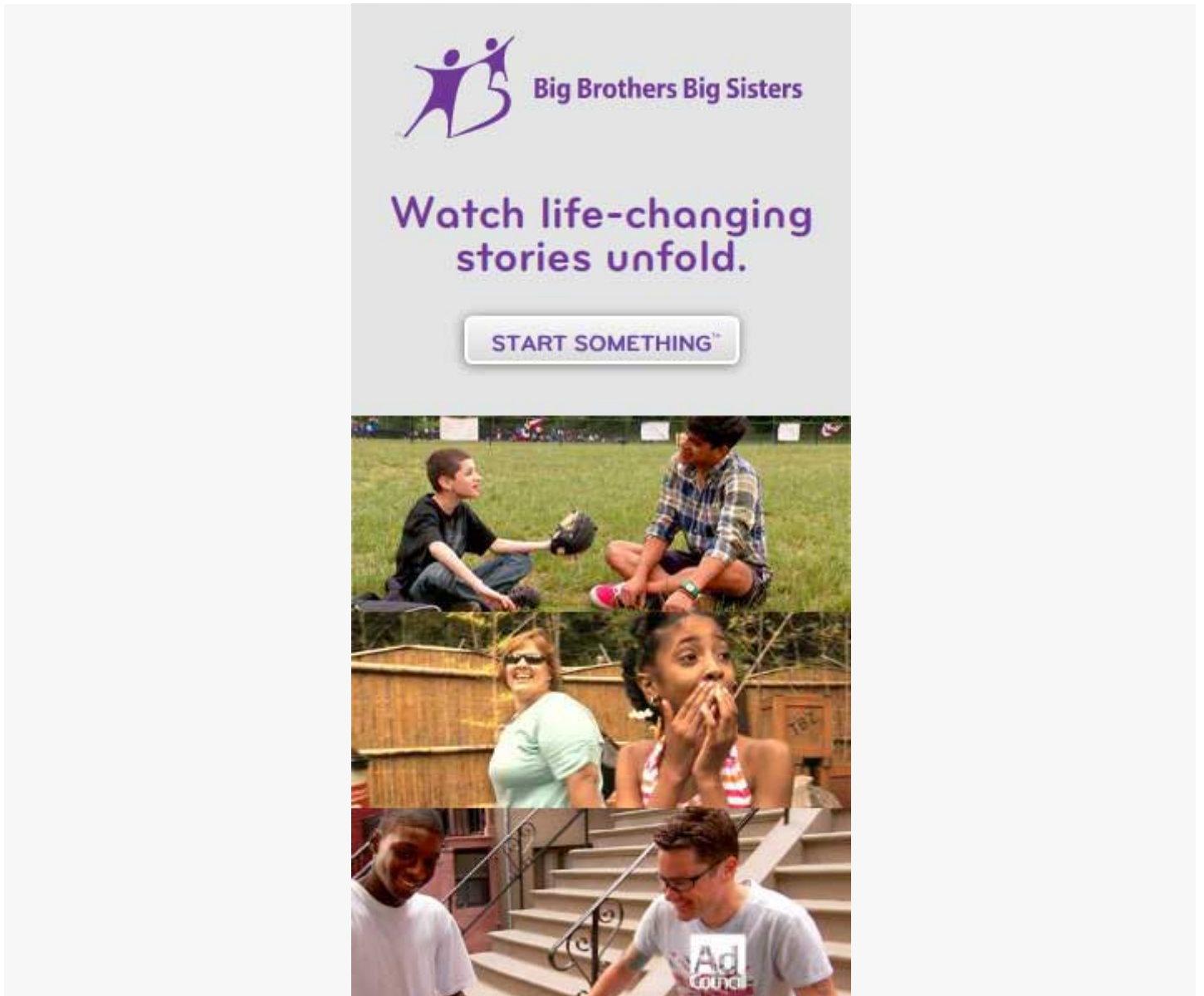
BY [LILLI PETERSEN](#) | A DAY AGO | 



Grecia is a businesswoman at heart. Like any other millennial with ambition, the 26-year-old from Lima, Peru, knows all about hustling to make her dream come true, and in this case, that dream is a pharmacy. In the living room of her cool, whitewashed home with a ficus tree on the porch, she describes where the business addition will go. “There is, in the back, a small area,” she says via a translator, gesturing to the door behind the kitchen sink with a hand wrapped in a ‘90s-style scrunchie. “I want to have a small pharmacy in that area.” She visibly brightens talking about her plans. “When I talk about a pharmacy, I get



running water in her home. "The hygiene is something very important and it has to be proper hygiene, for a small pharmacy," she says.



Until recently, Grecia was one of the some 4.5 billion people worldwide who **don't have access to safe sanitation services**, among the 2.3 billion who don't have access to a toilet or latrine, and one of the some 2 billion don't have access to safe drinking water, according to United Nations numbers from 2017. Besides the obvious, a lack of sanitation services can carry significant risks, from health problems — diseases like cholera, typhoid,



WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR WATER COLLECTION
IN 80 PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT ACCESS TO WATER
ON THE PREMISES.

And as in many things, women can frequently have it worse. According to a 2011 study out of the University of Pennsylvania, when clean water is not available in a home, it's **most commonly women who take on the task of fetching it**, a task which can average nearly an hour a day. And in terms of sanitation, **women can be left vulnerable to assault or violence** while relieving themselves outdoors. Grecia had a particular challenge — since her husband worked, she had to haul water alone during her risky pregnancy with her now-2-year-old son, putting both mother and child in potential danger. "There was nobody to help," she remembers.

See how Alzheimer's disease
affects the brain.
Take our Brain Tour.

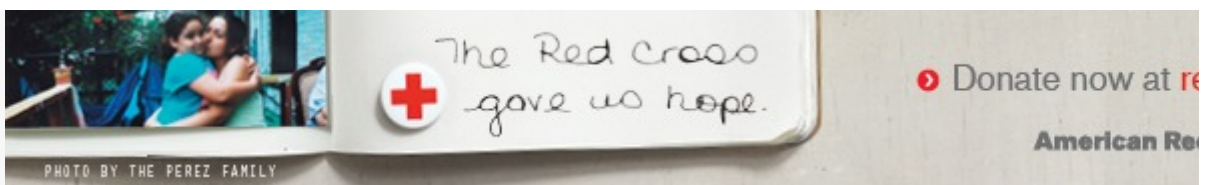


alz.org/brain

alzheimer's
association



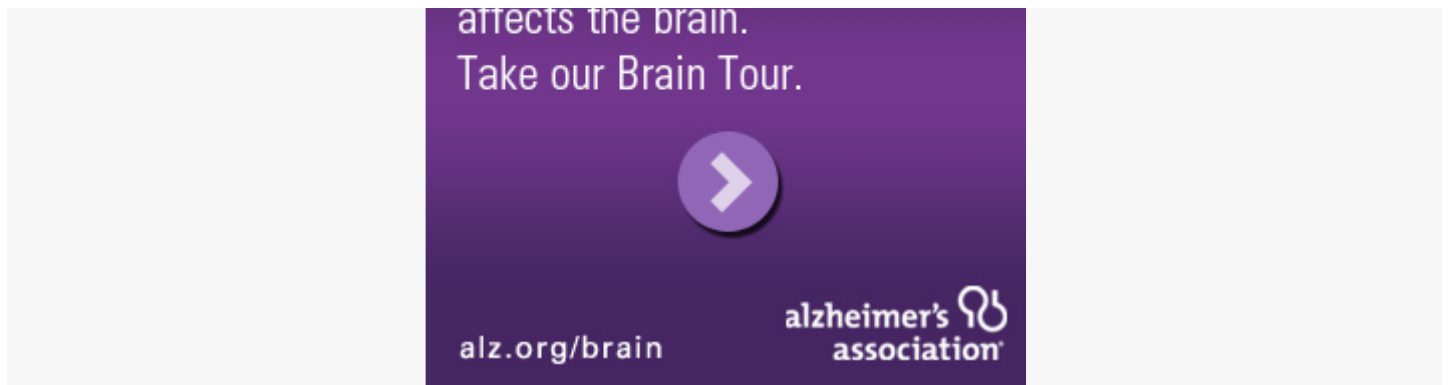
for water collection in 80 percent of households without access to water on the premises,” Silke Staab, a researcher with UN Women and the report manager for the *Turning Promises Into Action* report on gender equality, tells Elite Daily by phone. “If you don’t have water and sanitation at home, the basic tasks that we very often take for granted” — like brushing your teeth or doing laundry — “become really, really onerous and time-intensive. And that means for poor women, the lack of water access exacerbates and deepens their poverty.”



drive, everyone makes sure to use the bathroom, unsure of when we'll get the next opportunity. We stop again at a supermarket about an hour later, where we're charged 50 cents each to use a small three-stall bathroom with no seats on the toilets and a wide-open door leading to the street. An attendant hands us some five or six squares of toilet paper after we pay the fee; there's no paper in the stalls. But even this small measure of privacy may be unattainable for the about 7 million [Peruvians living on less than 338 soles](#) (\$105) a month — that 50 cents might be needed elsewhere.

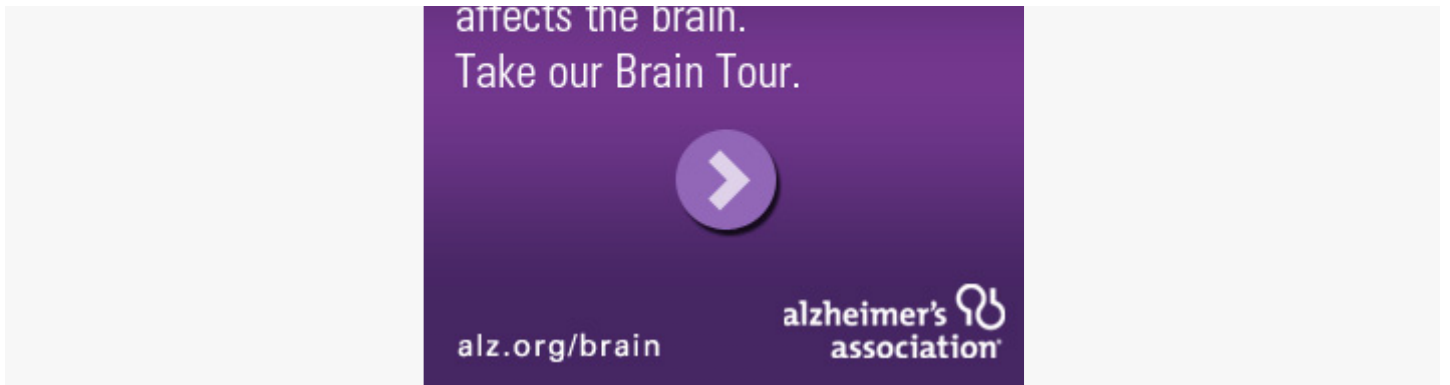
That constant consideration of how you're going to access water or a toilet is what Gary White, the CEO and co-founder of international [water charity Water.org](#), calls “coping” behavior. “You have all this uncertainty built into your day,” he says. “And uncertainty means that you can't be productive, and you can't improve the income and the health of your family.”





It's part of the challenge being tackled by Water.org's Water Credit program, which uses a microfinance model to help people install toilets and water in their homes. The program has a simple concept: help people obtain small loans, which they then use to improve the water and sanitation in their homes. The program is impressive in its local-to-international scope – at the local level, it's facilitated by local microfinance lenders who benefit from Water.org training, and who have the community ties to help streamline the process and the cultural knowledge to connect with their clients. At the international level, Water.org has a partnership with beer brand Stella Artois, which has worked with the organization since 2014. In early 2019, the beer brand launched the **Pour It Forward campaign**, which gives a portion of sales of the beer from some locations, as well as proceeds from the sale of speciality Stella chalices, to the program. Stella credits the partnership with having reached some 1.7 million people worldwide since 2015, and is aiming to more than double that number by 2020.

The program's focus on helping individuals install water in their homes is part of what Staab, who is not affiliated with Water.org or Stella, calls "the last mile." She points out that even when resources like water and electricity are available in communities, low-income households don't always have the means to pay for connections. "So the [water] network and the [electricity] grid aren't actually so far away, but wiring the home for electricity is out of reach, because the household doesn't actually have the resources," she explains.



THERE'S JUST NOT ENOUGH CHARITY.

The ratio of impact is significant. In Peru, the average loan is about \$1,228, and, according to Water.org, they have disbursed over 450,000 loans nationwide. In fact, in Peru alone — which has a **population of about 31 million** — the charity estimates they've reached 1.6 million people. Because the loans are small, it's not difficult for people to pay them back within a year, and Water.org estimates they have a 99 percent repayment rate in Peru. That means that the money can then cycle back into the system and be loaned out again to help another family and home, giving the program a much farther reach than a simple donation model. White notes that there's just not enough resources out there for philanthropic organizations to simply give money to the some 2.5 billion people living without sanitation. "There's just not enough charity," he says.

White also points out what becomes increasingly obvious as you add up the time spent or saved. "Once you're relieved of this time that you spend coping, and once you become more certain of your water access, then we do see people going out and getting those paying jobs." Anecdotally, he shares a story about asking a group of women in India how many of them had gotten jobs since they got running water. "About half the hands in the circle went up."



PHOTO BY THE PEREZ FAMILY

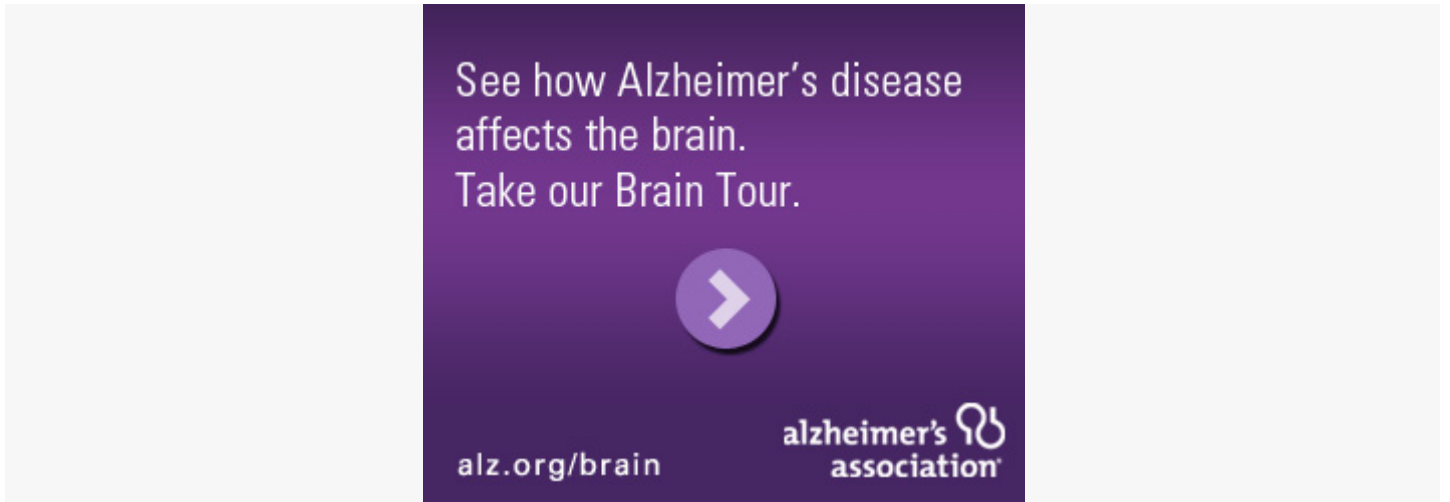


Daniel Apuy/Getty Images for Stella Artois

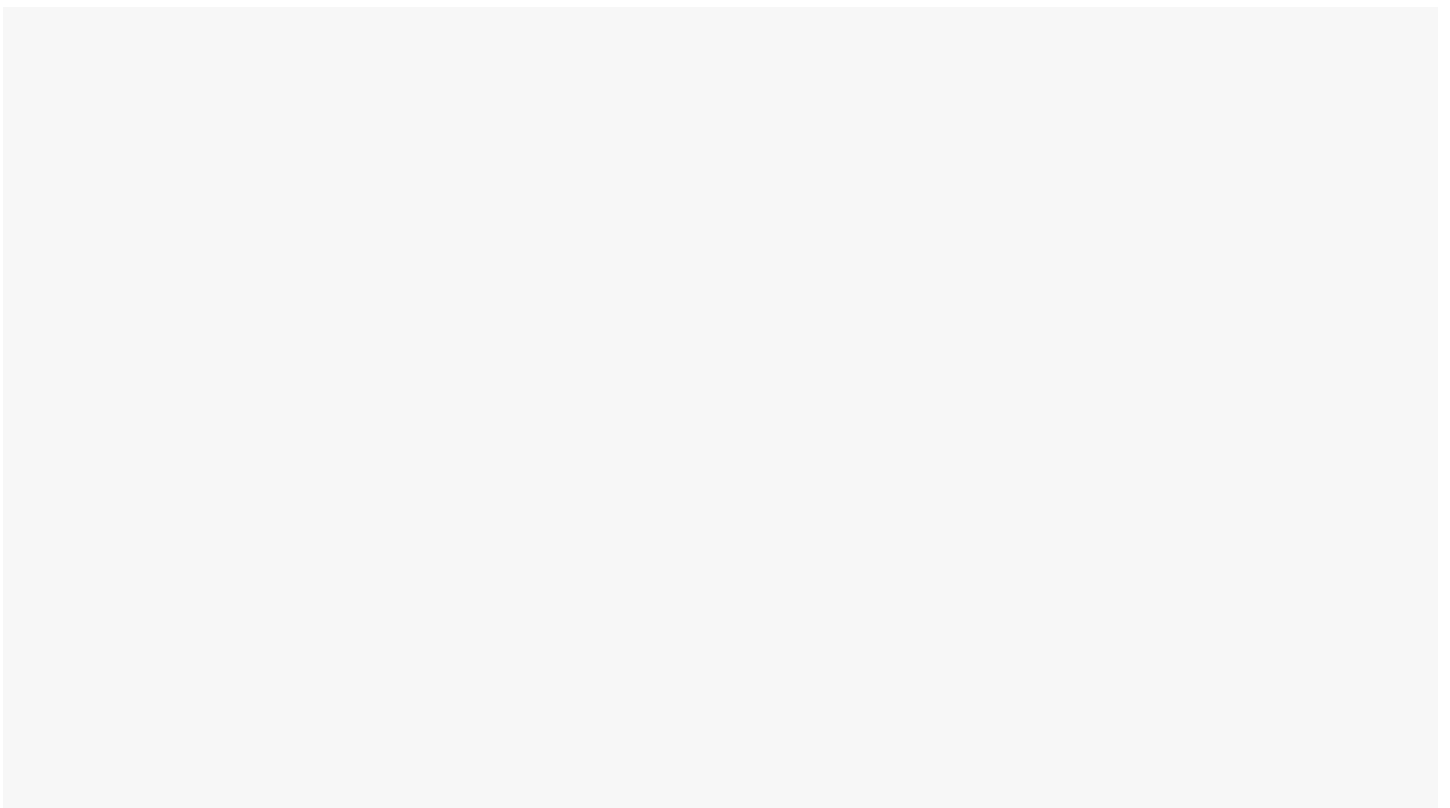
Accessing these resources can also help women grow the businesses they already have. Across the neighborhood from Grecia, 47-year-old Guadalupe runs a beauty business out of her home, with a cabinet full of beauty supplies in the bedroom she shares with her husband, Rubén, 56. But her lack of a bathroom affected her business. "Before, if I had a client who want[ed] to come in, and they say 'Oh, do you have a restroom? Can I use your restroom?' I would say no because I didn't have one," Guadalupe says. She admits that it



bathrooms in their home, and is in the process of building a third specifically for guests.



It's helping the next generation of women pursue their dreams, too. Rubén proudly shows off the private bathroom he built for his 22-year-old daughter, who's currently studying at university. He thinks that without a bathroom, it would have been much harder for his daughter to focus on her studies and succeed. "It would have been very difficult for her [to go to university], to develop herself," he says.





See how Alzheimer's disease
affects the brain.
Take our Brain Tour.



alz.org/brain

alzheimer's
association



I ALWAYS WANT TO IMPROVE.

Of course, as far as she's come, there's still more to do. Because Grecia and her husband don't have an official title to their home, they haven't been able to get hooked up to the main water line, so that's the next step. (Their water access currently comes from a storage tank connected to their indoor plumbing.)

While Grecia is dreaming big for her business, she's also thinking about the little things that water access can give her — like her ficus on her front porch, the only spot of cool



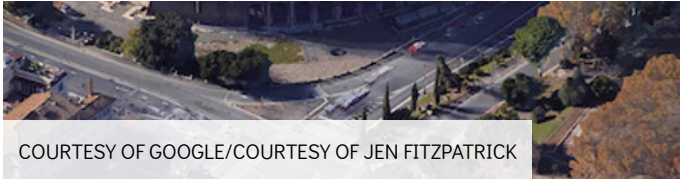
plants too.



Daniel Apuy/Getty Images for Stella Artois

"I always want to improve," she smiles.





COURTESY OF GOOGLE/COURTESY OF JEN FITZPATRICK



Google's Jen Fitzpatrick Is A Tech Pioneer Who Helps You Explore The World From Home

BY [RACHEL MURPHY](#) | 4 WEEKS AGO | [f](#)

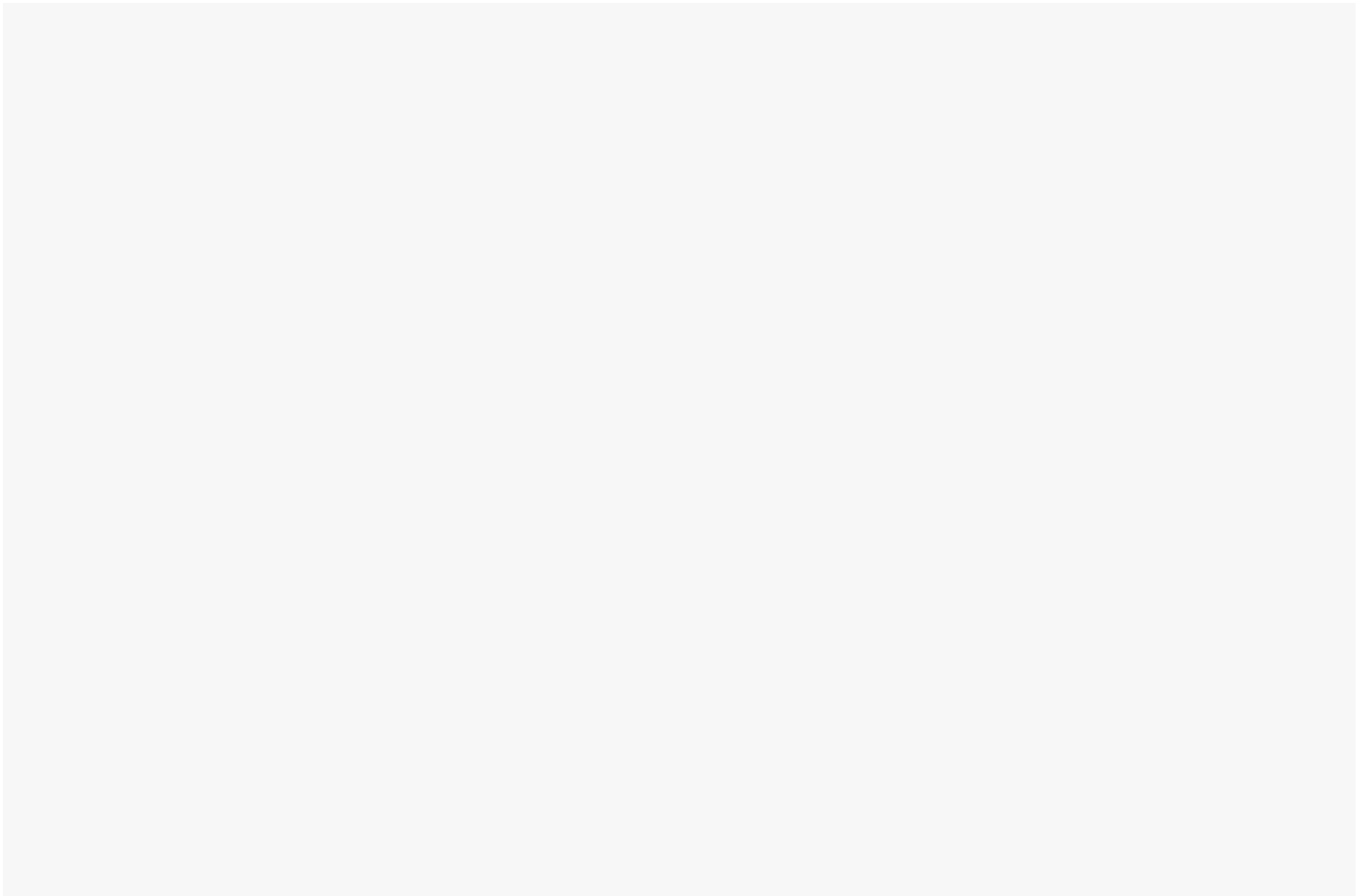
Jen Fitzpatrick's wheels never stop turning, so yours can do the same. As Google's Senior Vice President, Geo, Fitzpatrick leads the global team that's responsible for building and evolving Google Maps and Google Earth. [Google's Jen Fitzpatrick is a tech pioneer](#) who oversees many of the platforms you likely use on a daily basis. She's the reason you can use Google Earth to take in views you may never get the chance to see in person. She's also the reason you can use Google Maps to find nearby restaurants or check public transit options. It's a gig that empowers Fitzpatrick to use her creativity and smarts to benefit the world around her — literally. It's basically the definition of a dream job.

You may think that the higher-ups within a company take a more hands-off approach. Not Fitzpatrick. Each day, she immerses herself in all things Google Maps and [Google Earth](#) and is responsible for the long-term planning and goal-setting for both platforms, which requires patience, diligence, and a firm understanding of tech trends. She also oversees the development of Google's products to make them as interactive and useful as possible. If you've spent any time playing around with Google Earth, then you already know it is one of the coolest and most impressive ways to explore the globe without ever leaving your house. Fitzpatrick agrees.

"I work on products that impact billions of people and do things that are fundamentally useful and helpful in people's lives," she tells Elite Daily.



platform allows you to [explore the globe in exquisite detail](#) without ever having to leave your home. The intuitive map program lets you search for a destination and learn all about it. You can sit back and orbit the world in 3D all from the comfort of your computer screen.



Giphy

Fitzpatrick helps to build out the mapping technology that empowers anyone with an internet connection to be a world traveler. What's even cooler about her job? She is the driving force behind what locations to pursue next.

“I spend a lot of time on the big picture of our product engineering goals, thinking about ... for example, where Maps is going in the future,” says Fitzpatrick, who lives in the San Francisco Bay Area with her family.

One of the things she's thinking about is making sure the user experience accounts for different needs. "We have really pushed ourselves to think about the unique needs of our



everyone an opportunity to contribute to the map through our Local Guides program, which is a community of local experts who add insightful information based on their experiences."

"By giving our users a voice on the map, we're gathering more diverse information and allowing everyone a chance to share what matters most to them," she shares.

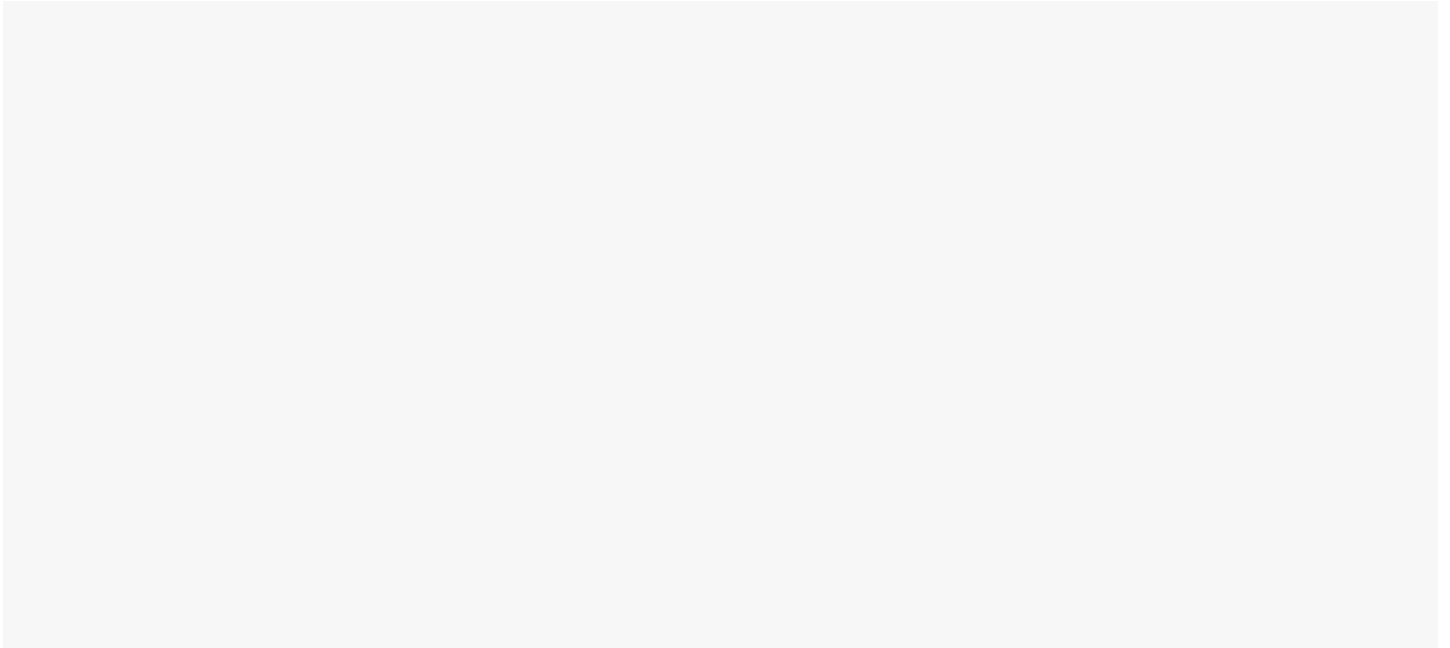


of figuring out where you and your friends should meet for dinner. Or [Google's iOS Match feature](#), which helps pair you with your next meal based on what you like to eat. You're probably familiar with Google Street View, which Fitzpatrick oversees as well. Her efforts help all of Google product — and users of the app — better understand the real, physical world out there. You can thank Fitzpatrick and her team for these functionalities that help make life a little easier.

The little details are important to her. "I think about how we want to improve it, change it, and evolve it from what it can do today to thinking about how we are reaching users in all parts of the world and how we are understanding where the product still needs to improve," she explains. She uses her own experience with the technology to pinpoint how to improve it. "I use these products when I travel and am always sending feedback to the team about how we can make small improvements within Google Maps and Google Earth," she says.

Her path to tech's top tier might seem unachievable at first glance, but it's actually super relatable. Growing up, Fitzpatrick daydreamed of being an astronaut, but after the [Space Shuttle Challenger disaster in 1986](#), her childhood career path took a different turn, she says. She enrolled in Stanford University's computer science program, but she wasn't even sure she wanted to work in tech. "I was somewhat of a reluctant computer scientist initially," she reveals.

During her time pursuing a master's degree at Stanford University, Fitzpatrick took an internship opportunity at the then-fledgling Google. Fitzpatrick was one of just four interns when she got her start at Google in 1999. "When it came time ... to look for a summer internship, I couldn't imagine anything other than working on a product that I really cared about," she shares. "Google was at the very top of the list, so I applied, and luckily, got an internship." Nearly two decades later, the former intern's career has evolved into one of the most influential tech jobs on the planet.



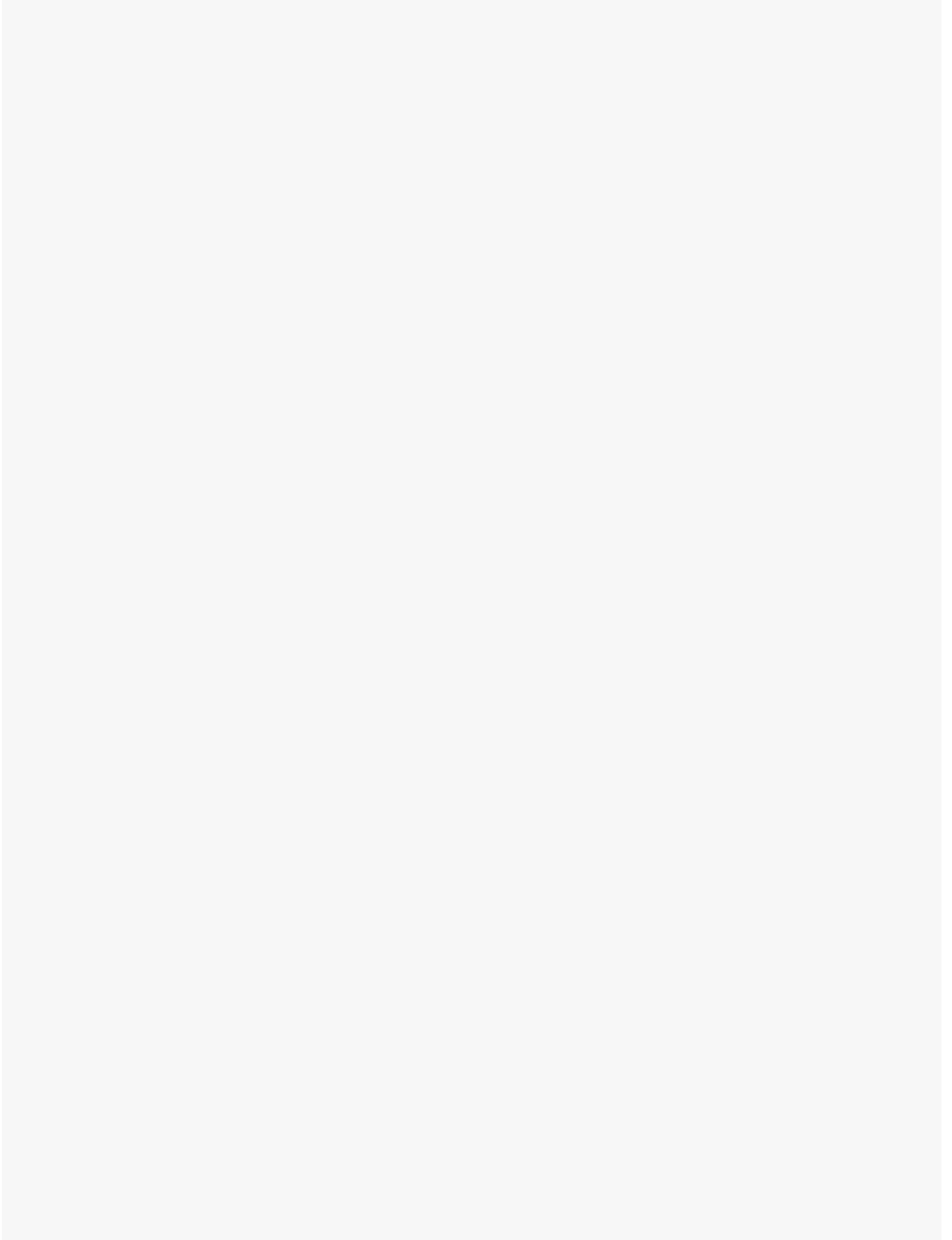
Courtesy of Google

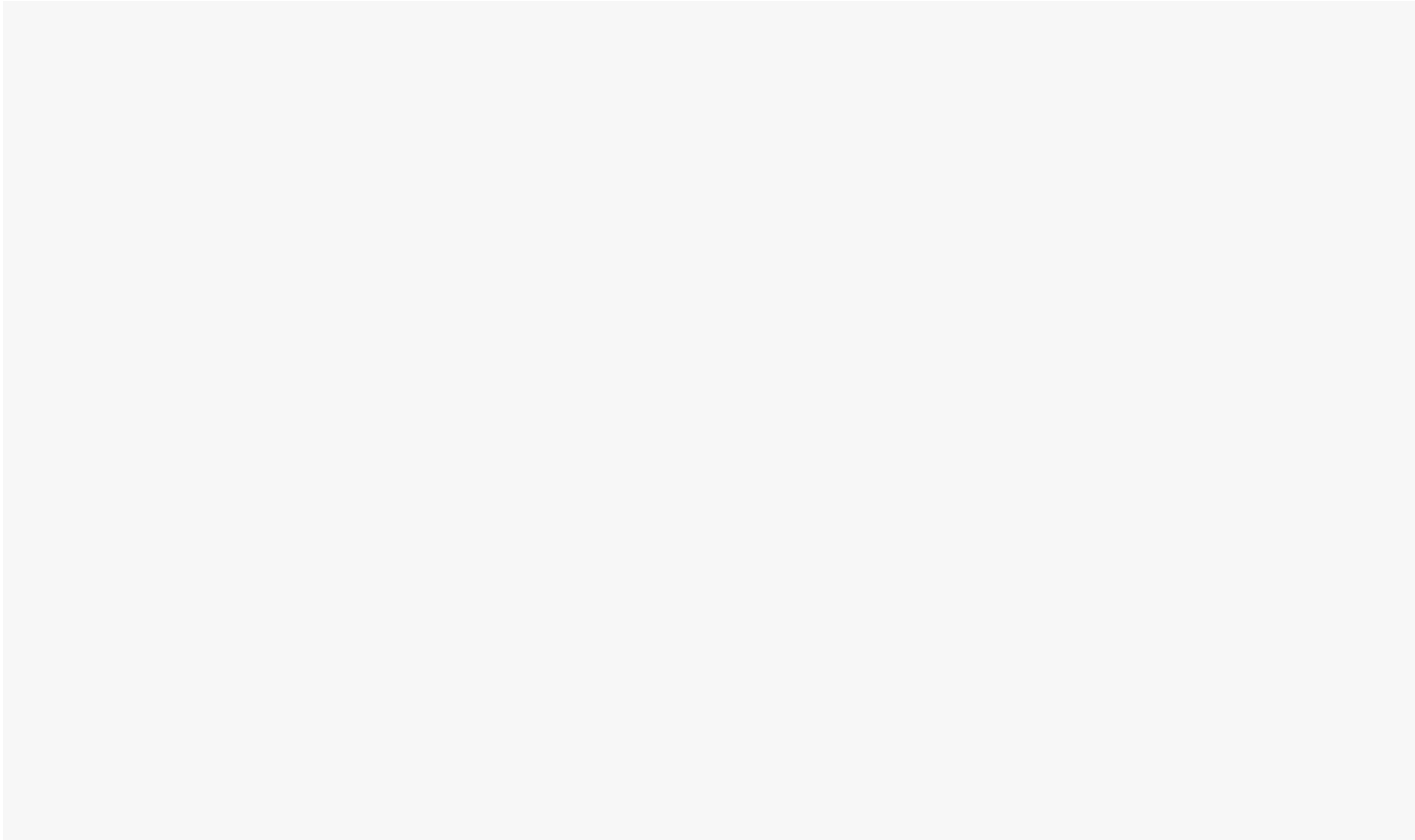
For her next project, Fitzpatrick is leading the charge to map out parts of the world using augmented reality.

"It's hard to do, but we're using machine-learning and scaling our Street View cars to get this done," she reveals. The augmented reality walking navigation will give users a look at where they are, and visual pointers on where to go. "This is really hard to do, but we've made good progress and have some of our Local Guides community testing it now."

She also has experience with multiple roles at Google, which is helpful as she thinks about new goals. Before working on Google Earth and Google Maps, Fitzpatrick cofounded Google's user experience team, and she's also led software development for a wide variety of products and teams including Google Search, AdWords, Google News, and Google Shopping. Clearly, she's never been one to limit herself to a particular career path or job function.

"My jobs and my roles have definitely evolved a lot, as the company has gone through significant growth since I started. I've never been a person who has had a lifelong career plan or even a five-year career plan or any of that," she says. "I tend to think about it much



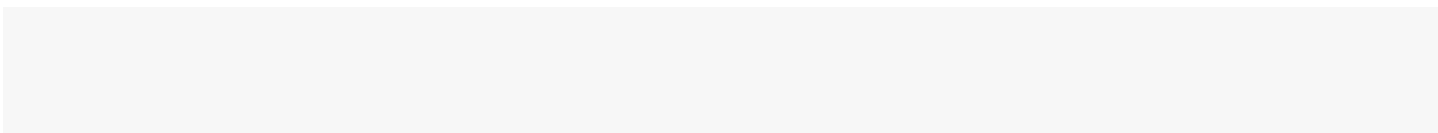


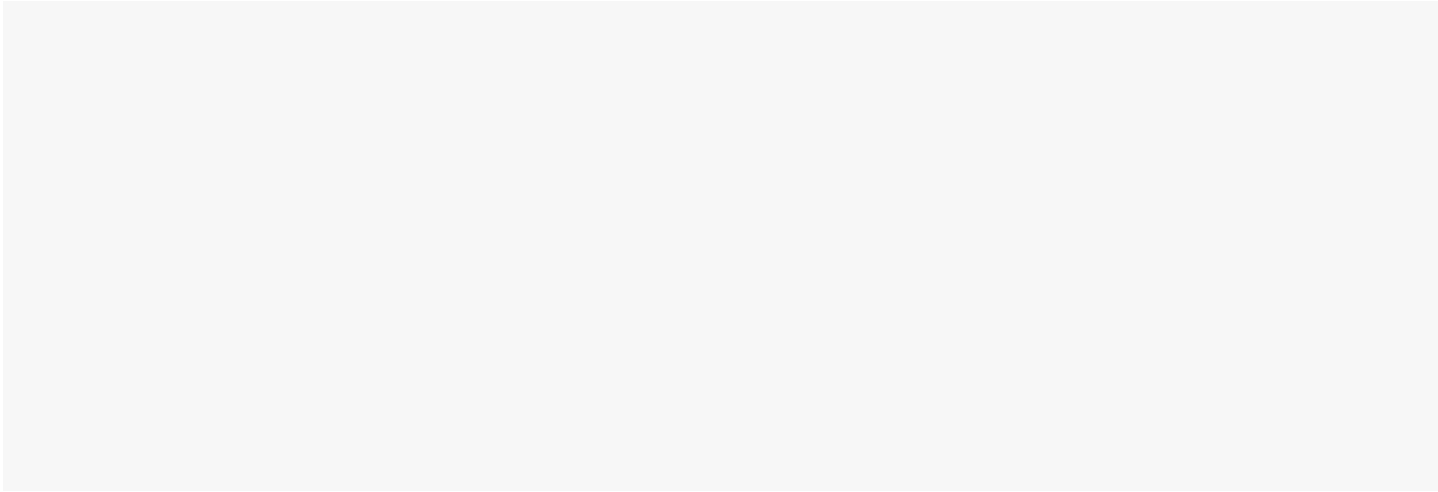
Giphy

For those who are eager to follow in her footsteps, Fitzpatrick notes that it's less about the skills you have and more about a willingness to be a part of a communal and innovative work environment. Considering the changing professional landscape she's seen since the early days of Google, it's valuable advice.

"It's all about collaboration, teamwork, problem-solving, and a willingness to fail and go back at it and try again," she notes. Not everything will be a win. "We try lots of ideas and great ones succeed and take off, but there are many, many things that we try and don't work."

There's no denying that Fitzpatrick wields an impressive résumé. Her career path in tech serves as a reminder to always be open to any opportunity that comes your way — no matter what industry you're pursuing.





Caroline Wurtzel / Elite Daily