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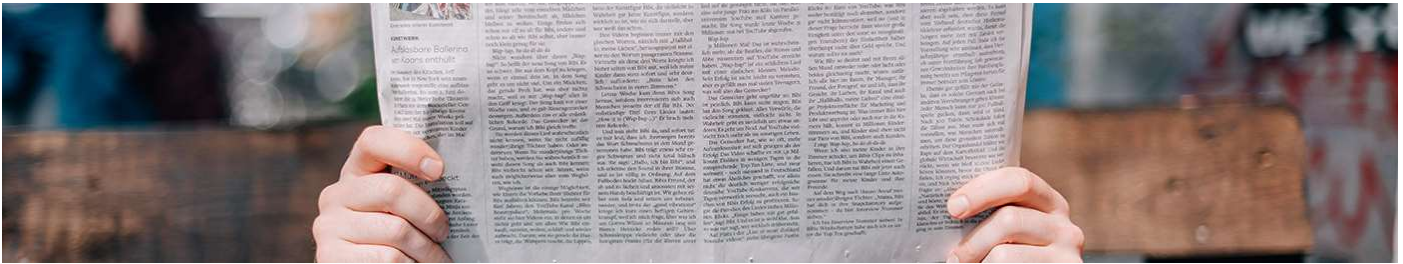
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Gail Miller Discusses Courage and Vulnerability

September 25, 2018

Gail Miller, Owner of the Larry H. Miller Group of Companies, kicked off the first Focus Friday Leadership Forum of the Fall semester. Miller was interviewed by the Dean of the Huntsman School of Business, Douglas D. Anderson. She also answered questions from the standing-room-only audience in attendance.

Miller was asked about her recently released book, *The Courage to be You. Inspiring Lessons from an Unexpected Journey*, where she writes about becoming the person she is today.

"For me, the courage to be you means to be able to step into that space that you didn't expect to be in and do the best you can with it," Miller said. She then told the story of her mother and how she returned to her schooling after raising her children and graduated with a nursing degree at the age of 61. She then worked as a nurse for 10 years.



[Gail Miller](#), Owner
Larry H. Miller Group of Companies

Miller described how watching her mother make this courageous step gave her the courage to face her own challenges. "We should not fear anything. Anything that comes before us we should take the courage to step into that space, and use the talents that we have, and the ability and the opportunity to develop who we are and what we can become."

She discussed the importance of courage and how she views courage as a foundational quality. "Courage is the foundation of all qualities; you can be kind, you can be generous, you can be loving, you can be curious, but unless you have courage to step beyond that those don't have the power that they otherwise could have."

Miller also discussed how stepping into her new role as owner of the Larry H. Miller Group of Companies required her to have courage. She talked about how her late husband, Larry H. Miller, had made the company financially secure, but he did not have time to set up a board of directors. One of the first things she did as the new owner was set up a board of directors.

When she was asked about being vulnerable she voiced her opinion on what it means to be vulnerable. "I don't think you can really learn until you're vulnerable. If you open yourself up to an idea that you can learn something, but that you may be hurt in the process or you may be exposed for your weaknesses, that's when you're vulnerable. That's when you learn the most because you have an ability to receive, if you are vulnerable. It sounds contradictory, but being vulnerable doesn't mean you are letting someone trample on you, it means you are in control of what you will let in."

Miller was also asked why she didn't sell her company after her late husband's death. To this question she replied, "I thought about what we had done together and the legacy that we had created and how important it was in providing jobs for all those people and opportunity for the community to attend a Jazz game, to go to the theater, to go to the race track and I decided it was more important for me to continue the path that we had been on, than to fold up shop and say no, I have had it."

Miller talked about her move to put the Utah Jazz into her family trust. "We did not buy the Jazz to sell it or use it as an investment to make money," Miller said. "So, we put that out of our minds and said this is an asset to the State and it will provide a lot of good."

According to Miller, the decision to make the Jazz part of her family trust was an easy one. "So, putting it (Jazz) in a trust was not a hard decision in reality." She said she hoped this move would finally put to rest the notion that her family would sell the Jazz as soon as they had a bad season.

Miller wrapped up her discussion by sharing her feelings about how the Jazz has helped unite the State of Utah. She told a story about how former Salt Lake City Mayor DeeDee called her late husband Larry after one of the Jazz playoff games to tell him there had not been on single call to the police during the game. She also talked about her feelings about her membership in the LDS church, sharing

a personal story about how she and Larry worked to become active in the church and how her religion is very important to her.

View the Entire Forum:



In its third year, Focused Fridays continues to provide programming to build skill sets and explore opportunities for life after school. After considerable conversations between students, faculty, and USU administration, the Huntsman School altered class schedules to a Monday/Wednesday and Tuesday/Thursday schedule, with Fridays devoted to extracurricular programming to better prepare students to enter the workforce. Events include résumé workshops, industry panels, skill-specific bootcamps, and the signature leadership forum, which brings senior executives to discuss leadership.

Videos of past leadership forums can be found at: huntsman.usu.edu/focusedfridays

For more information on how to get involved, contact: huntsman@usu.edu.