

What's Next? podcast

April Davenport

[Snippet from Podcast] April: So, adaptive fashion over the last five years or so has taken off and has allowed that spot to be filled by people with all different abilities, and that means not only like representation and advertising, but then again behind the scenes or the design concepts as well.

[Bouncy theme music plays.]

Introduction: Welcome to the What's Next? Podcast. Let me just start off by saying, not everyone has the same background. There is no roadmap for things that life begins at the edge your comfort level, leaning into your curiosities. It does suck when you grow up. We're also figuring out who we are. You can't just sit back and be silent. It's the little stuff that makes the biggest difference. You have another hour.

[Bouncy theme music fades.]

Cody: Hello, Beaver Nation, welcome to another episode of the What's Next? Podcast, I'm your host, Cody Stover. We have the honor and pleasure of having today's guest on the show. She's an award-winning apparel designer with a passion for making the fashion industry more inclusive and designing for people with disabilities. She now works in marketing design for Billy Footwear based out of Kent, Washington and is a 2020 OSU grad with a degree in fashion, design and merchandising management. April Davenport, thanks for joining us on the What's Next? Podcast.

April: Well, thank you. I'm excited to be here.

Cody: So, I'm excited to dive into the world of fashion design. But maybe just to give the listeners some quick context, what brought you to OSU and why did you choose fashion design? Was that always a passion or how did that come up?

April: Yeah, of course. So, I chose Oregon State, one reason was I'm just from the Pacific Northwest and the Portland area. So, I think my heart just drew me there, I love the area and I really ended up on the campus and the culture once I was there. As far

as fashion design, I have wanted to do it ever since I was pretty young, I'd say around age 12. I always had a passion for art, so I found that passion is a great way to not only express yourself artistically, but to help market your artistic styles in a way that brings happiness to people. And that's what drew me there, and I really enjoyed being part of our apparel design program.

Cody: Yeah, and I know at OSU, you had a couple of different adaptive fashion projects. Talk to me maybe before we jump into everything else, what is adaptive fashion and how did you start designing in this category?

April: Yeah, great question. So adaptive fashion or at least that term is pretty new, so I'm excited to kind of introduce that to your listeners, if that's something new for them. Adaptive fashion and design is designed specifically for people with disabilities. So, it's kind of taking into consideration their needs and how those might be different than people who don't have to worry about maybe their wheelchair or their braces, et cetera, when they're getting dressed or really any other facet of design, right. So, when it comes to apparel, adaptive design takes into account those different needs and it kind of adapts traditional designs or silhouettes in a way that is hopefully anyways fashionable, but then also, most importantly, functional.

Cody: Yeah, thanks for giving us kind of that high-level definition too, and I encourage folks listening, google that term and check out what's what more is behind it, too, and obviously we're going to get more into it in this episode. So, at OSU, I know that you had a couple of different projects. Talk to me about those, what kind of adaptive design projects did you do there?

April: Yeah, of course, so, you know, I think when I first started, I'm going to go a little bit of background here when I first started, at OSU. All right. Well, here it comes, whether you like it or not. When I first started studying, I think, you know, like I said, I know I wanted to design for a very young age, but I think I was still looking for, like my niche in the market. And so, you know, I know to design, but where I fit into that scheme and when I found adaptive, that really was where I knew I fit. And for one of the biggest reasons is I actually have a disability myself, which caused me to kind of struggle with self-image and self-worth when I was younger. It developed when I was 12 years old and it affected my mobility, caused me to walk with a limp and with crutches on and off for a long period of time. And so, you know, I think having that big passion for apparel

and getting to use that and take that to help other people like me boost their self-confidence through fashion, which is what really drew me to it. And I think that journey of mine has been able to help me kind of fit into that niche and understand customers in a way that other designers just couldn't in the same way just because they don't have that personal experience.

April: But yeah, so one of the designs that I did was studying was part of a contest for Runway of Dreams, which if you don't know that organization, I recommend you look it up. They are huge advocate for people with disabilities in the adaptive industry and in the fashion industry. They were doing a contest, and for that year it was for students to design a prom look for an individual with a disability. And so, I kind of took a lot of my experience with a disability in high school and thought about what I would have liked about age that I didn't have and what kids, it was in 2018, so what kids in 2018 wanted for their cool hip prom dresses and took those, you know, took those design elements that the juniors would want to fit in with their friends while also incorporating adaptive design concepts. So, for instance, I made it a high-low dress, so when dragged on the floor, I thought it could be for somebody who uses crutches full time. So, I made a long sleeve so the crutches wouldn't rub and added more details like that. So, it was really something that came out of my experience and my passion, and so it was a really great honor to get it. Take that design contest all the way to the end and end up getting to present that in Fashion Week as something that I could feel proud of, which is really awesome.

Cody: Yeah, that's really cool. Thanks for sharing all that and for sharing your background, too, on how this kind of field of design came into your lens. I'm curious too, like, why is adaptive design so important? It sounds like, as you're taking us through, that there are certain decisions being made, which actually sound no different than the normal decisions to be made. Is this dress long or short and thinking about target market. So, I guess if I could go back to that broad question, why is adaptive design so important?

April: Oh, great question. Yeah, so I think, you know, it comes down to a lot of things, but let me give you a broad scope. So, like I said earlier, adaptive fashion and inclusive fashion, that's all a pretty new trend in the market, which is kind of disappointing because disabled people is not a new trend. Disabled people have been around forever, and we're part of this world just as much as anybody else has. But despite that, we've

really been overlooked by many industries, including the fashion industry. I mean, all you have to do is flip open a magazine or look at a billboard and you're not going to see people who have limb differences or who are in wheelchairs, at least not often. And so adaptive fashion over the last five years or so has taken off, and has allowed that spot to be filled by people with all different abilities. And that means not only like representation and advertising, but then again behind the scenes for the design concepts as well. So, again, it's the simplest thing of taking into consideration, for instance, a wheelchair user. Wheelchair users don't stand, so you have to think about how their pants kind of fit when they're sitting down and learning how to tailor that and to make it something that's stylish and but also functional, that's comfortable.

April: Everyone wants fashionable clothes, so it's really marrying the two because up until about five years ago, all of the brands that had, "adaptive" clothing, you know, looked a lot more like sweat pants right now. It's not going to be something that a teenager who's in a wheelchair is going to want to wear to school every day. What if they want to dress up? So that I guess the premise behind its functionality is they need clothes just like anybody else. We need clothes, I should say. But then it's also that second piece where it's really stylish, right? We care about how we present ourselves. We want to look professional for a job or we want to look fashionable, maybe to impress our friends, and when we don't have that ability because of our physical needs, it's I know from personal experience it's really hard. So that's, I think, two of the biggest hurdles that apparel that adaptive design is trying to tackle, I guess you could say.

Cody: Yeah, that's really great. I appreciate you sharing all of that too, and as you're explaining that kind of too, and I know this is the field you studied, but I'm thinking about my experience working from home the last nine months and how some days I put on some form of work clothes. Some days I'm more in home clothes, sweatpants, and I definitely feel better on the days where I'm dressing better. I feel like I'm actually going to work, or, you know, I feel those mood boosts when sometimes just putting on a pair of work shoes that I like, even though I'm not going to the office, makes that difference. I'm curious, like in your studies of this field, is that kind of like, is there that kind of psychology behind what you wear?

April: Yeah, no, definitely. You know, like the industry is still so new, I don't think there is broad studies, but there's so much research that just says, you know, how we dress affects our mood, right. Like, just like what you're saying. And a lot of people have the

ability to dress how they would like to, you know, but then some, you know, some form or whatnot. And, you know, up until this point, people who had different apparel needs just haven't, they have to stick to one brand. Maybe it looks like a more mature style. Maybe they it's too big, but they have to wear it anyways. And there's just not been options, and so it's cool to see big brands over the last couple of years, such as Tommy Hilfiger or Zappos, really take on that hurdle and realize, you know, our brand is made for everyone, let's start designing like it. And that's been what's groundbreaking is seeing those people's reactions, of getting to go to a retailer or to a website instead of just shopping from one store or having to sew their own pants, and get to take home that brand name clothing or that age-appropriate clothing that just wasn't available in the future. So, I'm so excited, or in the past, I should say, and I'm so excited to see in the future how research and more understanding of this market really shows us what a difference this is actually making.

Cody: Are you seeing, too, that companies are hiring and, you know, making this a focal point going forward, like are they hiring adaptive design departments to focus on these key subsets like the Nike's of the world? The Adidas is of the world, the other fashion brands that have had these longstanding big companies? Are they making this shift as well? Or talk to me about that?

April: Yeah, no, I think I really have started to see that the last couple of years. At the beginning, I think a lot of us and the adaptive space were worried that brands were starting to design adaptive brands more just for the publicity or those lines. And so, it's been really encouraging to see, you know, big brands not only put out these lines, but take all kinds of people with all abilities as their influencers to the brand, whether it be on their staff or advisers, and giving them their personal feedback and having them there, and honestly, just putting us in the room, which, you know, in the past just didn't happen. So, it's been really encouraging, especially obviously we're in the middle of a global pandemic, seeing how people are just shifting their mindset to public health even more, which is so exciting to me.

Cody: Yeah, public health and inclusively as well, so that's wonderful to hear that that's kind of a general trend. I also wanted to talk about a project that you had at OSU, a brand that you founded called Crutching It. Talk to me about the vision behind that brand and what it entailed.

April: Yeah, so Crutching It actually evolved out of that contest I spoke on earlier. So, part of a small part of the design was, you know, they look a lot like, I guess you could say, a sock for crutches, for crutches that go under your arm. But I originally designed to match the dress and I thought, wouldn't it be fun if my design incorporated some way for the crutch user I'm designing for to dress up their outfit for prom? And I thought that was a fun idea, and I even thought at the time, like, I wish I had that in high school. Like, it's never fun to just use your medical grade crutches, wouldn't it be cool if you could make them look stylish, stand out, and make them a conversation piece? So that was part of the contest, and then when I ended up actually winning, I was like, ok, maybe this is something I could take further. So that's what I originally started it, and it was crazy to see how it snowballs. At the time, I was still, you know, in my sophomore junior year of college, and so it was, you know, really cool this down that brand while I was at OSU and get to use the resources there and join the entrepreneurship program in the College of Business specifically and learned how to write a business plan, you know, ask for funding, pitch my idea and really see just how people could resonate with the concept, despite whether they needed crutches themselves or not.

April: They understood how valuable it is for people to feel empowered, and that was really the whole mindset behind the brand. And so, yeah, that it was incredible, I don't think I'd ever call myself, or in the past, I would never call myself a founder where I would ever say that I had the entrepreneurship mindset or I didn't think I did anyways. Which, turns out you do once you are passionate about something enough, and yeah. So, I'm not going to lie, I stumbled through a lot of it, but the knowledge and insight that I gained through that experience was so valuable and really empowering for myself to getting to be a OSU and launch and pitch this idea over and over again to teachers and investors made me really open up about my disability and come to terms with talking about it in the open. So even just that regard, this whole concept was, in my opinion, worth it, because it helped me express myself, express, you know, my own struggles with my disability in a way that hopefully empowered others in the future.

Cody: Yeah, sounds like such an invaluable project both for the market you were serving and the folks you were serving, but also intrinsically. So, that's really cool. Yeah, of course. I was going to say what an amazing thing to come out of college with is already having the experience that founder experience, like you said, that seems so invaluable.

April: Yeah, no, again, I never thought of myself as a founder or an entrepreneur, so it was really humbling to see others' eyes light up when I heard about the idea or the gears start to turn, like, oh, yeah, I guess people who use crutches or canes might want to make that stylish, and then getting to share with them how big our market is and how much need there is there. So, I'm so blessed that I was able to go through that experience while in school and especially with OSU's support, because there were so many things that I had questions about that the entrepreneurship program we're able to just guide me through.

Cody: It's also, I think, a key call-out in there, April, what I hear you saying to is when you said I didn't have the founder necessarily like, you know, becoming a founder wasn't on necessarily the path that you had set for yourself, but it came to be because of a passion. And so, I just want to shout out to the listeners out there to whether you're a student right now or you're somebody who's, you know, out of school but not sure like is entrepreneurship would that ever be something in my future? It sounds like if I'm hearing it right, April, you don't know if it's in your future or not, if you follow your passions, it might be.

April: Yeah, no, I think all of this I would say everything that's led me this far in my career is just because of passion. You know, in school, I think I would say I was never bad at any thing I did in the sense that I was you know, I still put a lot of effort into school, but I didn't have that kind of passion until I discovered adaptive design, and that's when everything kind of clicked for me. It's extremely niche market in a lot of ways. But I think that's what drove me this far. I would have never started my business, I would have never ended up where I am today, I would have never thought to enter that contest if it wasn't for my experience and my passion for adaptive fashion. So, yeah, again, once you find that passion, however long it may take you, that's when things really start to click. So, if you're listening right now and that you haven't found that passion yet, I just encourage you also to keep looking because it's out there, and once you do, everything you do will just feel so much more worth it.

[Bouncy theme music plays.]

Hey Beaver Nation, I'm Ali and I'm a 2015 OSU grad and part of OSU, next, figuring out your journey post college in these times can be tough and it sometimes can seem like there's a lot flying at us all at once. We started the OSU Next LinkedIn group to be a

place for beeves to support beeves. Whether you're looking for tips on negotiating your first promotion, hoping to connect with others in your area, or simply trying to stay sane while working from home, we're here for you. Join us by searching OSU Next on LinkedIn. Now back to the show.

[Bouncy theme music fades.]

Cody: I want to jump into what you're doing now with Billy Footwear. But before we go to that, we have to shout out that you graduated in 2020, which is also a year of a global pandemic. So, first off, congrats. Yeah.

April: Thank you. Thank you.

Cody: Second off, how was that? How was finishing your senior year and getting that diploma while everything else in 2020 was going on?

April: Oh, my goodness. Wow, yeah, it was unexpected, but I don't have any regret looking back on it. I think in my head I really built up my graduation and the ceremony in particular, and just thinking about that milestone. I started community college a little over six years ago, so it had been a long time coming. And so, when it got canceled, I had to learn to find peace with not having the ceremony. and I did a lot of reflecting about what my graduation really meant to me and what it was and what it wasn't. I mean, it's not a piece of paper, it's not a ceremony, it's the last six years of knowledge I've gained, which sounds super cheesy. But, you know, thinking about that helped me get through it. And honestly, I'm a little bummed that have a ceremony. But, you know, I'm so lucky to have graduated with you and had that journey, so I came out with just this passion behind me. So overall, could have been a lot worse.

Cody: Yes, well, that's a wonderful perspective to have too, definitely tough to not get that classic graduation photo in front of the stadium with the cap and gown. But, hey, we're here on this podcast today to celebrate you and your accomplishments there.

April: Thank you. Thank you. It's been a wild ride, but here we are.

Cody: Here we are. Ok, so that's a good transition, here we are, and now you are working for Billy Footwear based out of near Seattle, so in Kent, Washington. Talk to me about how you landed that job.

April: Oh, my goodness. Yeah, so talking about fate, I know I mentioned that contest earlier that I won. Well, it was because of that contest actually, that I'm here. Part of the award was going to New York Fashion Week, and while I was out there, I met. Yeah, it was pretty cool as a student it was very overwhelming, but it was incredible. I got to go to an adaptive fashion show with a lot of leaders from the industry, which was incredible, and while I was there, I actually met the founders of Billy Footwear, which is an adaptive footwear company, and so we met and then ended up getting hired on as an intern this past summer after I graduated. And then now I'm a marketing and design associate here doing work on their apparel, some footwear, and then getting to help with marketing, which has been such a dream.

Cody: That's really cool. You turned the internship into a full-time gig as well. Yeah, that's the key aspect right there, so that's awesome. I was going to ask, could you give us some examples, too, of maybe projects that you're working on at Billy or have worked on? And then second part to that question, if you kind of unpack for us to, as our listeners get a better understanding of adaptive design, maybe, what are some examples of ways that you've added that adaptive design to the projects that you've worked on there at Billy?

April: Yeah, of course, so I'll start out with what our shoes look like and get to describe it for the listeners. So, one thing that's hard for a lot of users, depending on their needs, is putting shoes on and off. And this became really apparent to one of our founders, Billy, which is the brand is named after he had a spinal cord injury, a couple of years back now, and he was unable to get his shoes on and off due to loss of movement in his hands. So, he wanted to figure out with little limited dexterity in my hands, how could I put my shoes on and off? And that turned into the project that created the brand. So, the way they solved that problem was adding a zipper to the shoes. So instead of just regular laces on the shoes, we have a zipper that starts all the way on inside of the toe and wraps all the way around the toes and then comes up on the outside of the shoe. So, the top part of the shoe opens completely up, so you get to step in and zip it up and then you're ready to go. And so that's, again, the functionality of adaptive or inclusive

design, and then the aesthetic part is that they look like normal kind of shoes or sneakers.

April: So they still have laces, while they're usually just for looks. They come in from patterns and colors and especially for our kids, which is our most popular sizes. We have a lot of different options, and that's been the biggest part of it is that parents are so excited as well as the kids that, you know, finally they have shoes that look, "normal" or like the rest of their friends, while they can put it on over their braces or maybe they can't tie laces yet so they can learn how to use the zipper instead. And so that's our biggest, you know, that's our how we really adapt our shoes. So, what I've been working on is a number of different projects, one being some apparel we have coming out, so right now it's just being branded, so, a lot of really cool logo apparel, which is exciting. But then in the future, we hope to actually introduce some adaptive apparel, which would be incredible. So, that's been exciting to see that come to fruition, getting in all the apparel and then also headwear hats right now. And then I've also helped a little bit with our spring and fall shoes for next year. So, we're excited to be bringing some boots, that'll be new, some winter boots, and then also a running shoe, which is really awesome.

Cody: Yeah, as you're describing this to April, I'm on billyfootwear.com, and I invite anyone listening too, who's in a safe place to do so, to pull it up as you're listening too here, and take a few scrolls through some of these categories that April is describing. But, yeah, as I'm going through the shoes, tons of options, I'm impressed with how many options there are, but also all the color schemes. I think as a kid, I mean, even in me as an adult, I'm like, these are awesome. I would love to wear some of these color schemes on my feet, so really cool stuff.

April: Yeah, and that's the great thing about our shoes as well, is that, you know, while they fit the needs of a lot of people that maybe don't fit into regular tennis shoes, you know, anyone can wear them, and that's been our admissible time. You know, they have a zipper, but that doesn't mean that it changes how they look or how they function. So really, a large market of people wear our shoes, which is really exciting.

Cody: Yeah, that is. Also cool to hear that you're coming on at the company at a time where you are kind of at this leading edge of expanding into the apparel and the headwear, that that sounds like a really cool time to join the company.

April: Yeah, it's been amazing. I just started about six months ago, and the growth we've seen is already just, you know, it blows me away. They only founded this brand really four years ago, and we already are shipping internationally and selling. You can also buy our products through Nordstrom, Zappos and Amazon as well. So, it's been awesome to see them spread inclusivity and it's just been such an honor to be part of that.

Cody: That's really cool, and I was going to say to the listeners out there, we'll make sure to post some links in the show notes too, for where you can go and find Billy Footwear and apparel as well. So, you can access those links, and, yeah, check out what they got. I was also going to mention April. I love the logo it's a Billy goat. I'm assuming that's a play on the Billy, right?

April: Correct. Yeah, that will be on a lot of our apparel. So be sure to check that out real soon.

Cody: Yeah, I, I'm a big fan of outdoor apparel type logos and I like this one. Not that it's a completely outdoor apparel type logo, but I love the goat. I had goats growing up, so I'm also partial in that, but I love it a lot.

April: I can't say I can take credit for it, but I'm a big fan. I'm excited to, you know, introduce it in some cool ways and upcoming projects.

Cody: Ok, so I appreciate you talking all about Billy, again, listeners will put some links so you can check it out more, too. I want to jump over here to an episode with some fun segments. So, these are meant to kind of give us a little extra context into who April is, aside from the stuff we already have asked about. So, April, are you ready for our fun segments?

April: Ready or not, let's go.

Cody: This first one's pretty easy. It's called New Year's resolution. 2020 was a year unlike any other, you know, too because you graduated during a global pandemic. But we maybe had New Year's resolutions last year that weren't necessarily as we expected or they didn't end up as we expected. What's your New Year's resolutions for 2021?

April: Oh, gosh. Wow, I don't have any big ones. Honestly, I'm kind of scared because of the way this year's gone, but I mean, small things, I'm excited to keep growing here at the company. I don't know how great of an answer that is, but I'm excited. And, you know, I think one resolution for when the pandemic's over is I just moved here to the Seattle area, so I'm excited to start exploring the city. Once the pandemic is over, which hopefully will be 2021. I think a lot of people keep asking me, oh, what's your favorite restaurant? You know, what do you like to do it? I'm like, not much, so I guess that's a good resolution. You know, once this all settles down and we're safe to do so, I'm excited to get out and explore whether it's nature or restaurants and get to experience the new place I live.

Cody: Yeah, I think folks too, I'm interested to see where people take this question, but I think we're all a little more guarded in setting New Year's resolutions this year just because of one of mine was travel more last year, and so, honestly, I'm not going to make that same one this year, and yeah. We're all a little hesitant to put out some big resolution, but I appreciate you sharing that. Ok, this second one, so this one is meant to kind of highlight maybe another area in your life that you've been interested in professionally but maybe haven't fully tapped into. So, the prompt is, if I weren't a blank, so in your case, an apparel and marketing professional, I'd be a blank, and you can take that wherever you would like.

April: Ok, I think I would be a party planner. Yeah, no, this is kind of more of a lighthearted one, but I got married a couple of years ago and honestly, it was a lot of fun planning my wedding. And I've done other, you know, events, whether it be bridal showers or sweet sixteen parties or even help with other people's weddings. So, I could definitely see myself doing that as a as a job if I wasn't here. Life of the party.

Cody: You like that planning phase of it all.

April: Yes, I'm very organized. You know, it might drive people crazy sometimes, but it pays off and you get to use it in fun ways to help people celebrate is always a lot of fun. So, I think that would be a good way to spend my overly-organized talents.

Cody: I like that. OK, this last one is called Dinner for Four. So, if you could have dinner with any four people, past, present, future, dead or alive could be anybody. Who would they be and why?

April: Ok. Wow. Well, first is easy, and my grandpa, he passed away my freshman year of college, but he is the reason why I went to school, and so I did a lot of reflecting about him in the last year and just how grateful I am that he was there for as long as he was to push me to pursue my goals. You know, I think if it wasn't for him, I literally wouldn't be here. I don't know, I would be doing something that I wasn't passionate about and because of him, I got it literally follow my dreams. So that's one, and so I pick three more or do I count as one person?

Cody: You can have four guests. That's a good question, we clarify that a lot. Yeah, you can have four guests, you're the fifth.

April: Ok, can I invite my husband?

Cody: Of course

April: Even though I have for dinner every night, I'll still invite him.

Cody: Does he want a chair or would he, you know, I guess I'll give you five chairs you can choose.

April: Oh, no, I was trying to knock one person out here. Oh, no. OK, OK.

Cody: No, you can choose your husband.

April: OK, I guess I'll choose my husband still, that way he gets to meet my grandpa, because he didn't originally, and then I only have two left. OK, OK, stress is going down. All right, I've met her, but I still invite her again. I said that I was part of that contest and mentioned that a couple of times and the contest was through Runway of Dreams Foundation, and they were really the people that started this all, the adaptive industry in a lot of ways. So, I would invite the founder, Mindy Scheier, to come because I think, you know, I owe her so much, not just for the contest I won, but because she is the one that introduced adaptive to me and to the world. And I would be a different person

without that here, because not only is that my job, but that's something that's empowered me so much. Last one, let's see here. All right. I would, this is kind of a funny one, I would invite with all those people, I would invite my teacher's assistant from sixth grade, who told me that I was faking my disability to that dinner, and I would tell her how much my disability changed my life for the better.

April: Because I think, you know, when my disability first, you know, formed about a little over 10 years ago and my legs, you know, I walked with a cane and I was experiencing a lot of embarrassment, and even teachers didn't believe that I would ever believe that I was actually disabled. But they also didn't think that I would ever walk again in the same way. And I think, again, over the last year when I was graduating and did a lot of reflecting of how my disability really brought me to where I am today as far as confidence and as far as career wise. So, I think that would be kind of cool to have her there as someone who didn't believe that this was even real, to get to show her, kind of, where it's taken me.

Cody: And the fact that you're now getting the opportunity to give back and design for, you know, a growing market and population of folks who can have access to these type of products like you're put together with Crutching It and also now at Billy, like that's super cool.

April: Yeah, no, I think, you know, all jokes aside, it's it would be, it's been so cool to see how, you know, that such negative elements of my life brought me to such a great place, as cheesy as that sounds, and so I really looked back the last couple years is how negative moments really changed, how I looked at whether the fashion industry or myself and, you know, ultimately those lows is what brought me to these highs that I've been experiencing. And it's been an incredible journey that I wouldn't trade for anything, which I can't imagine I would have thought of that back then. But I'm really happy and fortunate to be able to have that outlook now.

Cody: Yeah, amazing perspective and, you know, we're so appreciative that we got to, you know, hear a little piece of that story, too, and know that there's so much more that went into it and so much more strength. So, thanks so much for coming on the podcast and giving us a little look under the hood.

April: Oh, of course, thanks Cody. It's just been such a great time and, you know, I'm excited to also get to hear all the other great guests that you've been interviewing as well.

[Bouncy theme music plays.]

Cody: Hey, listeners, our goal at OSU Next to the Association is to build community, and that includes creating connections and sharing these unique stories with the rest of Beaver nation. If you found this episode of the What's Next? Podcast valuable, you can help us achieve this goal by writing a quick review, leaving a radio and subscribing to the show in your preferred podcast player. We're thankful for your support.

[Bouncy theme music fades.]