

Women in Tech Interview – Nashlie Sephus Ph. D.

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Listen to an amazing story about a fantastic minority woman and the strides she is making in the tech industry.

We all want to believe we've finally gotten to the point where every industry has an array of races and genders represented...and the technology industry is beginning to offer that. What an absolute breath of fresh air to see a minority woman like Dr. Nashlie Sephus, who specializes in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and facial recognition software, thrive and become a respected leader in this space.

Dr. Sephus, a proud Jackson, Mississippi native, currently works for Amazon's AI team, detecting inequities in algorithms and retraining them to recognize differences, and recently purchased a 12-acre property (and seven buildings) to transform downtown Jackson into the nation's next big tech hub. She's calling it the "Jackson Tech District."

Dr. Sephus graduated with a degree in Computer Engineering from Mississippi State University, and went on to receive her Ph.D. from the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology in 2014. She loved seeing communities thrive with the help of technology and innovation...but once she noticed she had never seen that happen in her own hometown, she decided to take matters into her own hands.

In 2018, she founded The Bean Path with the objective of providing technical advice and guidance to individuals and small businesses, in order to grow networks and fertilize communities. This program includes initiatives such as "tech hours" at local libraries, engineering and coding programs for youth, and scholarships and grants for student and community organizations. This non-profit organization blossomed into her new tech hub in downtown Jackson.

"I'm happy to say that we are going to take this property and create a very high tech center, a live-work-play mixed-use development for the city of Jackson," Dr. Sephus said. "It includes a high tech field but also at its core will still maintain the culture of the city."

Dr. Sephus' project will also have a for-profit side, including housing, residential lofts, restaurants, venue space that residents can rent for events, and a Wi-Fi hotspot area that will be COVID safe.

For additional information please visit thebeanpath.org jxntechdistrict.com and on social media: @phenomenashlie (IG, Twitter, FB)