

Women in Science: Virginia Lazala ^[1]

Discovery ^[2]



Virginia Lazala, Vice President & Legal Head, Latin America/Canada Region and Global Legal Head, Oncology HR

In recognition of National Mentoring Month ^[3] this January, we interviewed Virginia Lazala, who holds two positions at Novartis: Vice President & Legal Head, Latin America/Canada Region and Global Legal Head, Oncology HR. Lazala was recently recognized ^[4] by Hispanic Executive, a US magazine, for her exceptional commitment to mentoring students and colleagues.

Go for it! Follow your passion. Do not let anyone tell you that you can't succeed in science because you're a woman or a girl

What does it mean to you to be recognized by Hispanic Executive and honored for your achievements?

It's quite humbling to be honored by Hispanic Executive and to be included in the same category as other leaders who are recognized figures both nationally and internationally. The magazine has been reaching out to me for several years but I never felt worthy as I'm just me and doing what I believe is normal and common. I am not one to seek the limelight, so the attention I have received since the article was published has been a little daunting. I am very proud to be recognized as a role model and mentor because serving and mentoring others is a large part of my life.



[Discovery](#) [2]

Women in Science: Renee Rodgers [5]

Given all of your personal experience and involvement with mentoring, what is your advice for young women and girls interested in science?

Go for it! Follow your passion. Do not let anyone tell you that you can't succeed in science because you're a woman or a girl. You are as qualified and deserving of success as anyone else and probably even more so! Find others (men or women) who are pursuing the career in which you are interested and ask them for advice. Seek out mentors and sponsors to help you progress in your career. Never be afraid to ask for help. The worst that can happen is that someone will say "no," and if that's the case, then ask someone else. Never be deterred by the word "no."

"Novartis Presents: Women in Science" is an ongoing series showcasing women at Novartis who are helping develop innovative oncology medicines for people with cancer and related diseases.

Disclaimer:

Responses have been edited for length.

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