



LEADERS OF MOON MARK

DR. DEBORAH HEISER, PH.D - FOUNDER AND CEO OF THE MENTOR PROJECT AND CURRENT MOON MARK ADVISOR, ON HER JOURNEY TO SUCCESS AND THOUGHTS FOR FUTURE LEADERS

Introduction to Deborah Heiser, Ph.D

Deborah Heiser, Ph.D., is an Applied Developmental Psychologist, a TEDx speaker, consultant, Founder of The Mentor Project, and an Adjunct Professor in the Psychology Department at SUNY Old Westbury.

Deborah has additionally authored peer-reviewed articles, is co-editor of *Spiritual Assessment and Intervention with Older Adults*, and a frequent expert guest for syndicated and local talk radio shows, international and local podcasts, and print and online media outlets.

What or who inspired you to pursue the role that you have now?

My grandfather, when I was five years old, started taking me out on weekends while he ran his errands. As a civil rights activist in the early 1970's, our interactions with others when we went for breakfast or to the post office, were not always pleasant. For some time, I was embarrassed by these interactions, wishing we didn't always draw negative attention. But, we continued, and over time, through his mentorship, I learned the importance of character, doing the right thing, and that people are complex. His mentorship, nearly 50 years later, still resonates and I hope to pass on his message to the next generation.

What was the game-changing opportunity in your career, and did you recognize it as such at the time?

The game changing opportunity I had was getting my doctorate. In order to do the work I love to do, that fuels my passion, which is working with people, could not have been done without my advanced degree. It was a big leap for me and I wondered if I was capable. But, this educational opportunity opened doors for me and allowed me to follow a career path that as a young child, I never imagined for myself. I never took this opportunity for granted and have always recognized the value.

What advice would you give to the next generation of leaders?

Form strong, supportive, meaningful connections with others. Ask for help and give help freely. Find lateral mentors - experts in fields other than your own. These mentors will open new and surprising opportunities for you.

- Moon Mark is a proud partner of The Mentor Project. Moon Mark could not do the great work of inspiring our next generation without the leadership of Debbie as well as her team of Mentors.