

Erin Bowald – Point of Pride Transcript

[00:00:00] **Erin:** My one point of pride at Simantel can't quite be summed up into one distinct moment. Rather, it's thousands of moments that have built to this feeling of warmth and belonging and pride that I feel deep in my bones. The pride of being a part of a company led by and built by many strong, powerful, smart-as-hell women, or badass bitches, as I usually say. As a brilliant female poet, Beyonce Knowles once said,

[00:00:26] "Smart enough to make these millions, strong enough to bear the children, then get back to business."

[00:00:42] **Misty:** Hey there friends. Thanks so much for checking out our Point of Pride series. In celebration of our 40ish anniversary, Simantelites are sharing stories about the work they're most proud of that made a difference for Simantel, the client and perhaps most importantly, themselves. I'm excited to share this story with you from our Executive Strategy Director, Erin Bowald.

[00:01:00] We've worked hard to cultivate a culture of connection, compassion and empowerment here at Simantel. So I'd love to hear about the positive impact it's had on our staff. Give Erin's story a listen as she shares how her experiences at Simantel have not only helped to shape her career, but have also given her hope for her daughter's future.

[00:01:29] **Erin:** My point of pride at Simantel is the experience of working for a company made up of so many strong, dynamic women that build each other up and push one another to be their best inside and outside of work. I'm Erin Bowald, Executive Strategy Director at Simantel, and I've been here for 15 years. When the request came out asking for Simantelites to share a point of pride to help celebrate our 40ish anniversary this year my brain flooded with memories and stories from my 15 years.

[00:01:59] I've been a part of countless projects with tons of amazing clients, working alongside all of my amazing teammates and partners. How could I choose just one? Would it be the first time Susie Ketterer went out on a limb and told me I should help present at a pitch?

[00:02:13] And honestly, I did pretty darn well. Would it be the crazy prep for another pitch where we were at the office until midnight one night, sitting in a conference room eating Old Chicago pizza to fuel our ideas, to ultimately hear the client say the following day, "I love both concepts. I can't pick just one."

[00:02:32] Would it be the blood, sweat and tears and a little traveling roadshow that we put into our work on Greater Peoria brand? Would it be the feeling I got when, for the first time someone I'd been mentoring for a while started really soaring, kicking ass and taking names? Would it be working alongside Maggie, Susie, Jake and our town's police chief, DA and mayor to work on probably the most community connected work in my career for Don't Shoot, a campaign to end gun violence?

[00:03:01] I realized it was all of these yet none of these. These are all moments that build up to an enormous feeling of pride I have when I talk about this crazy place I've called my work home for 15 years. But as I kept thinking about it, I kept going back to the people who impacted me and those moments and others that make me so proud. And the thing that just kept rising to the top-

[00:03:23] damn, I am so proud to be surrounded by these amazing women who have taught me, shaped me, molded me. And I'm so proud to feel like I've hopefully done a tiny, tiny bit of that for others. Now, don't get me wrong, the men at Simantel are freaking incredible. I mean, God love them for letting us tap into some vulnerability when, at times, I know it's the last thing they want to do in the moment.

[00:03:46] I'm so grateful for them too. Kevin McConaghy, the calm energy guy. Chris Moehn, the work big brother, I never knew I wanted. Jake Beyhl, the person I laughed hardest with and yelled loudest at. Mike Garcia, the person who taught me that my way isn't the only way. Tim Leesman, the one who's become my gauge when I'm making a tricky decision. I literally say, "What would Tim do?" almost weekly.

[00:04:09] They all make me so proud, too. But, to understand my point of pride, I think I have to tell you about a specific personal moment in my life. Three years ago, I became a mom to the most special, spunky, sweet, weird, adorable baby girl. That truly changed everything - the way I thought about my life, my career, my happiness and hers.

[00:04:32] I love this girl so much it freaking hurts. Now listen, I know this is not unique. Every mom feels and thinks this (insert eye roll here). You want to make sure your kid is the most well-loved, supported person on the planet. And as a girl mom, you want so badly to believe that nothing will be able to hold your daughter back from being exactly who she's meant to be.

[00:04:55] It's not unique. But what is unique is how the women at Simantel helped shape my thoughts for me and my daughter from that moment forward. If this was a novel, I would tell you about the countless times on maternity leave and in my first day back, where the ladies of Simantel would check on me, send me sweet notes and gifts, or give me a reassuring text or call.

[00:05:17] Those moments were incredible and something I don't think a lot of working women have. But instead, I wanna focus on what and how I learn from these women. I learned by osmosis. I learned by just being with them and observing them in so many different points in their career. For that, I will always be incredibly grateful.

[00:05:37] They changed my viewpoint of what is possible for me. They empowered me. They made me see my own value. They showed up for me personally and professionally. They showed me how work can and should be fun. They let me fail so I could learn. They gave me some hard truths, but they were always there to soften the blow.

[00:05:58] They taught me that your gender doesn't limit what you can and should do. They were open and vulnerable, which built so much trust. They taught me that our work, while important is far less important than the people doing it. They showed me how to work hard but not lose yourself in the work. They built me up when I was down.

[00:06:18] They were cheerleaders and supporters of everyone. There's no room for bullshit cattiness. They were kind and humble. They owned their mistakes and flaws and were stronger for it. They were, and are, bad ass bitches. And they are exactly who I want my daughter to be - fearless, empowered, strong, brilliant, opinionated, humble, kind, generous, hardworking and fun.

[00:06:47] These women provided me some reassurance that my baby girl can be and do anything she damn-well wants. And that's why it's my point of pride. As I think about her future and her career, I hope to God she finds herself working alongside women like the ones I've been able to here at Simantel.

[00:07:11] Misty: Thank you so much, Erin, for sharing your story, for all of your hard work and for paying it forward to help shape so many lives in your 15 years here at Simantel. We're so lucky to have you, and I'm proud to call you my friend. If you liked Erin's story and want to hear more, head over to marketingsweats.com and check out our very special season six where you can hear my full interview with her and other Simantelites as they share their point of pride in celebration of our 40ish anniversary.