

The Spirit Of An Entrepreneur

Launch Your Career

Alisha Ring Lagarde was inspired to found Launch Your Career after informally coaching and mentoring many young women to successfully launch their careers. As someone who, in her early 20's, was fortunate to benefit from advice and mentorship from experienced professionals, Alisha is passionate about giving other young women the help that she was afforded early in her career. Alisha has long believed that her career success was due in large part to the coaching she received from business leaders in Austin. Through Launch, she will offer a "launching pad" for young women who strive to become successful businesswomen.

After graduating from the University of Texas, Alisha moved to New York to pursue a career in advertising. She loved the city and all the opportunities it afforded but was drawn to return to Austin to take a chance on a job opportunity that would have challenged professionals with twice her experience: to turn around a non-profit organization that was losing money and needed to be re-energized. Within a few years, Alisha, with the support and help of her team and Board of Directors, had turned the organization around to become robust, profitable and a thought leader in the technology community in central Texas. After leading the organization for five years, Alisha decided to pursue other challenges and to focus on her personal life.

Since 2009, Alisha has gotten married, given birth to two sons, served as the first General Manager of the Texas Tribune (where her fundraising strategies led to raising \$3.6 million in four months to launch the new publication) and contributed to the start-up of several companies/non-profits. For the past three years, since the birth of her first son, Alisha has been a domestic engineer, tackling the challenges that come along with raising two little boys. This includes creating magical adventures, playing with trains, cleaning scraped knees and handling all of the scheduling, finances and logistics for a family of four.

Alisha comes from a family who believes in entrepreneurs, starting companies and following your dreams. Her husband, Jamie Lagarde, is an avid Saints fan and entrepreneur who has started two companies in the past three years alone. He has always been supportive of Alisha's career decisions and wishes to be home with the boys. Without his full court cheering, Launch would probably have remained an idea that never came to fruition.



Her father, Harvey Ring, is an angel investor and spends much of his retired time reviewing early stage companies and mentoring them on their investment strategy. Her mother, Nancy Ring, has always supported every dream or direction she chose to walk with the utmost enthusiasm and support, as well.

Now that her sons are in school and have regular schedules, Alisha is thrilled to bring Launch to life so that she can be a resource and coach to young women who are starting their careers. Alisha wants to pay it forward. With Launch, that is exactly what she is doing — paying forward all the expertise and advice she benefited from early in her career. Launch Her Career provides professional women tools to build better business relationships. Alisha's approach seeks to give women advantages in situations where business is promoted and conducted. Her goal is that clients will learn practical ideas and strategies that will help them present a more professional image as well as enable them to move with ease and confidence within the business arena. Based on feedback received from her clients, she knows she is providing a much needed service.

Alisha is involved in the Austin Community and has served as a member of several boards. She was on the board for the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, Girlstart and as an adviser for The Austin Planetarium. She has also served as a board member of the Austin Technology Council, the AusTech Chamber, the steering committee for the Austin Wireless Alliance and Long Center Corporate Council. Alisha was also a member of Tex-change's Advisory Board.

Alisha's professional success has led to numerous accolades and award nominations. Alisha has received awards including a spot on Austin's Fortunate 500 List (2007 – 2008) and was a finalist for Austin Under 40 in 2007 and 2008. From 2006 – 2009 she served as the Vice Chairperson for InnoTech, Central Texas' premier IT conference. She was also selected to be a member of Leadership Austin's Essential Class in 2007.

Her advice to current or future professional women? "Build and use a support network! The people you need to help move your career are actually all around you. All you need to do is activate them and act as the guiding point to help them move together to achieve your goals. It all starts with you. Knowing what you want. Knowing where you are going. Knowing how you are going to get there. Set your path and off you go. No matter how long that career journey takes, you are, and always will be, the pilot.

Also, your community network is often a hugely underrated resource for your career. Don't underestimate its power; it truly can be who you know, rather than what you know. Of course, you do need the qualifications to secure each new role on your own merit. But having a warm introduction or being alerted to a new opportunity by someone in your network can be invaluable. Attend community events, meet your neighbors and be deliberate about communicating your career needs. Keep contacts warm and up to date by reaching out often and finding out how and where you may potentially have an opportunity to work together."

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