Intro Music ([00:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/zTKjuCFyhE08lB_8SOKc7qHpt_PANdWEyZfE1CaTX1EZ522EER7BtRkXFwA3W4vXsQFkC8CwiP6Np-YO5Z0X-Idr2U4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=0.21)):

5, 6, 7, discover, connect, engage, become, discover, connect, engage, become, discover, connect, engage, become.

Lauren (Host) ([00:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/YJ5UaQNu2729jXfSXKLq8leB_Kt5Xsn9iD3KB6NUA60wXEXqiAd3-RLorT68KNZY28y9i7o5_0II0gXAa9mtrFQGjeg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=16.05)):

Welcome back to another episode of the CURN Cast, where we are breaking down the barriers to research. I'm your host, Lauren Okano, and on today's episode, we're going to be talking all about grad school. Now, whether you are [00:00:30] thinking about applying, whether you are in grad school or whether you are not sure, but you just want to hear about some tips and tricks, we have all of that for you and more as we talk with our special guests. And I can't wait for you to hear our conversation. Let's go. I would like to acknowledge that the CURN cast is being recorded and created on the traditional and unseated territory of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc within Secwepemcúl’ecw. [00:01:00] I'm very grateful to be able to learn, play, and create on these beautiful lands. Welcome to the podcast. Uh, we're super excited to have Dr. Lindsay Blackstock, who is an assistant teaching professor in the department of Chemistry at T R U.

Lindsay (Guest) ([01:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/xS11pe2DM_0JUGdQSqLTebJBF98-wTh9GwoBrAVSs1GmtNESFN02G-NUpwHS6plQ8jZVdDoE1gtUjaOfyQEvado1C3s?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=81.93)):

I'm very excited, Lauren. I so appreciate the opportunity to talk. I feel very much still in the grad school experience it, uh, [00:01:30] even though I'm out of it now. Yay. But I, yeah, I'm happy to chat about it because I was a grad student from 2014 to 2020, so I'm happy to answer any questions you have.

Lauren (Host) ([01:44](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/KmFqGnrMGskzz5nMgR-m-23G6l8gQtIF2SgH1QB0-HH4LZgL-kPKGqEP3X1XQfQlcIE4F69nyuBqAeh9DtckPV9zlqE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=104.13)):

I'm excited to get started. And I think a good way to kick things off is to start with a little lightning round. So just some quick questions about research that we ask everyone, and basically we just want, first [00:02:00] thing that comes to mind and yeah, we'll get started. So our first question is, what was the last thing you researched? Hmm.

Lindsay (Guest) ([02:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ddohFv3Bhb8DKlQ3UPJKoPnioWw3wB0zyXH0kDfLErRDND6q4pdaSP0vmemMQMJO1EOy53euev89Je5SibS79Qd2EsA?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=129.48)):

I guess that's a kind of a tricky question because at least in my grad school experience, we worked on our own individual projects and then we also worked collaboratively with our peers. But for myself, in terms of hard research, the last project that I was working on was trying to determine [00:02:30] if the artificial sweetener, aspartame, when you react it with chlorine, so either chloramine or free chlorine, does it form disinfection byproducts? So that was the last work that I was doing.

Lauren (Host) ([02:47](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/3ln3z1Nuzo5d9EqlnpB1RH-Ri1DZRZS25upQ-o7oUHlkb_Jfiz2Xnl9bkkmFGuMqzjk-Ktdo10l0P2pz9Lw4AETctUk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=167.94)):

That is really awesome. Um, do you have a current research interest?

Lindsay (Guest) ([02:52](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/IUBqy7zfjZMWbc0Nm4_iaFvWLM_Lxhgz7cj6F7QjdIlrtRgbhHn1_bM78tY4vWpqkefstYPFDhyWwHVUeaqMJeVOW84?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=172.8)):

Oh, sure. So my current research, I'll preface with saying that in the position I have right now [00:03:00] at T R U is a bipartite position. So that means that my roles and responsibilities are split between teaching and service versus a tripartite, um, position would have teaching, service and research. So because I don't have a research component to my position, I'm not engaging in in depth analytical research in the same way that I was doing when I was in grad [00:03:30] school. However, I am still engaging in research, which is exciting. I've just started to shift that research aim because now my focus is teaching. I really love teaching and I want to get better at teaching, and I want to make sure that my teaching materials are as effective as possible. So my new research focus is scholarship of teaching and learning and focusing on chemical education and how I can, um, [00:04:00] create better materials and resources for students so that they can be more successful in chemistry.

Lauren (Host) ([04:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/AmibU9LtYb5ZjEpVHweWT0B6H8bxp5R6st7Wu3TYROD1iCEtEPuTx0oYaxl1qeXtDxzC6A4KACxrmvLOHE9-MVWwCsQ?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=249.61)):

You get to see there's many sides to research and you don't have to stick with one type of research forever. You can branch out. And teaching research is, is one of my favorites because it really does impact a really large amount of people and students who, who are our favorite to work with. So, [00:04:30] <laugh>, a next question would be, what do you wish more people knew about research?

Lindsay (Guest) ([04:34](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/Mm5KUTP5mDe9uIC8Eh6n57I7-DE2Lz2QbIKv1dhnruRm4toPKXxILwk0hiGlM0f-4EIPIdBjy3jO4mWlaM2bgtY-dzM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=274.6)):

Hmm.

Lindsay (Guest) ([04:36](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/hUwXTJ20XExX55hlzrK_CSrl0gTlkBU2STfScZgQW-kFrQZsbvN6G2_FOekoEUOHchgjzEGbWMk2MQcKaj-ARcaBxd4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=276.68)):

I, I, it's, it's such a fun thing 'cause you everyone who's in research it, it feels obvious, but if you're not in research, I suppose you don't realize how many dead ends you're going to go down. Um, when you're trying to start a project or continue someone else's project or [00:05:00] do anything really on your own for the first time, which is the whole idea of research. You're doing something new. Um, oftentimes things aren't going to work out and they won't work out and they won't work out and they won't work out. And maybe they're going to work out so poorly or lack thereof working out. Um, it'll be such a disaster that you just have to completely abandon everything. And that could feel like a year wasted or months [00:05:30] or, or years. And, and that can be really exhausting on your soul and your mental state. But the thing is, is that with projects where you can have such a potentially negative spiral because the ideas or the strategies that you're coming up with just aren't working for whatever reason, I also want to point out to those that don't do research that sometimes [00:06:00] you can be exceptionally lucky or maybe lucky isn't the best word, but perhaps all the stars align and you're continuing a project where there's been a ton of optimization ahead of time or it just so happens to work out.

Lindsay (Guest) ([06:19](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/x-lv9zrwzmw2ZO4G7n66ME_sx_goqNkWTsexr3m376__Tn2EMXa71uUNuvd6JsbcKUDVfJuSmxKD9_5BTQcc2KCfFsI?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=379.16)):

And that is fantastic. And each project, especially if you're working alongside someone else, is going to have a completely different trajectory or [00:06:30] completely different roadmap. And just because one person's project only needed one phase of optimizing, that doesn't mean that your project is less valuable or the work you're doing is is less rigorous just because your optimization steps aren't working out as quickly.

Lauren (Host) ([06:48](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/t0wZNNfu05Js4CxCW6ZyyYN8-1VA1fUC2hlN56c-zp_FyF5aibanD84zGP_cUfhQiJb0fY02DT_KVmvAUTRoMr7jLFU?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=408.41)):

Yeah. So what I'm hearing is sometimes research is not so much about the outcome, but more the process and you know, the little soft skills that we're picking up in between [00:07:00] that, like grit and resilience, that's something that I think, as you said, every researcher comes to know and, and develop as a skill, but maybe not someone who hasn't done research and, uh, hasn't thought through some of those really key things that you can gain. So yeah, I really love all of those answers for that, uh, lightning round. And then, yeah, just to jump right into the main interview, [00:07:30] my first question is kind of around your research journey and, um, did you always know that that was what you wanted to do to go to grad school? Or how did that kind of start?

Lindsay (Guest) ([07:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/kE70cP4oYKMTPuUm-qqVIMCYf_FM_9f9Nd9DCzveLTLm6WiBTZYfVycKWA-a8F2QKXPYsYNV2ZBiUDyUVztTqoirhFM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=461.72)):

Oh, sure. So I can tell you background. So, um, as you are familiar, Lauren, but maybe not other listeners, I did my undergrad at T R U as well. So I'm from Kamloops and I did my BSc. here and I majored in environmental chemistry. And honestly, when [00:08:00] I first started doing my undergrad, I just wanted to graduate and get a job and have a family and just do my, be a daily driver, just get, have my job, get my paycheck, live my life. And as I was working through my undergrad, I took co-op. So that was my first kind of step in the journey because co-op forced me to think critically about what are you actually [00:08:30] going to do with your degree? And at the time I wanted to do ecology and environmental biology major. And I was so excited because I loved David Attenborough and Planet Earth and I wanted to be a wildlife cinematographer and I wanted to do wildlife research.

Lindsay (Guest) ([08:47](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_MwR4BbFlparhl4KSLEmyc7YOVr6P0QM7e8YdQnOcbYnc6T5SoBxKugNooiOBNR4Yr1MoqxLNiDmMqU-mWZKT1uHJ2Q?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=527.72)):

And I, I, I love the environment, I love animals. I was like biology all the way, or n r s, those, those were kind of like my major drivers. And after going through co-op, [00:09:00] I identified that the types of jobs that I really thought I would want to do would require me to move to isolated regions of the world and make little to no money and my opportunities for like having a family and this kind of like regular everyday life where I just make money and pay bills and that really those two weren't going to coincide. So [00:09:30] after that co-op experience, I decided to redirect my focus. I didn't want to give up all of my undergrad courses that I had taken so far, like the first two years of my B S C. So I decided to go into environmental chemistry. And then also through co-op I realized that things are very competitive.

Lindsay (Guest) ([09:52](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/otsmo0wAFnNy_DF2iFincYmqDrK7ZJs599mE5Ix248o2U0jMng_Ifmfptq14sCKlLczhBPXu7Bcszf5SsjICpr-0vGI?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=592.83)):

And I had, um, Bruno actually sit me down, Bruno Cinel, he sat me down in the hallway one day and he said, Lindsay, what are you doing? [00:10:00] And I said, oh, I'm just, you know, doing school. He's like, yeah, but what else are you doing? And I was like, oh, you know, just trying to graduate. And he's like, but you need to do research. And I said, why? He said, you need to like set yourself apart so that after undergrad you can do things and you know, have a good resume. And I thought, okay. And so he said, you should uh, meet with Sharon. 'cause he knew that I liked environmental stuff and I'd never had a class with Sharon. So I went to her office and I just sat in her office [00:10:30] and I just <laugh>. I said, I just really love animals. And I started to cry in her office <laugh>, how embarrassing.

Lindsay (Guest) ([10:38](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/w6Txp_wk3ejuIaTCJj8GpuTh9Do_thCikZWWHVLOhQ4-_9AKGOo9j5ElvARSjvgTWAeGcGp1xj9iBZ6pJ-proKVslIg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=638.49)):

And she was like, okay, let's come up with an idea. And, um, I wanted, I, like I said, I wanted to work in industry and so I thought I wanted to work in mining. So I started a soil chemistry project with Sharon and Kent Watson, who worked in natural resource sciences at the time. We dug these soil pits and we collected samples [00:11:00] as we went like horizontally down into the soil pit. And I analyzed those soil samples for heavy metals and it was a very tiny project. If I look back now, um, there's many things I would change with my new understanding of research, but it was still a wonderful project where I got to just identify kind of like some what's here at the baseline. Um, so I did that project, that was my first project then. And then research just started coming my way.

Lindsay (Guest) ([11:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/L82PiQXPMfQlzIOqN7eA1xkYxC0-pF6BP7CmqYkrWZPYjP-zLvkm8R1P3p_TY4Ag8FJuT3oItREejgZ15avXLhoyOMY?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=689.46)):

It felt like one [00:11:30] door opens and then it just started snowballing. So then I started working with Kingsley and I did one project where we went out with some of the members of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc band, and we collected all sorts of different berries that are picked traditionally, and I dried those berry samples and I looked for heavy metal in those samples as well. So that was another project I did with Kingsley. So that gave me like quite a bit of research experience as an undergrad. [00:12:00] O once I did that, I, I still didn't want to go to grad school, Lauren, I was doing all that research and I still didn't want to go to grad school. I just thought, wow, all of this research is going to make me an excellent candidate and I'm going to get a job <laugh>. Um, and no, like I did not get hired.

Lindsay (Guest) ([12:17](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/acG913KYxtYhWrRvQP1DvcN7EZ5xJEOAXAI65V4VNWlyDcCAw2zx7ZmPqraokaLLmgr8xRzgu71h1ngAw9HleKaBZy8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=737.5599999)):

I was not find, I was not being successful getting jobs. I did get a job with Activation Labs out in Dallas, so I was doing like assay for them for maybe three, [00:12:30] two or three months. And then they laid me off and it was then, it was at that point, thankfully I had done so much of this research work in my undergrad that unintentionally I was an excellent candidate for graduate school, but that was never my focus, that was not my goal and that was not my motivation. I just was trying to get a job. But after seeing like a really intensive, kinda like slap [00:13:00] in the face reality of how hard it is to get jobs, I came back to Kingsley, which was one of my main mentors in my undergrad. And he said, you know what? Like, why don't you just do a master's program? Think about it like a two year job position. And then when you're done that two year position, you're going to be much better prepared, you're going to be a higher, um, choice candidate for the next job opportunity. So Kingsley kinda like tricked me into going to [00:13:30] grad school. <laugh>,

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Hit the Streets ([13:38](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/GyDPHB_UUxVMbqDf3G6MVAfUkpOWvasA8iiQzMhCkxQHyAQSGPpjhcBzIhHV68eKoP1au6SliKGt2kWsV7OMlGpR_R0?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=818.62)):

Welcome to Hit the Streets. I'm Hannah and I'm Julye-Anne. This is a segment where we ask strangers weirdly specific questions about research. Now let's hear from our first victim.

Speaker 5 ([13:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/wMwyXVsqbw1vWmbeDU9Xof-p1bFu_2K2HP5O6F3YrN8r1LG0m4d_NGetozUP4JIcn1V9kYsx7yebkLz_kjjoo9BkM1M?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=831.4)):

Are you considering grad school? Why or why not?

Speaker 6 ([13:54](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/eZ4JGJBAscb7bjix2uIx3vuTxosQgqGIF8mzzr9ZNFO0YjeNU1CJQU2FmVNxSCKjmus5CK6IbVM0En8qRyi1g3ITDug?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=834.25)):

Uh, not right now. Okay. Um, because I just, that's not my plan right [00:14:00] now.

Speaker 5 ([14:01](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/UTQMxnmVPcf_zQG4AruNjHkvkR8K1aDImnYkoe99c50_AI44kryLrr3b9i5iAV1CGA56fR4kzcfsvKhEwfzDjP1N5fQ?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=841.63)):

Uh, I am considering grad school just because, um, I feel like with a lot of science courses, um, in order to do or science, um, majors you need post-secondary or post-graduate school to, uh, uh, in order to really do something with your degree, like if you want to become a doctor or anything like that. So that'll be why I will be going to grad school.

Speaker 7 ([14:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/iMDcpbaVTce87Zul88fWNNQJkQ8JOQ5dornadPBh8ZT9RKSQZkyVJxLyzGJDK2mBXXTyRreWiyihW3HzNkr0Zuw02bI?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=866.38)):

Um, I haven't really put much thought into it to [00:14:30] be honest with you, but I feel like once I'm done school and I have my degree, I'll have more of an idea with what I want to do with that. Like right now I'm just trying to get my degree done and get a career going.

Speaker 8 ([14:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/wYRCiLijitRtZvPFmvG9OOexHMG9F6TFwNy1_Lyxx3a7sW9ACorYAP1AAJ2QCiKfy4040nEzPzYPxfIAhHzrH2eTXHw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=881.89)):

Um, I think I would would like to consider it, I do want to take some time off, um, just to work for a little bit, get some work experience, and then I think I would like to come back and eventually go to grad school.

Speaker 9 ([14:53](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/CTRxKdYUuJQITK4nt-3edj4o_YaiBjFiP7GK69kKEU9V9TbdVjZTervaoiV-lPiVw4kSEXnUaONngSLVRaHgSZESGkw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=893.06)):

Personally, I would be interested if that, if it does come up to me, coming to school for how many years has taken [00:15:00] a toll on myself. So there are different hoops you have to jump through, but if it does permit later on, definitely I would.

Hannah (Segment Host) ([15:07](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/kGs9THcXIZhBL18bw-y_YWWRkjHS1rD_OfWJiwg3TPOq7FnDouZEwTylOzODJ2aR4zp6hj0Uq9BZTJ7EqPUHik94k-Q?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=907.73)):

And that's it for question one. Now back to our regularly scheduled programming.

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Lauren (Host):

Flash forward a little bit to grad school. What did you like about it? What was your experience like?

Lindsay (Guest) ([15:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/g-tUEiHtPpLaRuGJks6W6KV2NRfCbYpVwUao9adRBdmoFgs_TvXP0BWSHt--mazvq3nXQ-f1neNDK6Dj_tacu9iDSOo?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=922.94)):

Um, it's, it's funny, like grad school, I feel like is one of those things where someone says, what do you like about it? And I like kinda laugh [00:15:30] to myself because I'm like, grad school is a very like, bittersweet experience. <laugh>. Um, I went to grad school at the University of Alberta and I have to preface that I had overall a fantastic graduate experience and I think that that was really facilitated through my graduate supervisor. Her name's Xing-Fang Li, and she is extraordinary [00:16:00] and she has a spectacular lab. She is a powerhouse researcher. And I believe that, you know what, in grad school, anyone is capable of amazing things, but if you're being realistic, if you join a lab that has a phenomenal amount of resources and support, unfortunately, even if that's [00:16:30] not as fair, students that join a very successful lab group often times can be propelled into success themselves.

Lindsay (Guest) ([16:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/S_Vg4BMPh9jUy4SO0ro7Nt7TsNngvOjAz7VaKgE4LTpROJGkab2GrUeNvzjiqnhRUzbtBoJS0PC5Mox32vDsrHzXepc?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1003.1)):

Um, Xing-Fang often would say that the tide raises all ships. So in her group, everybody worked on projects together and when projects went well, everyone succeeded. And I [00:17:00] think that I had, one of the reasons I had a spectacular graduate experience is because I was with a very well renowned researcher and I was very lucky to have that. And I didn't realize how lucky I was until the la like the back half of my PhD experience. It was really like, it felt like luck that I was placed in that graduate group. And I, like, I applied to it and Xing-Fang was looking [00:17:30] for students and Kingsley recommended me to work with Xing-Fang So it sometimes in academia and in research, it can be a bit of who you know and not what you know, even though what you know really matters.

Lauren (Host) ([17:44](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_EcaJXeg36iwzy232LVdwTeSzuP3DtovGjhmIFKjHMffoP7giocaDu6bg6OSSGSvl2kCw5hOqK-VPm3mNiPnvHprEsg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1064.6)):

Yeah, definitely. I think also as you said, everyone kind of puts in that effort and does a little bit of their homework. That's a great tip to, uh, really consider not only the what you're studying, but who you're studying, who is, [00:18:00] is a support in that area. So

Lindsay (Guest) ([18:03](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/FuE9drFAwQAhWXeZKdcyeIV68fD0lOgp0D8kzyQr8dEmtFpvxIuj33iBSMNUtQ7kgc6VVjDPDu_-4AQ7M4BtzvnuAJI?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1083.09)):

Certainly, and of course, you know, the thing about grad school, which I feel is also not often spoken about is that like every individual person's experience is going to be dramatically different. Because in my opinion, if you're doing a project based or a thesis based grad school, it is less of a traditional school experience and more of an apprenticeship because you are essentially [00:18:30] apprenticing your supervisor. And the key skills that I learned from Xing-Fang and how she would manage her lab and how she manages her project deadlines or she manages her research team are going to be completely and astronomically different from another student who had a different supervisor who may have different strategies or techniques, which again goes to show why it's very important that [00:19:00] you have a decent idea of who your supervisor may be and why it's so important to talk to the research group students when you go, if you are interested in going to grad school, it's very important to talk to those students to see if they're telling great things. That's great. If they're not saying anything, I dunno, I would maybe just like look at other groups if the students are afraid to say anything about their experience.

Lauren (Host) ([19:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/fOxiBnNrUSiU3PuAF9NsHvsaebLEnadIkNMkqVv1zn9b3VQimocVnZDrLaMvQSAkxm1ho6DV5S2v7SZnRahU-87sezo?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1170)):

[00:19:30] I also want to know, were you always super confident throughout your grad school experience or were there times where we like to use, um, the interim imposter syndrome comes up a lot with research students and I think it's something that you don't necessarily see, uh, like profs and PhD such as yourself go through. But is that something that you [00:20:00] experienced?

Lindsay (Guest) ([20:02](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/AXoJX-N2tIT9h12_---ykkLZetsOaOGFjXOBxXP4pvbxK10T4T4cFv5YHpHRCBhUcRpr-BaMFcsLE9ZsjEm5mPdS_Bw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1202.31)):

Oh, definitely. I feel like imposter syndrome is like a daily, daily, even now, as always, I feel like you, it's so challenging for me in my grad school experience, I was always the least confident in lab. Um, I feel very confident in my writing skills. I feel very confident in my project design. I feel confident in my experimental design. I feel confident in my like rationale and [00:20:30] like, basically I'm confident in everything except for getting the results in the lab. And that was because I just, my research was the drive of my research. I found the theme was how to take a complex problem and apply a simple approach to solve that problem. Whereas a lot of my peers were doing extremely complex things, uh, very challenging, [00:21:00] very high tech, very in-depth, very sciencey labey things that I was not doing. And so when I would look at my papers or the, the content of the material that I would present at conferences or in any sort of platform, I would always feel like, wow, I'm presenting like a first year chemistry project.

Lindsay (Guest) ([21:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/dB36LNghVRfgrD_z2mMZrqNWutEQ9njpPqAG5gOpJoHmPKReHjOXkgekTZS11iypuxh5CG1OChFTbbwi4yDTphFvZm0?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1289.6199999)):

Um, [00:21:30] like a, like an undergraduate level. Like honestly one of my favorite, one of my projects has been, um, proposed to be made into a first year lab. So <laugh> it is, it, it just was something that you just have to own, at least for myself, I found that you, you just have to identify like what's working for you and kind of like be proud of it. So I stopped, I tried to stop being so, [00:22:00] um, not nervous, but like ashamed that my project was so simple and instead I like to now I now believe that that's actually made me more effective in my job now because you take very complex ideas and if you can kind of apply a very simple approach or a simple way of thinking that's really important for like the general public to understand what you're doing or why you're doing things. And I think, um, being able to identify like a simpler way to tackle problems [00:22:30] is an asset. But at the time in grad school, I definitely would feel very kind of like bashful about the lack of complexity of the questions that I was trying to answer <laugh> in my, um, research.

Lauren (Host) ([22:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/FGcqcVU_5RT7MB2Ud6CmCbO59-unSB4eVbnFGg-CUqPTeeT1BO0iXdAPrpewvm_1fIvZb7N27W4OnOQWGtDqZ8xzdrU?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1365.94)):

Yeah. So in a sense it's like more focusing on that personal development aspect and what you are getting out of the research instead of, oh, I need to get to everyone else's level and do all the [00:23:00] same amazing things that all my peers are doing. It's, uh, I like that way of looking at it and, and turning it into a what are my strengths and, and how can I move forward from that? That's cool. Do you have any other tips or, uh, other suggestions for supports that are available for students who are looking at grad school?

Lindsay (Guest) ([23:20](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/9L19CT4lNfJy_WlNrDEfcew6t1HYuRowvouAbIglXuDTb0PBSe-70WKIT2GMR3DQGhq0yYRqFZGmu9gvxvUCZ8hSLVU?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1400.8)):

Yes, I would, I'm happy to give tips. First I would preface with identifying what are your goals in grad school? So [00:23:30] a key thing is again, doing some reflection on what are the potential career pathways you have after grad school. So typically there's like the three major categories of like industry, government and academia. And recognizing that each of those different sectors are going to require different skill sets at the end of your graduate school journey. Um, for me, I didn't, I didn't recognize that I wanted to go into academia [00:24:00] until like maybe halfway through my program because to me academia felt like, oh, being a PI or like a principal investigator, right? A lead of a research group, I saw how hard my supervisor worked, like crazy hard and she'd always be like, Lindsay, don't you want to be like me? Don't I live a nice life?

Lindsay (Guest) ([24:18](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/5VHLF2HxoYr4287jr-rrMENlRALOSXthvDTKvzEaJIREWKsZMhDPqh7iNRIfc9sNe53OWJyJMlUdGO3DstkYNzlvh-E?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1458.35)):

And I'd be like, ha, no, I don't want to be like you. I want to like have work-life balance. And my whole goal was work-life balance. And then I kind of came to realize that coming back to T R U and [00:24:30] taking this kind of undergraduate focused academia approach would really suit my interest. And I, I love communicating science, I love teaching, I love presenting. So I, I was able to identify that academia was the avenue that I wanted to go into. Um, because I knew academia was where I wanted to go, I recognized that I was going to have to have like an extremely competitive CV because it's exceptionally difficult to get [00:25:00] jobs in academia. So the, some of the things that I began focusing on, again, recognizing also I was kind of interested in government as well. Like I didn't want to go industry, I was thinking government or academia.

Lindsay (Guest) ([25:13](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/VFtmW0PGPB387HtCFKiJTeUcaMKyzs9CUT0zUd6JGnL4RU9P5P-cQC31StgDMi78L-m8NQ0j4EePkLpSbSDfEr-1Qxc?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1513.52)):

So I knew that I was going to have to have like a lot of service. I knew that I was going to need to show very much my commitment to community and be focusing on different areas of service or volunteering that would, um, help propel [00:25:30] me in the direction of either academia or government. Um, so I would hugely recommend once you identify kind of what you need, um, regardless of what you need, I would say identify, uh, acts of service that you can become involved in. So whether those be like different groups that you can join, um, being on different boards, being a part of different communities, um, really trying to do the most in service is going [00:26:00] to not only, not only does it, is it good for your cv? Yes, it's excellent. You've checked the box, you did service, you volunteered. But again, this comes back to, it's not always what you know, but who you know, who, you know, the people that you're volunteering with are going to be the ones that potentially have hear about job opportunities or they're going to introduce you or you're going to network with them.

Lindsay (Guest) ([26:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/DBuSxUHfcLSNo9Xztifc4aYdCri89695DAHicCarAzYoZ4z--wBKHZBMrEgfKiivmm1GdczL0aL1N3JOE_LkcAzijeQ?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1582.6099999)):

And you are telling these people that you're spending your afternoons and your weekends with, you're, you are committed to the same kind [00:26:30] of goal of whatever service that you're doing in whatever sector you are going to show to the, this network of people your commitment and these small things, they travel far. When people are looking for employees, they often kind of like do like a little internal search ahead of time or there'll be little feelers that go out or you might hear about opportunities ahead of time. Um, so being engaged in [00:27:00] these different service spheres or sectors I would say is really, really important.

Lauren (Host) ([27:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/DIB7BR1JEFTx-qMpiY92hrAotBOhGrNvOe6d43Yqu79jPq2x_kD5ee14KL0XqI0Ux2veloqCa0_aIOElOpKs9y538fU?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1626.8699999)):

I like that idea of going in with a strategy with a goal and kind of reverse engineering your, your experience for what you want it to be. I think you get, uh, a lot more out of it when you're not just going in blind per se, <laugh>.

Lindsay (Guest) ([27:23](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/cyIA8nmU5DUBEf5VjK9c_oNTqDMJAOuoXJ5TDkWElZjZFNHjc6MzqlVYUh-1Fv4W-HAaZxVqhVeDoJhG6ZhZLPh_GH4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1643.25)):

Oh, certainly.

Lauren (Host) ([27:24](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/xo5fMLdHm18g8Fgpzl1odGgm_CEck2brsmGZu6Dzdm_vmJznqs-TA3k0ZxaEKu59J7x1xE8ZVhyL29vPRYHqliSeduI?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1644.21)):

Yeah. That's all the questions that I had for you today. Thank you so much. I'm going to [00:27:30] have to go back and reflect on a lot of the things we talked about just because there was lots and I think our listeners were will find it very valuable. So thank you so much, Lindsay <laugh>.

Lindsay (Guest) ([27:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/y9hTkSsqPilHPr_SYRImJHdcAz8oZ7HgU5s2IZnPf_Q1g6HsnPLJiI2ADc_RVjaa5j2y2IKY2eesnLGxyrYgb6Iu4hE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1661.91)):

Oh, I'm so glad.

Lauren (Host) ([27:46](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/M7lI6UsamiyB2uJGcEhsoltGFl9pGYoM8jtF3KWoSbfj1i57OPuIvqL9Bp9BfxifU-qoXyVktAIHVpgaWnyjWC9bKnU?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1666.5)):

I want to say another big thank you to our special guest, Dr. Lindsay Blackstock, for sharing about her research journey and experience in grad school. I hope you enjoyed this episode and if you did, make sure to tune in to part two [00:28:00] where we'll be talking to a current grad student in the Master's of Science in Environmental Economics and Management Program. I hope you have a really great day and we'll see you soon on the CURN Cast.