



Episode 33: "Sharing BIG Stories"

with Sharilynn Wardrop, Knowledge Translation Strategist with the BC Behavioural Insights Group (BC BIG).

Sharilynn Wardrop is on a temporary assignment as Knowledge Translation Strategist with BC BIG. Sharilynn shares her BI journey and how she plans to use BI towards conservation when she returns to her regular role with BC Parks. Sharilynn and I also talk about how BC BIG and UBC-DIBS work separately and together to communicate BI ideas and build a diverse, thriving BI community. We talk about recent developments, from the BI Principles to the BIG Difference Advisory Board, and what we're excited about for the future.

Transcript:

KIRSTIN APPELT, HOST: Welcome to this edition of Calling DIBS. I'm your host, Kirstin Appelt, Research Director with UBC Decision Insights for Business and Society, or DIBS for short. Today, we're calling DIBS on Sharilynn Wardrop, a Knowledge Translation Strategist with the BC Behavioural Insights Group.

I've had the pleasure of getting to know Sharilynn over the last 11 or so months, and even though she's only been with BC BIG a short time, she's made a BIG impact, which is our first BIG pun of the day and probably not the last. So today I'm really excited to chat with Sharilynn about her BI journey, about communicating about BI, and about how she likes to talk about and spread the word and build BI community. So welcome to the podcast, Sharilynn.

SHARILYNN WARDROP, GUEST: Thanks, Kirstin.

APPELT: Why don't we have a start by just having you tell us a little bit about yourself?

WARDROP: Yeah. Well, I have a fairly meandering background, so maybe I'll take you on that journey a little bit to start with, because I started my career as a biologist, training in biology and a Master's degree in Behavioural Ecology.

So I started out applying behavioural theory to animals and plants, believe it or not. And I worked in that field and as a Wildlife Biologist for a few years and then moved to Toronto, where I ended up working in gallery spaces in the Royal Ontario Museum. And so that was a lot more about developing education and programming around some of those ideas.

And I did that for quite a few years. It was great fun until my husband got an opportunity to go work in France, and so we decided to move our family there. And while I was in France, I started a communications business, so doing science communications, restarted my career again. But communicating has been a theme that I've been thinking about right through my career. It's something that can be a tool or a barrier in communicating science and some of the important ideas that people need to know about science so they can use it. And it's been something I've been noticing for a long time.

Eventually, we made our way back to Canada and back to BC, where I found my way back to my roots as a biologist at BC Parks. So I worked for five years as an Ecologist at BC Parks, and I've been on loan, I guess, to BC BIG for the last year. And that's where I am now.

APPELT: I love how everyone's like, well, my journey is a bit meandering, and then I feel like we all have these meandering journeys that finally bring us to BI or bring us to BI along the way. That's such an interesting story. So it sounds like we're getting little hints along the way already, but how did BI get on your radar?

WARDROP: Yeah. Well, like I said, I started my career studying animal behaviour and a lot of the same behavioural economic theories that apply to people apply in animals as well. Over time, I became a lot more interested in the interactions between how people behave in conservation efforts.

So there is a field within conservation called human dimensions, which has a lot of overlap with the field of behavioural insights, although I'm not sure how much conversation happens between those practitioners in those two fields. And I did some workshops while I was at Parks with Dr. Alistair Bath who is a professor at Memorial University specializing in human dimensions. And he was actually the first to really introduce me to the idea of the intention-action gap and talked a lot about how we need to question the idea of continuing to do education programs without considering behaviour change outcomes to come of them.

And so really, he was talking about behavioural insights. They used different language, and it wasn't something that quite landed with me, but it was something that was on my radar from that moment. And all the time I was listening to podcasts like Freakonomics and Hidden Brain. I was getting that theory, but I didn't have a name to put to it until I learned about BC BIG. And I don't even remember how, I think it was probably a training announcement or something, and I was just like "This. This is what we need. This is the thing that's been sitting in my mind all this time that we need to apply to conservation". And so I started paying attention to what BC BIG was doing.

APPELT: That's so interesting, and I really agree that there's like a lot of similar practices happening, and I think over time we're building more connections. But like you said, there's actually not a lot of crosstalk between some of these similar, similar disciplines. It is interesting when you sometimes work in an area or on a problem and it's like, oh, if we just tell people about the problem, that'll be sufficient. And then we're like, "Wait a minute, nothing's happening". So that's probably a good transition to thinking about how you are strategic in knowledge translation, which sounds like your exact role as a Knowledge Translation Strategist. So can you tell us a little bit about your role at BIG?

WARDROP: Yeah, for sure. I mean, in some ways it's a little bit undefined because there's a lot of different ways that we could interpret what that means, knowledge translation. But I think I apply it to the three pillars of work that BC BIG does, so one of them is around evidence building. And so that is delivering projects that test BI interventions and demonstrate impact. And that work takes up a lot of the team's time and so a lot of the work I do is about telling the stories about those projects so that people can understand and apply the outcomes of the research.

But we also do community building as a second pillar, so we work a lot on this piece. One example of that is the work that I've done with you, Kirstin, on organizing the BIG Difference BC conference, which brings together a lot of different people to expose them to research, to share concepts and BI across a huge audience.

And then the last one is capacity building, which is really our way of strengthening our reach by building skills in others. And most of this for us is focuses on finding training sessions and materials, and I put a lot of work

over the last year in planning and organizing a more strategic approach to training. So that's where the strategy comes in.

APPELT: Absolutely. And I think it's really cool how BC BIG has these three pillars and they're all mutually supporting. Like, we can't build evidence unless we have a strong community of partners who have capacity in this space. So it's just such a great, great strategy. Good job to you. So again, this might be something you've already alluded to, but what drew you to this role, particularly within BC BIG?

WARDROP: Yeah. Well, although I mean, I think I have that background in behavioural ecology and that interest that I think had kind of drawn me to BIG, but I'm not a behavioural scientist. Not these days, for sure. And maybe when I first finished my Master's, I could have argued it, but these days my skill set is more an understanding of ecology and communication and strategic planning.

And so the KTS role is actually really well suited to me because it has all of those pieces. I've devoted my career to taking complex ideas and delivering them to people of all kinds of different skills and abilities and needs, a lot of experience in communication. And so, it was sort of like an opportunity to immerse myself in something I was interested in, in the way you might immerse yourself in learning a new language. And yeah, that's why I applied for the role. I wanted to be a part of it.

APPELT: Absolutely. And we've been so lucky to have you in the role. So I think given that there are these different pillars, it's probably somewhat of a challenging role. There's a lot you can do with the role. So how do you do it all? What do you do? So what are some of the challenges?

WARDROP: Yeah, I think one of the big challenges at BIG, I think is actually that it's just a really small team, but there's a lot of interest and a lot of need. And it's been thinking about how do we deliver on those three pillars when we have right now, seven people, and we have a maximum of eight on our team and then, of course, partners and supporters. And so that's a real challenge and that's been that challenge that's been driving things like developing the training strategy or other tools that allow us to extend our reach.

I would say the BIG Difference community is another way that we can do it as over the last year or so, Kirstin, we've been kind of coalescing that community together. That can extend our reach. So yeah, just figuring out how do we, we know all this good work can be done and we know that there's a lot of interest, but how do we maximize our reach has been one of the biggest challenges.

APPELT: Yeah, I think we all are just so excited that it's hard to make choices about what to do because we want to do all of the things, but we can't do all the things. So yeah, I find that challenging too. On the flip side, what's rewarding about the role?

WARDROP: Yeah, I think, well, there's no end of things that are rewarding, as certainly I've alluded to just how much I get to learn all the time and the people that I get to work with. People are so committed. You know, just yesterday we were in a meeting where we were just throwing out ideas of "How do we solve this problem?".

And at the end of the meeting, we said, "Isn't it great to work in a place where we can just spend time discussing ideas that we think will make something better?". So that's really great. It's a really great team. I feel really lucky to have been involved in an initiative, and it's something because it's growing and so many people are interested, you really feel like everything you do is appreciated. So that's been really nice, too.

APPELT: Absolutely. Yeah, it's so rewarding for me when I get to see that we're - BIG pun number three - making a big difference, whether it's building, training or sharing BI with folks who've never heard of it or bringing people together and making connections, I really enjoy that part myself. Is there a favourite project initiative communication, something you want to share with us to give us a little flavour, more specific flavour of what you do?

WARDROP: Yeah. Well, I think the one I want to share the most maybe won't be a surprise because I've already mentioned it, but it is the training strategy and I think that is the one that I really like the most because there's just so much interest and it's allowed us to be more focused. It's allowed us to pull together a bunch of pieces to a training pathway that also integrates with the work that you're doing at UBC and hopefully will more and more over time. It's something that our team can deliver to a lot of people, so it'll extend our reach. I'm actually really proud of that work that we've done on the training strategy. It's probably my favorite project and I'm really hoping that I'll leave it in a place that it can sustain itself moving forward.

APPELT: Yeah, I think that's a really good one because it's something where BC BIG has over time developed a wealth of amazing training opportunities from one-hour sessions to three, four-day boot camps to other opportunities. But before it was kind of just we have all of these things, come and get it, and we know from behavioural insights that you have to make it easy for folks to know which one is the right fit for them.

And think you've done really good work in making it, like you said, a bit of a pathway where you have a clear place to start. Clear next steps along the way. So I think that's going to make a - BIG pun number however many - a big impact. We need we need one of those "bing!" noises every time someone says BIG.

WARDROP: They call that a sting in podcasts, I think Kirstin, you need a sting that says BIG Difference-- music behind it.

APPELT: Me too. Maybe next year's budget, for the podcast. Well, talking a little bit more about the communication side of the house, you've been exposed to many BI communications. You've written, co-written and edited a whole slew of communications, from blog posts, newsletters to web pages and so many other things, progress reports. What do you think works well when you're communicating about BI?

WARDROP: Yeah, I think as someone who has communications as a big piece of their toolkit, one thing that I've really realized is that we need to apply the same principles of BI to our communications. So whether that's simplification or having messages that are salient or making our calls to action attractive and sometimes even things like personalization or framing in different ways is really important. And we use those principles, and I think a lot of communicators use them, but with that understanding of the behaviour and how people respond to that context that you're setting in your communication, really makes it better.

APPELT: Yeah, I think it's really true that practicing what we teach is really important, but it's also surprisingly hard. Like I myself have drafted many like multi page emails and then had to say, wait a minute, that's not easy or attractive for anyone. So I think that's important, but surprisingly difficult.

WARDROP It really is.

APPELT: And I mean, this may be just the flip side of what you said, in that sometimes we don't practice what we teach. What are pitfalls to avoid?

WARDROP: Yeah. I think one of the things that we as communicators for sure need to focus on, and a lot of people struggle with, is tailoring to your audience. So although I think every communication benefits from

those things like simplification and salience and attractiveness, not every audience needs the same type of information. So, you really need to craft it the right way for the right people.

And then I would also say that there's lots of nudges you can apply to communications that are probably going to make it better, but there are others that might not. So be really careful about using things like social norms or even framing if you're not sure how your audience will respond to those things.

APPELT: I think that's a really great point about tailoring the communication. So on that note, how do you tailor because we have in our community everyone from someone who still doesn't know what BI stands for, to folks who have decades of experience.

WARDROP: Yeah. And it can be really tricky, especially in something like our progress report, which is really for everyone. So, we wanted to keep that fairly simple and straightforward. But we still include case studies that have enough detail, has a high-level summary, but also enough detail that the scientists who are reading it will get a sense for the strength of the data. That was a really tricky balance but most of the time we use the same principles but tailor the level of detail.

So, for example, our newsletters that go out to everybody are fairly brief and high level. And when we link out to research, we try to pick, or I try to pick a summary, a well-written summary of the research and then those scientists who want to dig deeper can find the original work. Some folks on our team are developing, on the flip side, our practitioner guide, which is really for more expert audience. And it's a guide for practitioners to understand how we go through the process of delivering a BI project. And although again, those high level details will be the same, it will be salient and simple. There's a lot more detail and the language will be more suited to my expert audience.

APPELT: Yeah, and I really like that approach of kind of having the best of all worlds where you start with the simple, but then you have successively more detail, whether it's in appendices or later pages or link out. I think that's a really nice way to be able to kind of have it all. Mm hmm.

Well, one other thing I was hoping to chat a little bit about is, like you said, you are a bit on loan to BC BIG and you'll be returning to BC Parks, so I'm wondering if you can tell us a little bit about your role with Parks so that we could maybe think about how BI might be relevant in your future work?

WARDROP: Yeah, I work at the conservation program in BC Parks as a Protected Areas Ecologist, and there are several of us who work in that program provincially and then colleagues who deliver conservation on the ground regionally, and we provide support for them.

And so over my years at Parks, my role sort of evolved into being the person who does a lot of more of the strategic planning, some of the program delivery. I worked on, for those of you in BC, you may have seen those license plates all over the province, BC Parks license plates, so I work a lot on planning for how to deliver that program. A lot of work on managing human wildlife conflicts falls within that program. A lot of work on just understanding what we're protecting in parks. And a lot of work on managing visitor impacts.

So parks are pretty popular and especially during the COVID pandemic, they've become really popular as we've been unable to travel internationally or even across the country, out of the province. And there's a lot of impacts from all those people in parks. But of course, we want people in parks, and so it's quite a challenge figuring out how we manage that balance when you have a system that is there both for people to enjoy and for preserving biodiversity.

APPELT: Yeah, that's definitely got to be a challenge. I've noticed myself, on my own walks, how busy the parks have gotten. And then you see, you can physically see the impact of having so many folks. And just shout out to the license plate program. I thought that was brilliant, and I very much enjoyed my own BC Parks license plate. Highly recommend it.

WARDROP: Nice, I'm so glad you have one.

APPELT: So how do you see BI as being relevant to the work of Parks?

WARDROP: Yeah, I think there's a lot of areas that I think it could apply just within the conservation area that I know the best. I think what we know is that conservation is about people. So if people weren't behaving in all kinds of different ways, you wouldn't need conservation. Nature would run its course, and change and evolve in its own way.

And so there are so many places where the way we behave impacts parks, and we've done our own research as well as looked at research from others, and there's really strong support for conservation in parks that doesn't line up with behaviour. So I think that there is separate space there within our education and programming department. We've got development of things like responsible recreation messaging, and I think there's a real opportunity to test out how some of those landing and how they're resonating with people and if they result in the behaviour change that they're designed to.

Yeah, and even within the license plate program, I think encouraging people to donate to those initiatives by getting a license plate. I think that there's a lot of misunderstandings about whether the funds actually go to parks and they do. But I think sometimes when there's those barriers, like a lack of understanding, we can come up with behavioural interventions.

APPELT: Absolutely. And I think it goes back to what you said at the very top of the podcast around the intention action gap, for a lot of these behaviours, like even someone who's very conservation minded, they might not realize by doing a shortcut, they're creating a new trail which has impacts. And so I think, like you said, there's just so much there. I'm excited to see what you do with all of that when you get back into the role.

One of the things I thought would be really interesting about having you on the podcast, as you came from a role where you could use BI, but not a role that had anything BI related in the title or job description. You've spent time with BC BIG, you'll be going back to a role that won't have BI in the title. And a lot of our students and alums are in roles that don't fall into a stereotypical BI role, but they're roles in which there's really a lot of potential to use BI. So how do you think you'll be able to use BI? Like, do you think you'll be able to have actual trials or do you think you'll be doing just kind of BI lens on things? What do you think you might be able to do?

WARDROP: Yeah, I think both. So certainly one of the things that the team at BC BIG has supported me in doing is making sure that there is some connections already with the park. So we did a presentation and we shared some material. So I think there's a lot that you can do around integrating BI into the culture, especially once certificate program students are done, they will have the knowledge they need to do some of those presentations and sort of bring the concepts of BI to their colleagues.

In my mind, my expectation is that I'll both use behavioural insights as a lens, but if I get my way, will do a project too. I think that doing even one project in parks just to demonstrate the value of testing some of your ideas can really make a difference. And I think that the environment there is ready to do a trial, but it's just finding the right one. But I can definitely see myself, I hope people will see me as a resource, and that I'll be

able to provide the behavioural insights lens as well and identify when maybe you shouldn't do that without doing some testing.

APPELT: Yeah, I think that's a really neat part of being in a role, again, I don't want to call it a non-BI role, but a role that is not stereotypically considered a BI role, is that there are these opportunities. You can be a bit of an evangelizer of BI. You can be a resource. You can be someone who says, well, that might not be a good use of BI we need to test it or we need to do some more research first. So I think that's a really exciting possibility for folks who are in a role within an organization where maybe BI hasn't gotten as strong of a foothold.

WARDROP: Yeah, this is something I'm really excited about as the certificate program graduates are coming out and it's so neat to see the graduates from last year coming out and starting to bring what they've learned into their roles, and I've seen examples of that already. And I sort of mentioned how hard it is for BC BIG to extend our reach, but now we have all these partners moving out into the world who can be that resource or share what they know or make a connection. I think it's really exciting now we have a whole new cohort who will be graduating next spring.

APPELT: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, I think like you said, it extends BIG's reach and it's creating this network within the BC Public Service so much more can be done, which is exciting. Well, I'm curious, do you have a biggest BI related lesson from your time with BIG? Is there anything you think is going to really stay with you?

WARDROP: Yeah. You know, as I'm getting close to the end of my time at BIG, so at the end of this calendar year, I'll be moving back to Parks. And so I've been reflecting on that more and it's still solidifying because there's so many things I've learned and it's just being able to speak the language a little bit and to be able to say things like, well, maybe we can use framing or social norms or things that I wouldn't have, I might have known but didn't know what words put to it.

But I think, a couple of things, one is having that BI lens and just the EAST framework, which is such a big focus of our training at the introductory level. What a great tool like, talk about using BI. It's so easy. There's so many complexities under making things easy, attractive, social or timely. But the concept itself is really simple and it gives you a first place to start. And it's a really easy way for me to share those ideas with my colleagues so having that deep understanding at this point of what that is and how it's applied is really helpful.

And then I've been thinking a little bit about what research has really impacted me. I know we haven't had the next conference yet or anything. But I'm still sitting with the keynote from last year's conference from Eldar Shafir, as well as some of the work that Jiaying Zhao presented on the New Leaf Project and how we can use BI to understand how the context of poverty is affecting how people make decisions.

And it's just because it's such a big issue in our world today and especially here in Victoria, issues around homelessness and poverty. I don't even work in that field, but I've been sitting with that talk all year, and I think it's going to be something that I'll be noticing in the media and I'm looking to support as I move forward. They just did such a good job of using behavioural insights and human language to help understand really why people may end up in situations that they're in. It's those behavioural decision-making contexts change and get more and more challenging. Yeah, although I haven't seen this year's conference, I'm pretty excited to see some of the presentations on where the field is going, actually.

APPELT: Yeah, absolutely. And I agree. I find it can be easy to get bogged down these days when you see all these stories about issues like homelessness and the opioid epidemic and everything. But seeing the great work that's being done by researchers like Jiaying and Eldar and others, it gives you a little bit of hope that

maybe we have some tools, if not to completely solve the problem, at least to make a big impact on the problem. Yeah. So yeah, that absolutely is something that keeps me excited about the field.

Well, I thought we could kind of bring it back around, thinking back to you, pulling your thread about Parks, the thread about BC BIG, one of the things you've been really involved in, one of the other things we've talked about, so many things that you've been so busy, you've really been crucial this year in growing and developing our local BI community, which we call BIG Difference BC now. And I think maybe you started to get at this a little bit with the conference, et cetera. But what are you excited about for the BI community?

WARDROP: Yeah, I really think over the last year, what I've witnessed in my time is that community began to coalesce from a set of great initiatives and people who support each other in the conference and the newsletter and individual partnerships into a bigger movement that is coming together and aligning. And so as it does that, all of us are starting to build up a bigger reach and have bigger conversations and bring more people to the table. And so I'm really excited to see where it goes over the next couple of years.

We just launched a blog, we're talking about social media and ways that those conversations can start to become two way, even with folks who maybe aren't as involved in the field, at the center. So, yeah, I'm really excited to see how that starts to evolve and how we can get together in person too, in the coming year, I hope.

APPELT: Yeah, we've actually never met in person, it's been a whole pandemic while you've been there. I also want to just flag, you buried it in there, but we launched a blog this week, so there are lots of new developments happening within the BI community. And I think I too am excited about this idea of having more two way communications. We're trying to find more ways where we can hear from other members of the community so it's not always BC BIG and UBC DIBS doing the talking.

Another project I'd love to touch on, and as I do this conversation with you, I was struck by how many things you worked on this year. It's quite impressive. But another thing that you've been intimately involved in is the development of the BI principles. And I was wondering if you could tell us a little bit about those, what are they? How did they come about?

WARDROP: Yeah. The BI Principles is a project that is a collaboration with lots of folks and led by BC BIG. And it was, you know, as the field has been growing and evolving, and it really is still continuing to grow and especially out here on the West Coast, I think that BC BIG and a lot of partners wanted a set of principles that sort of both guide the work of practitioners and especially new practitioners, and that could be used to set some standards for hiring and to support training of new practitioners.

So we came up with a set of six principles. They were all kinds of different numbers. They went from 10 to seven to eight to six that are there to serve as sort of guideposts for us if we do our work. And to set a bit of I would say an ethical framework, to be part of our ethical framework, as we do our work. Yeah. And so we've got them now in sort of a really easy to consume one page document, and they've been supported by a whole bunch of organizations that all work together to create these principles.

APPELT: Yeah. And I think one of the things that's been neat about them is like we just mentioned, we're trying to have more of these two way communications. And with the BI principles, we actually were able to have some opportunities for public comment. So we did things like a thought exchange. There were other opportunities for this working group, which spans the country with lots of different organizations from different nations. So I think that is a nice example of how we're making progress towards some of those goals around, not just unilaterally delivering content.

WARDROP: Absolutely. And it went through a few phases where we had a smaller working group of experts kind of craft some ideas and then we put it out and about exchange. Those ideas that came through the thought exchange really did shape how these principles landed. And then we did another round of consultation. And we're so impressed with how many people responded with all kinds of different backgrounds to you know what felt right to them as spectacles that they wanted to work toward.

APPELT: Yeah. And I remember one of the main things that came out of that is before we had it sound a little more directive of like, thou shalt nudge for good. And then we realized that wasn't the right tone it needed to be more about these are the principles we live up to and it's working through social influence like we're holding up to these principles, we hope you'll join us in doing so. So it's more of a we nudge for good, we hope you do as well.

WARDROP: Yeah, it's sort of an example of how hard it is sometimes to apply BI into your own work because it hadn't occurred to us before that we wanted to use language that implied a more social collective goal that we're working towards, as opposed to something that we're requiring people to do. And it reads much better now thanks to all that input.

APPELT: Yeah, and I think it's a document we're quite proud of, and if anyone is curious, it is on the BI wiki so we can link out to it from the podcast notes. So I'm curious, we've talked a little bit about this already, but are there particular things you hope to see as the BIG community continues to develop and grow?

WARDROP: There certainly are. I think I've touched on most of the things that I've been thinking about, so I'll bring some of them together. One of them is definitely getting more and more people who have an understanding and a deeper understanding of what BI is and where it's appropriate to apply it and where it isn't. Because I think that that's something that takes a little bit of time to sort of land on, you know, it's not necessarily about ensuring someone behaves the way you want them to. It's more about supporting them to behave in a way that benefits them or society. I think where there's an actual behaviour that can be changed as opposed to an attitude, and I think that that's something the more people we train, the more certificate students move out into the world, and share that understanding. So I'm excited about that. I'm excited to move to a place where we get, like I said, more two way communication.

So opportunities for more people to provide input and the principles is a great example of how that improves the work we do, when we're getting that sort of input. Yeah, and definitely more ways to provide support. So there's a lot of ideas out there that haven't landed yet, but things that BIG and UBC DIBS have done before things like a form of palooza or a hackathon, or the kinds of things where we can create events, where people can get together and learn as they do. So I'd love to see some of those things, sort of people who are excited about BI, but maybe aren't quite ready to apply it themselves. But you can come together as a group and work on something. So those are some of the things that have been on my mind. Yeah.

APPELT: Yeah. I think those are all things I'm hoping for as well. And I think one thing that was maybe a little bit implicit in what you were saying, too, is that as we're getting these two way communications as we're getting to do these other opportunities, we've always had a cross-sectoral community, but it's kind of BC BIG and DIBS were the anchors. And now I think we're seeing that there's more organizations anchoring with us.

So now we have this advisory board, which has folks from the private, nonprofit and public sectors. And so there's other folks who are willing to come to the table and be those anchors so that we can have these multilateral discussions, so I'm really excited and encouraged about building that piece more, so reaching

these diverse audiences and diverse on multiple metrics, whether it's racialization, gender, sector, all these different ways, just having that richer conversation by bringing these different folks to the table.

WARDROP: Yeah. And I'm glad you summarized that that way because I think that I would agree and it'll be really great to start to see some of those different stories appearing on the blog and some of those different stories getting out through the different tools that we're developing around the community.

APPELT: Yeah, it's definitely an exciting, exciting future, I think, for the BI community. Mm-Hmm. Well, on that note, I think we're getting close to the end of our time, so I'll ask one of my traditional ending questions, which is, do you have a message for our BI practitioners in training?

WARDROP: Yeah, I think I've touched on this already, too, about how excited I am that there are so many already coming out and so excited to see how many people are willing to put in that time and commitment to hone their skills in the field and that they're from so many different backgrounds.

So just building on that idea of expanding the community and diversifying the community, what a great opportunity to do that. All these students, they're going to be such an important part of the field moving forward, and building our capacity. And they're just like me in that way that we're all expanding our toolkit and bringing these new perspectives back to our roles in a way that can really support our community in new ways. So I'm pretty excited about that and that all of these people are going to be following the principles and focusing on generating positive social impact that's pretty inspiring to think about.

APPELT: Yeah, absolutely. And I love what you said in there too about honouring the commitment they've made. Nine months is no small potatoes, so I'm always impressed by the commitment to the program and then throughout the program.

WARDROP: Yeah.

APPELT: Any last thoughts, any questions I should have asked and didn't?

WARDROP: I can't think of any questions. I feel like we covered a lot in there, but I just do want to say how grateful I am to have been able to spend some time in this community. And I really see so much potential and growth and partnership opportunities. So it's been such an amazing experience and I'm a little bit sad to have to leave. But it's the right step to kind of go back and figure out how to take what I've learned and make the next step. What a great experience.

APPELT: Yeah, and what I love is that with the BI community, you're leaving the position at BC BIG, but you're in no way leaving the BI community. And now you're going to be one of those people going back to another division and helping to further grow and expand the work that we do. It's a great way to get our hooks into people and we don't let them leave. Well, thank you so much, Sharilynn. It's been really nice to chat today and I am a little bit in denial that your time at BC BIG is drawing to a close, but we'll always have this episode.

WARDROP: Something to save.

APPELT: Yeah, so thank you for joining us today.

WARDROP: My pleasure. Thanks, Kirstin.

APPELT: And thanks to our listeners for joining another episode of Calling DIBS.