

0:01
Welcome to the Garden Gate a podcast
0:03
where we talk to professionals across
0:05
many fields who work directly and
0:07
indirectly with plants and our natural
0:10
World. We are students at American
0:12
University in Washington D.C. and interns
0:14
at Smithsonian Gardens
0:16
we have created this project with the
0:17
hopes of inspiring a new generation to
0:19
make sustainable and meaningful change
0:21
in our world. I'm Kira Burba and I am
0:24
Caroline MacDonald and this week we're
0:26
talking to Ryan Gooch about his work in
0:27
the field of education.
0:29
Ryan Gooch is a former Smithsonian
0:31
Gardens intern who is now working at an
0:32
outdoor preschool in Washington state.
0:35
It's so good to have you today we're
0:37
really excited to talk to you really
0:39
excited to be here. I'm Ryan Gooch I'm
0:42
from Simi Valley California which is

0:44
the Los Angeles area. I'm 26, I got my
0:49
degree from UC Davis
0:51
uh in international agricultural
0:54
Development, a little different than
0:55
stuff I'm doing now but learned a lot of
0:57
really cool stuff there and got my start
1:00
at the UC Davis arboretum and that's
1:02
what brought me here today
1:03
we've known you for a while you
1:05
obviously were our predecessor at
1:07
Smithsonian Gardens which is awesome
but
1:09
we haven't talked to you in a while so
1:10
do you want to tell us what you're doing
1:12
now and how you got there? So
1:15
I think like everyone I'm kind of going
1:17
through a transition phase as well um
1:20
right now, I am serving with AmeriCorps I
1:23
am a preschool teacher so teaching
1:25
outdoor preschool in Seattle that's
1:27
where I live right now I love it I love
1:29

being able to talk about plants I love
1:31
being outdoors and
1:33
working with kids has always been like
1:34
one of my major passions so that's
1:37
really fun and awesome for me
1:39
and then I plan on attending graduate
1:42
school next year
1:44
at the University of Washington in
1:46
education
1:47
that's kind of where my trajectory has
1:49
taken me now
1:51
yeah it's a cool place to be.
1:53
How did you decide on
1:56
choosing an AmeriCorps program and what
1:59
program are you in?
2:01
yeah so
2:03
I'm in an AmeriCorps state and national
2:05
program which
2:06
basically, means that AmeriCorps is
2:09
partnered up with a local non-profit
2:11
in Washington reading corps which
2:14

usually pairs with the schools in the
2:15
Washington area trying to boost uh
2:17
literacy rates among
2:19
elementary aged and preschool students
2:21
and I chose this because I'm trying to
2:24
minimize the amount of time that I have
2:26
behind a computer because it seems like
2:28
that's what everyone's doing right now
2:30
and I just really like being outdoors
2:32
and it's been a while since I had a
2:34
chance to really work with kids again
2:36
and I think that might be like I said
2:38
one of the trajectories that I'm looking
2:41
to in the future
2:42
AmeriCorps
2:44
is
2:45
special to me because I get a chance to
2:48
put my foot in the door in environmental
2:49
education and it also allows me to
2:52
feel like I'm doing something good with
2:55
my life you know I get to just go out
2:57

and teach kids in the mountains that's
2:59
pretty cool and it's not going to be
3:01
forever but it's a really nice thing to
3:03
put on my resume and
3:05
since I'm not totally sure exactly where
3:07
the future is going to take me it's
3:10
just a nice steppingstone so that's
3:12
kind of why I chose to do AmeriCorps.
3:14
This year
3:16
being in school during Covid is like
3:18
it's so much screen time so I envy you
3:20
that you can be outside and working with
3:22
kids and what you want to be doing
3:24
in this time, I don't know how you do it.
3:26
yeah, and I'm doing my student teaching
3:29
right now, and so like obviously hearing
3:30
you talk about how excited you are to
3:32
get into education work with kids like
3:34
makes me excited because I want to like
3:37
bring nature and environment to these
3:39
students and help them learn about it
3:40

and it's amazing that you get to do that
3:42
with them and outside so
3:45
your next step going
3:47
and getting your master's degree is that
3:49
Correct? Yeah, that's right. How did you
3:52
decide that getting a master's degree
3:55
was right for you?
3:56
How did you come upon that decision? For
3:58
Me, even undergrad I was iffy
4:01
and masters I was even more iffy on
4:03
doing but this program that I'm going to
4:05
do is it's different it's kind of unique
4:07
the structure of it the University of
4:10
Washington has paired with an
4:11
organization on Bainbridge Island and in
4:14
the Puget sound of Seattle called uh
4:17
island wood is the program
4:19
and basically, what I will be doing is
4:22
taking groups of students throughout the
4:24
area like third graders around that age
4:26
and teaching them science-based
4:28

education um every week so that really
4:32
drew me in the fact that
4:34
like I said I'm really somebody who
4:35
needs to be out and doing things and if
4:38
I'm if I know I'm going to be stuck behind
4:39
a computer then that's not a program
4:41
that's going to be for me but I really
4:43
have to be doing something
4:45
so, when I saw that program and I knew
4:47
that a Master of Education would also
4:49
allow me to
4:51
it would expand the opportunities that I
4:53
could apply for in the future maybe
4:55
something administrative maybe something
4:57
that's like more leadership position the
5:00
fact that it would allow me those
5:02
opportunities I thought was a big reason
5:04
why I wanted to go to grad school.
5:07
I'm looking to apply to grad school
5:09
myself so I'm just curious did you apply
5:11
to the University of Washington
5:13

specifically for that program because
5:15
you liked what they had to offer or were
5:17
you looking to get a master's just in
5:18
general and that was one of the few that
5:20
you looked at.
5:21
Definitely the first one, a master's
5:23
degree for me I was really trying to
5:25
balance out the pros and the cons it's
5:27
extra debt that no one needs but you
5:30
just need to make sure that you're doing
5:31
it for the right reasons that it's going
5:33
to propel you
5:34
to the future and your goals.
5:36
So that's kind of what I did I weighed
5:39
out the pros and cons and I decided that
5:41
this program specifically would put me
5:43
where I want to be in the future it
5:45
would give me those connections.
5:47
A master's in education is nice because
5:50
it's a pretty broad degree to have uh
5:52
med is what it's called and it would
5:54

allow me to pretty much work in any kind
5:56
of educational institution but
5:59
with my previous skill set and
6:01
experience I did feel like
6:04
I could probably have done something
6:06
that would make me happy
6:08
without a masters but again I just kind
6:11
of waited out and decided well this
6:12
masters specifically and this program
6:15
and the connections I can make within
6:16
the area which I think is a great area
6:19
for environmental education um just
6:21
seemed like the best course of action
6:24
for me.
6:25
yeah, I really can't think of a better
6:26
place to be teaching outdoors than the
6:29
pacific northwest that really sounds
6:30
awesome
6:32
at what point did you
6:35
know this is what I want to do now
6:38
this is what I want to pursue this is
6:40

the path that I want to take that's a
6:42
hard one um
6:44
for me
6:46
the first job I got
6:48
out of high school was a summer camp
6:51
counselor I liked working with kids and
6:53
I had been a summer camp all my life and
6:56
I really liked it I stuck with that job
6:58
and then after school care for like four
7:01
years all throughout my community
7:03
college years and then even
7:05
when I started going to UC Davis I kept
7:08
coming back and working there over the
7:09
summer and
7:10
I just really liked it but I never
7:12
really pictured myself in an education
7:14
field working with kids so I decided to
7:17
use my time uc davis to really explore
7:19
my options international ag development
7:21
sounded really appealing to me and I
7:23
still
7:24

think that in another life if I had
7:26
chosen that I would have been super
7:28
happy
7:29
but working with kids has always been
7:31
something I've been really passionate
7:33
about and
7:34
I kind of shied away from it there's not
7:37
a lot of not a lot of money in working
7:39
with kids and it can be a very stressful
7:41
job and it's tricky to go for the
7:44
first thing that you do out of high
7:45
school you're like I did this well I
7:46
should make a career out of it no I
7:48
should probably check out some of the
7:50
things and then I was like no I should
7:51
just make a career out of it
7:53
so it was a little bit of back and forth
7:55
and trying different things I'm getting
7:57
a better idea of what I want to do and a
7:59
better idea of myself and I think that's
8:01
really important at this age when no one
8:02

knows what they're doing is
8:04
uh
8:05
everyone thinks that oh I should like
8:07
think about exactly the job that I want
8:09
to have but really you should be
8:10
learning about yourself you should be
8:11
learning about your strengths what you
8:13
like and then let that job kind of find
8:15
you and that's kind of where I've been
8:19
I love that message so much
8:21
and especially the message of like
8:24
following your passion because it sounds
8:26
like for you
8:27
your passion is what makes you happy
8:30
and that's something that you want to
8:32
obviously want to do every day you want
8:33
to wake up and be excited
8:35
what advice would you have for someone
8:38
who
8:39
knows they like to work with kids wants
8:41
to go into education is really
8:42

passionate about providing equitable
8:44
education to students
8:46
but is also really passionate about the
8:49
environment something plant related
8:52
what advice do you have for them
8:54
to mesh those two passions together
8:57
no matter where they are I would say
9:00
that explore the field of environmental
9:02
education
9:03
it is so important
9:06
to get children opportunities to learn
9:09
from nature um it's kind of cheesy but
9:11
when you're in the world of
9:12
environmental education you always hear
9:14
the term like nature is the best
9:15
classroom
9:17
and of course you know it is it is the
9:19
best classroom you just look around and
9:21
opportunities for learning are all
9:23
around you don't have to just say
9:24
well I like science and I want to be a
9:27

teacher so I'll be a science teacher
9:28
there's so much more to that
9:30
there's
9:31
like informal education is such a broad
9:34
world and a broad category
9:36
that you really just have to find the
9:38
opportunities and for me when I was in
9:40
social
9:41
I felt like
9:43
I didn't see a lot of those around me
9:44
and then when I went to college I was
9:46
like okay you know maybe there's more to
9:48
it than I thought and now in the PNW
9:50
it's incredible it's everywhere
9:53
every kid has that experience
9:56
um of going to some sort of outdoor
9:58
school it doesn't have to be a program
10:00
like that it can also be like working
10:02
for a museum or it can be working for an
10:04
aquarium there's so many opportunities
10:06
to educate children outside of the
10:08

classroom that I really wish people
10:09
would consider because
10:11
they are just as important as
10:14
in classroom opportunities
10:16
and it's not an easy decision to choose
10:20
the more broad vague gray world than it
10:23
is to be like okay I can get my teaching
10:24
cert and move straight into a classroom
10:27
but I would really recommend someone
10:29
like that to look into that world of
10:31
environmental education
10:34
thank you that's so valuable and I think
10:36
it's so important that people realize
10:38
that
10:39
education is
10:41
everyday life and
10:43
you can
10:45
get an education you can learn not only
10:48
just in the classroom but like also
10:49
outside as well and in non-traditional
10:51
environments and for some students
10:54

that's what's best that's what gets them
10:55
excited building upon what you said
10:58
earlier about
10:59
trying new things and you're never going
11:01
to know
11:02
what you like until you do it it's like
11:04
how I feel about smithsonian gardens
11:06
like I never wanted to work with kids or
11:07
do anything with education
11:09
but
11:10
now that I've worked here I really like
11:13
educating people educating visitors and
11:15
I think that that's where I kind of want
11:17
to go into now and I never thought that
11:18
that would be somewhere that would lead
11:20
me to this path but like
11:22
without getting these kind of odd
11:24
internships on jobs you're never going
11:25
to know without trying it totally
11:28
and I feel like that's just so true for
11:30
our age too like
11:31

I
11:33
for a long time have known I want to be
11:35
a teacher I want to be in the classroom
11:36
I want to be with kids like that's my
11:38
dream job
11:39
but then I come to
11:41
smithsonian I'm like wait a second like
11:44
we don't have to be in a classroom
11:45
sitting in rows at desks like we can be
11:48
up and moving and playing and like
11:51
learning
11:52
from
11:53
the environment we live in and I think
11:55
that's just so thrilling to be able to
11:56
share like something
11:59
you're passionate about with another
12:01
student because thinking back to
12:03
teachers I've had
12:04
the best ones I've had are always the
12:06
ones who are the most passionate
12:08
about what they're doing about the
12:09

topics that they're teaching so true
12:12
one of my first internships that really
12:14
set me on this course
12:16
was working for
12:17
a student garden in an elementary school
12:20
near Los Angeles
12:22
uh where kids had no idea about like the
12:25
seasons or where their food came from or
12:27
soil and how those things work because
12:29
it's so urban of an environment and
12:33
depending on where you're from you
12:34
forget like what opportunities some kids
12:36
may or may not have so
12:38
being able to bring that to them the
12:40
outdoors to them or whatever kind of
12:42
program you can find that can enhance
12:44
their knowledge of the outside world is
12:47
so valuable so important and
12:49
I really encourage everyone to look into
12:53
opportunities to do that it's really
12:54
going to change the world if we can get
12:56

these kids out and about
12:58
the best days of school were the days
12:59
that we would go out in the woods behind
13:01
my middle school and look for like
13:02
salamanders and stuff I feel like
13:04
there's just such a limit to what you
13:05
can be learning
13:06
about nature in the classroom and I felt
13:09
so privileged that I was able we were
13:11
able to go into the woods but
13:13
it's so hard for kids that are learning
13:15
in the cities to have that kind of same
13:16
experience so I think
13:19
improving environmental education is
13:20
such a big deal
13:22
even on this online environment
13:25
this morning during our morning meeting
13:27
with my fifth grade students we got into
13:29
this conversation about one student said
13:31
hey have you ever heard of a turtle bug
13:34
and I was like no what are you talking
13:35

about I don't know what a turtle bug is
13:36
and he's like well it's a bug with a
13:38
shell and I was like what do you
13:41
mean so I look up turtle bug and
13:43
find out that maybe he was talking about
13:46
a stink bug or it kind of has like a
13:47
shell on the back kind of like armor and
13:49
then we got into this whole conversation
13:51
about roly-polies and is it a roly-poly
13:54
or is it a pill bug and then we got
13:56
talking about cicadas and the cicadas
13:57
that are about to emerge from the ground
13:59
in dc they've been buried for 17 years
14:02
now they're about to come out and this
14:03
is
14:05
these are students who
14:07
come from an urban environment
14:09
and we're in a pandemic most of them
14:10
spend their time inside even during our
14:12
break they want to spend their time
14:15
on line with their friends and the most
14:18

excited I saw them all week was talking
14:20
about insects that's so cool
14:23
yeah those little moments you gotta
14:24
treasure them
14:26
just looking back on your journey of
14:29
how you've gotten to where you are so
14:30
far and
14:32
what are like the best resources that
14:33
you say would have helped you along the
14:36
way
14:37
obviously my first answer is going to be
14:40
learning by leading
14:41
is
14:43
the greatest program
14:44
ever to come out of anywhere in the
14:46
world in the universe I really could not
14:48
speak more highly of learning by leading
14:50
um but I do recognize not everyone gets
14:52
a chance to be a part of a learning by
14:53
leading style
14:55
um internship
14:57

but what I would say is
14:59
look for opportunities that give you
15:01
that responsibility like learning by
15:03
leading does that puts you in a role
15:05
where you can make choices for yourself
15:08
because you can only learn from
15:10
from failure and from trying things that
15:12
make you uncomfortable
15:14
and I've had both I've had learning by
15:16
leading where you know
15:18
literally you're I was learning because
15:20
I was a leader and I was able to help
15:23
people on their journey to become a
15:24
leader whenever you can get an
15:26
opportunity to
15:28
be a leader and find someone who trusts
15:31
you enough to make your own choices I
15:34
would say definitely look for an
15:36
internship like that and then in that
15:38
internship finding those supervisors or
15:41
mentors who really believe in you and
15:45

having them kind of coach you through
15:47
things and don't be afraid to ask them
15:49
and get their personal emails whatever
15:51
you need to do to just connect
15:54
I had a lot of
15:55
people at the uc davis arboretum that
15:58
really inspired me and
16:01
taught me how to be a good leader and
16:04
even on my like really low days where I
16:06
just wasn't feeling it they were really
16:08
you know pushing me forward to be the
16:11
best learning by leading intern I could
16:13
be and I would suggest everyone to
16:16
get out of your comfort zone get out of
16:18
that you know box that you feel safe in
16:20
and find those people that you can
16:23
relate to and if you can't find them
16:24
just keep looking you know you have to
16:26
make those connections and then
16:28
once you have them like allow that
16:30
journey of growth to really flourish and
16:32

take off I would say
16:34
in a nutshell
16:36
how would you
16:38
describe learning by leading
16:41
so learning by leading is it's a style
16:44
of doing an internship
16:46
where you have two student
16:48
co-coordinators who have been chosen
16:50
based on their experience
16:51
and their knowledge but also their
16:54
potential for leadership their
16:55
willingness to go out of that box of
16:57
comfort and have those tough
17:00
conversations but also be there for
17:02
those great moments and then those two
17:04
students
17:05
will really be
17:07
like the leaders of this internship and
17:09
they will be the ones
17:11
choosing and hiring the interns below
17:14
them
17:14

and
17:15
setting schedules and planning meetings
17:18
and helping them along their journey of
17:21
leadership because the two
17:23
co-coordinators are also really there to
17:26
facilitate the growth from the interns
17:28
and the interns are a lot of the times
17:29
the ones to come up with those great
17:31
ideas and
17:33
have their voices heard and contribute
17:35
whatever they can to the process so it's
17:37
really kind of like a top-down style of
17:40
internship and of power whereas most
17:42
other internships are
17:44
perverse um
17:46
and I think that is really important and
17:48
that's what makes
17:50
learning by leading so successful
17:52
thank you that was a great way to
17:53
describe it
17:55
yeah you're able to describe it so much
17:57

more concisely than me and cara ever
17:59
have been able to
18:01
going back to your point about
18:04
encouraging people to take opportunities
18:06
kind of take that risk that's such a
18:08
great piece of advice because I wouldn't
18:10
be here unless I had done that
18:13
the way I learned about this program and
18:16
how I found out about it was I picked up
18:19
someone else's shift someone else was
18:20
supposed to give a tour at american
18:22
university and I picked up that shift
18:25
and it was
18:26
a arboretum and sustainability office
18:29
combo tour and we were giving a tour to
18:32
high school students
18:33
and I
18:35
last minute picked it up because someone
18:36
couldn't go
18:37
and
18:39
there was stephanie there and stephanie
18:41

was like hey I heard you're an education
18:43
major and you like plants and the
18:45
outdoors I was like yeah and she was
18:46
like well
18:48
like there's this thing at smithsonian
18:49
gardens and I was like no way and like
18:52
that's how I met you and that's how I
18:53
met
18:54
you know the folks at smithsonian
18:55
gardens and here I am
18:58
but
18:59
that wasn't like a very clear linear
19:01
path I wasn't like okay this is how I'm
19:03
going to get there like I just it just
19:05
happened and so I think like
19:07
it happened because
19:09
I was putting myself into my position I
19:11
was already in I was
19:13
taking leadership by stepping up and
19:15
taking on this
19:17
someone else's shift
19:18

and then this magic happen so
19:21
I think
19:22
our past can be really intentional but
19:24
then they can get really exciting when
19:26
you kind of take that jump
19:29
I met Cindy because she was giving us a
19:32
tour for some random communications
19:34
class that I was taking
19:35
um and I just asked if she had any
19:37
internships and she's like here's this
19:40
one that we're just starting and you can
19:41
apply and I'm like okay it's working
19:43
with smithsonian sounds super cool and I
19:46
never knew that it would be something
19:48
like this which is so amazing
19:50
and we got really lucky also being in a
19:52
dc
19:54
going to the school we do um to be able
19:56
to like get those opportunities for sure
19:59
and I feel like the more you just share
20:02
your plans with people like the more
20:04

different professors different people
20:06
that you work with are gonna be like oh
20:08
hey I know this person I can help you
20:10
out with that or maybe there's this
20:12
opportunity for you and you just have to
20:14
keep making connections with people I
20:16
feel like it's just so important
20:17
that is true being open to uh every
20:20
opportunity that comes at you even if
20:22
you weren't expecting it is so important
20:25
it's one of the best pieces of advice I
20:27
have for people is really like
20:29
say yes until you
20:31
can't anymore if I hadn't said yes to so
20:34
many random people being like oh can you
20:36
help me out with this
20:37
you know my life would be so different
20:40
yeah definitely
20:42
I wanted to ask um
20:45
like what's the one best thing you did
20:47
to get to where you are today would you
20:49

say that taking those opportunities
20:51
is the best thing you did to get to
20:53
where you are today or something else
20:56
there is there is like
20:58
the major one that jumps out of me
21:00
was we got an email saying that
21:05
the american public gardens association
21:08
is doing a scholarship
21:09
uh for
21:11
someone who can attend their conference
21:13
this year like they have a yearly
21:14
conference and it's pretty long and I
21:18
wasn't sure I was going to get it
21:20
but I was like one of the only people in
21:22
my year in my uh
21:24
my cohort of interns to actually apply
21:27
and I
21:29
like was floored that I actually got it
21:31
and I and I didn't think I you know
21:34
would but I just decided you know why
21:36
not might as well try
21:37

um and when I got there
21:40
I realized that
21:41
every other person who had won that was
21:44
at least a graduate student if not like
21:45
a doctoral student or something you know
21:47
in a crazy field but just because I
21:49
tried and they really felt like that
21:52
year they wanted to include some
21:53
undergraduate representation
21:56
they chose me and I was able to go and
21:59
meet so many people and go to these
22:01
amazing presentations and learn about
22:04
the world of uh of public gardens and
22:07
who do I who am I introduced to but good
22:09
old you know cindy brown um
22:12
and
22:14
I remember like just really connecting
22:17
with her and
22:18
you know she had a lot of nuggets of
22:20
wisdom which she always does
22:22
and
22:23

at the end of our trip she was like
22:26
if you ever
22:27
want to have an internship just let me
22:29
know and just come over and we'll talk
22:31
about it and I was like oh okay and
22:34
then here I am months later being like
22:36
actually I
22:37
maybe want to follow up on that and
22:40
there I am smithsonian gardens helping
22:43
set up learning by leading there's so
22:46
many dominoes that need to fall in place
22:47
right for an event like that to happen
22:49
to bring me from
22:50
northern california to washington dc
22:53
there's so many things that need to fall
22:55
in place so many times I had to say yes
22:57
and be okay with being uncomfortable and
23:00
meeting people and being surrounded by
23:02
these amazing people that I was nervous
23:03
to talk to but I talked to them anyway
23:05
and only because I decided to say yes to
23:08

all those opportunities and put myself
23:10
in so many uncomfortable positions did I
23:13
make that connection with somebody who
23:14
really understood me and believed in me
23:17
you have to allow it to happen I don't
23:19
know maybe it was fate
23:21
[Music]
23:23
yeah I love that allow it to happen
23:25
sometimes you just have to let
23:27
change happen
23:29
yeah from knowing you and talking with
23:31
you you're someone who
23:34
is very passionate about
23:36
what you do
23:38
how did you find your passion was it
23:39
always there
23:41
that one is tricky
23:43
because I don't think I can narrow it
23:46
down to a single event
23:48
but I will say that I've always been
23:50
passionate about the outdoors and the
23:53

environment and
23:54
working with people
23:56
and
23:58
on my journey I kind of learned about
24:00
myself and learned I'm kind of a people
24:03
person I really like talking to people
24:05
I really like teaching people and
24:08
I mean I happen to work well with kids
24:11
um
24:12
and I love I love the environment I love
24:14
plants and animals and you know learning
24:17
about the water cycle um and what can I
24:20
do to combine those
24:22
you know
24:23
to find the perfect role for me
24:26
that's how I came to be where I
24:28
am is I looked at all of my passions and
24:30
everything I'm just passionate about a
24:32
lot of things I always was down on
24:34
myself because I'm like I can't decide
24:36
what I want to do I want to do that I
24:38

want to do that
24:39
if you wait too long maybe I'll lose
24:41
those opportunities or maybe I'll waste
24:43
some of my college years if I can't
24:45
really stick to one thing
24:48
but that was not the way to look at it
24:50
uh having all my passions and finding a
24:52
way to combine them and realizing that a
24:56
lot of them bleed into each other way
24:58
more than you'd think they would
25:00
once I was in that mindset I was in a
25:03
way better place realizing that I can
25:06
have my cake and eat it too I just need
25:08
to be creative and I need to know the
25:10
right people and find the right
25:11
opportunities and
25:13
like I said let fate kind of decide
25:15
for you and
25:17
if you can stay open and stay positive
25:19
and
25:20
learn your strengths and feed your
25:22

passions then you'll find yourself in a
25:25
good place
25:26
well I wish I would have heard that when
25:28
I was 16.
25:30
that's just something I can really
25:32
relate to is just being interested in so
25:34
many things and it's like
25:35
graduation's coming around for high
25:37
school what school do I go to how do I
25:40
pick the right school because I'm
25:41
supposed to be interested in something
25:42
I'm supposed to know exactly what I'm
25:43
supposed to do so I'm supposed to go to
25:45
the best college for that well I don't
25:46
know what that is
25:48
um
25:49
and people were like it's okay like it's
25:51
all gonna fall in place you'll find it
25:53
and I was like well I wanna do all this
25:55
stuff equally I don't want to just pick
25:56
one and forget about the rest and so I
25:59

think it's just such an important
26:01
message for people to hear is like you
26:03
don't have to pick one thing
26:04
you can combine things you can change
26:07
things you can you can you can make it
26:09
fit and so
26:11
hearing you say that is awesome
26:14
something
26:15
younger kira could have heard
26:18
100 I just feel like it's so relatable
26:21
and I feel like so many people are in
26:22
the same boat I know myself like I
26:25
picked american because I didn't know
26:26
what I wanted to do and the same as you
26:29
guys like I am so passionate about so
26:30
many different things and it wasn't even
26:32
until recently in my senior year that I
26:34
found one thing that I actually want to
26:36
do that encompasses multiple of my
26:38
passions
26:40
yeah I also
26:42

think that like
26:43
now
26:44
caroline and I are seniors
26:46
graduating from our undergrad and
26:49
I wish I could say like yeah college
26:51
like solidified that even more but it
26:53
actually like opened up the world even
26:56
more to me I'm like wait there's even
26:57
more I can do and now it's exciting and
26:59
now it's not as scary and it's like wait
27:01
actually having all these passions and
27:04
multiple
27:05
skill sets and tools that's gonna help
27:07
me and that's not a bad thing
27:10
um and so I think
27:13
having those kind of mindsets
27:15
in college and just like back to keeping
27:17
our minds open are so important to like
27:19
finding what's truly going to make us
27:20
happy definitely
27:22
yeah graduating undergrad is only to
27:26

start
27:27
that's when you're like okay I think I
27:29
know a bit about myself now now I'm
27:31
ready to jump into that world with the
27:33
skills that I have and the people that
27:35
I've met that's kind of a difficult
27:37
place to be but
27:38
you need to change the way you think
27:40
about it and just say like this is a
27:41
start of a journey the job will find you
27:43
you know do what you have to do you know
27:45
to get by obviously but the job will
27:47
find you
27:49
yeah definitely
27:51
yeah and I wonder if that's something
27:54
that's like very true of our generation
27:56
because certainly
27:58
in generations before me
28:00
that doesn't really seem to be the case
28:02
it's like okay gotta pick what you're
28:03
gonna do now for the next 40 years
28:06

you better stick it through
28:09
and I'm glad that you know we're not
28:10
getting that message anymore
28:13
yeah
28:14
I think we're a lot more informed by our
28:16
desire to make change too because our
28:19
generation has seen
28:20
I mean just some
28:23
horrible things destroying our you know
28:25
world
28:26
I think a lot of us are passionate and
28:28
passionate change makers and we want to
28:30
see
28:31
a better world for the next generation
28:33
after us for sure definitely thanks Ryan
28:36
thanks for being here of course so happy
28:39
to be here so great to see you
28:41
have me on anytime all right yeah thanks
28:44
you guys too have a good night have a
28:46
good weekend bye
28:49
the garden gate was created by kira
28:51

Burba and Caroline Macdonald as part of
28:53
the learning by leading initiative with
28:55
the smithsonian gardens
28:57

this team includes Emily Warshaw as the
29:00
education specialist
29:01
Yenna Yu as the marketing specialist
29:04

Nicolette Kelly as the recording
29:06
assistant and Megan Hastie as the audio
29:08
engineer the music is by royalty-free
29:11
music on SoundCloud
29:13
special thanks to Cynthia Brown and
29:14
Paula Healy learn more by visiting
29:18
gardens.si.edu
29:19
thanks for listening
29:23
[Music]
29:29