one of the big things in my life

that really changed a lot of things for me was becoming a type 1 diabetic one night I'm walking down the hallway and I can't even walk straight blood Sugar's a thousand and lucky I lived to the next day sort of thing but I tell you that shaped my life in a big way because there I went from you know being blissfully unaware to having to control a major bodily function by myself every day it was one of those things where yeah I could have let it stop me a lot of people just give up but no that's
it's another one of those life lessons

you learn about it you deal with it you control it and you move on to do the rest of the things in your life my name is Karen Gundy berlett I'm a research scientist and I work at NASA my uncle Floyd started a little air line between paso robles and santa cruz and basically it was to distribute the apples from the family ranch in Washington down into the area here but beyond just the airline he also did barnstorming and I grew up with all of these wonderful pictures and stories of all of his exploits and it
did make me very aware of aviation i was 

born in san jose california lived in the 

same house on my life i went to UC 

Berkeley for my undergraduate degree and 

then to Stanford for my masters and PhD 

degrees undergraduate degree was in 

mechanical engineering and masters and 

PhD in aeronautical engineering my high 

school biology teacher new Hans mark who 

was a center director at the time and um 

so she knew that there was programs for 

high school students it was one of those 

amazing interviews here i am just a you 

know a high school junior and talking 

about differential equations and how

they approximate them it just it was

great so I that was my first experience

at NASA was with that interview and I

just from there on I worked one day a

week at NASA during the school year and

I was paired off with a series of

different mentors wonderful research

scientists who

taught me so much right now I'm working

on the lunar atmosphere dust environment

Explorer that's a spacecraft mission I'm

the flight software quality engineer

being able to actually apply a lot of

that background work I've done in what
happens in software systems and in the intersection between software systems and people in that interface and so being able to use that in order to create new ways of verifying flight software is just a fun job for me right now one of the things that I've learned here is even though I'm a math and techie person communication is absolutely vital if you can't talk about what you're doing it doesn't matter to the rest if you can't convey it it's not of any use to anybody else I would advise somebody to not specialized too
quickly too early I mean to really understand what's going on in math to link it with your sciences and learn how to communicate all of that be an intern figure out what you want to do with your life try a few different places a few different companies don't be afraid to test the waters out I've probably had five or six really critical mentors as I move through my career starting out as a 16 year old and finding a series of scientists who were helpful challenging and each one of them I think highly and I try to give back I bring on students
all the time and try to pass on the

knowledge and experience that was given
to me with new crops of of students and
other employees I think one of the most
important things when you're coming up
young and in a field like this is not to
be deterred by little things I mean
evry little roadblock find a way around
it go over it don't don't let yourself
get stopped because I've watched too
many people become dispirited because of
a little thing and
it just keep going