

VoyageDallas

AUGUST 29, 2018

Meet Ossa Fisher of Istation (aka Imagination Station)



Today we'd like to introduce you to Ossa Fisher.

Ossa, please share your story with us. How did you get to where you are today?

I am an immigrant to the United States, having arrived in California from Sweden in 1981 at the age of four. Now a US citizen, I am honored to say that I have lived the American dream, benefiting greatly from both public and private US educational institutions.

My passion for education began when I was a freshman at Yale University in New Haven. While Yale is a very well-funded university, many of the local residents live in far more impoverished neighborhoods. During my time there, I volunteered in the local elementary and high schools (where many kids entered school doors through metal detectors), and I was able to see the deep impact that quality education can have across all ages. I discovered that education, if done well, is the great equalizer. Education, if mismanaged, exacerbates disparity.

I was fortunate enough to go on to earn a master of education and MBA from Stanford University, as well as work at some of America's most iconic institutions, including Goldman Sachs, Bain & Company, and Match.com. All of those experiences helped prepare me for where I am today: Chief Operating Officer and incoming President of Istation, one of the nation's leading providers of educational technology.

I love the role I am in today, and in many ways consider it a calling. Being able to live and work at the intersection of education, technology, and business is a blessing and an honor. Knowing that we are impacting the lives of teachers and students on a daily basis and, in turn, affecting American education defines our commitment and mission.

Has it been a smooth road?

Is the road ever smooth or straight? Life would be boring if it were. Personally, one of my biggest challenges was coming to terms with “working motherhood.” I have two amazing daughters and a very supportive husband, who also works outside the home. Finding my footing both as a mom and as a business executive took many months, if not years. There were many tears and many sleepless nights along the way.

As the girls are now in 3rd and 4th grade, I look back and see that I have not always navigated this road smoothly, but I have navigated it very consciously.

We are very lucky to have grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and additional caregivers as an integral part of our lives; our extended family adds tremendously to our loving environment when work calls for either my husband or me to be away.

So let’s switch gears a bit and go into the Istation (aka Imagination Station) story. Tell us more about the business.

Celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, Istation (aka Imagination Station) has become one of the nation’s leading providers of richly animated, game-like, computer-adaptive assessments and instruction for reading, math, and Spanish literacy.

We are at the forefront of the educational technology (edtech) sector, with more than 4 million student subscribers at about 9,000 campuses across the United States. We’ve also seen demand for Istation grow beyond the US and now serve students in eight other countries.

As a company, we are most proud of our steadfast mission to support educators, empower kids, and change lives. Personally, I am also very proud of our recent foray into cutting-edge voice-recognition technology. Bringing speech recognition to classrooms will help make our reading programs more dynamic and effective. Most importantly, it will help teachers spend more time with kids and less time on administrative tasks like grading papers and assessments.

How do you think the industry will change over the next decade?

Education technology is a fast-moving field, and we are constantly seeing new innovations in our industry. In addition to technology-related progress like speech-recognition, artificial-intelligence, and virtual reality, I also believe we will see a growing desire to see evidence-based programs and products. As we think about technology in classrooms, it is important that we don’t just introduce the latest fad, but rather to ensure that what students are using is pedagogically sound and makes a real impact in learning.

Contact Info:

- **Address:** Ossa Fisher
Istation 2000 Campbell Centre
8150 North Central Expressway
Dallas, TX 75206
- **Website:** <https://www.istation.com/>
- **Phone:** 972-715-3866
- **Email:** ofisher@istation.com
- **Instagram:** @IstationED
- **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/istationed>
- **Twitter:** @IstationED

