BOOK LEARNING COMES IN SECOND PLACE to hands-on experience in Eva Cherry’s world.

For employees to be successful, especially in competitive STEM fields, they must be equipped with much more than knowledge, she says. And the local business leader can rattle off the essential skills and values she’s looking for in rapid fire succession.

“Creativity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, how to work in a team, project management, along with adaptability, integrity and empathy — all are equally important as knowledge, more important than being able to recite a technical manual. This is what prepares people to be successful,” she states.

The CEO of Bothell-based Silicon Mechanics — which provides customized servers, storage and high-performance computing technologies to organizations across the globe — is just as quick to praise UW Bothell for preparing precisely the kinds of employees she looks for.

“UW Bothell graduates have more hands-on experience,” Eva says. “They don’t come with just academic knowledge. And I like their curiosity.”

Her belief is grounded in her own experience. In addition to hiring graduates, Silicon Mechanics has hosted two teams of UW Bothell seniors who have completed capstone projects at the company. Eva also serves on the School of STEM Advisory Board and is personally supporting the Campaign for UW Bothell.

“It’s important for me to give back to a university that is nimble and flexible and able to adapt to the needs of industry,” explains Eva, who grew up in the former East Germany and earned an MBA in South Africa. “Being on the Advisory Board, we’re always looking for tangible ideas to make a difference, and the biggest challenge in executing those ideas is funding. This campaign is so important for the future.”

To learn how you can make a difference by supporting the Campaign for UW Bothell, call 425.352.3394, email uwbgive@uw.edu or visit www.uwb.edu/give.

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