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ASIA EDITION

International Women's Day- Dr Jennifer Holmgren

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Dr Jennifer Holmgren, CEO, LanzaTech, NewZealand



With over 20 years of experience in the energy sector including a proven track record in the development and commercialization of fuels and chemicals technologies, Dr Jennifer Holmgren joined LanzaTech as Chief Executive Officer in 2010. LanzaTech was established in Auckland, New Zeland in 2005, with strong financial backing from the Silicon Valley-based Venture capital group Khosla Ventures.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Dr Jennifer Holmgren shares her personal side with BioSpectrum-

My Daily Routine-

I tend to wake up pretty early, before 6am. It does depend on where I am time zone wise, as that could push it back or forward depending on the jet lag! If I am at home, the minute I move, my dogs come bounding over to be petted. When away from home, which is a lot of the time, I will check my emails first thing then head to the gym or go for walk to exercise before the day starts. Depending on where I am I will try to fit in some exercise after waking up, either in a gym or by taking my dogs out for a walk. In both cases, depending on time zones, I may have to take some calls. We work with partners from China to California, so there is always someone awake! After coffee and breakfast I will settle down for more calls or meetings and respond to emails as they come in throughout the day.

My idea of fitness and nutrition-

It is very important for me. I recently became a vegetarian, although I didn't eat much meat before this. I am lucky that my husband has been trying out new meat-free recipes for me, which has expanded the variety of foods that I eat. Exercise is very important to me, and it can be really hard to both eat right and exercise when you travel as much as I do. If I am travelling, I will try to use public transport and walk everywhere to build it into my day; I will try to find hotels with a gym but my favorite type of exercise is out walking with my husband and dogs in the mountains in Colorado, where we live.

My favourite cuisine-

I do like Middle Eastern and South American foods. I am from Colombia originally and I do have a soft spot for tostones, yucca and other ‘inappropriate’ starches. . Indian food is particularly good, especially from a vegetarian perspective!

My favorite holiday destination-

Big Island in Hawaii, where Don and I go for 2 weeks every year and enjoy hiking, the beach and whale watching.

My idea of balance between personal and professional life-

I think when you are doing something you are so passionate about, your work and personal life blend in together. The work is part of who you are, the hardest part for me is not separating the 2, but how it causes me to be apart from my husband, Don, and my dogs so much.

I have been very lucky in that I have an incredibly supportive partner in Don which definitely helps when you spend as much time on the road as I do. We now live in Colorado and LanzaTech is based in Chicago, IL and so we do spend a lot of time apart. What certainly helps is how much more we are able to communicate today than ever before with emails, FaceTime, text messages etc…these are all super helpful when you travel and need to stay connected to your family.