



**121 Captions Ltd**

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**Thursday 30 May 2024**

**Girl Talk on Q Radio**

JORDAN ARNOLD: So joining me today on the show we have business woman and trailblazer, Tina Lannin. How are you?

TINA LANNIN: I'm very well.

JORDAN ARNOLD: I'd like to go back to the beginning. You were born profoundly deaf, then in 2012 got two cochlear implants that gave you the gift of the sound for the first time. What was your life like up until that point, then how did it change after the surgery?

TINA LANNIN: It was quite difficult wearing hearing aids up until that point because it was stressful being profoundly deaf and managing, trying to cope with understanding people. So you get very tired every day with communicating and trying to understand people and with the cochlear implant, the problem is I've been too deaf for too long so the whole world of sound was very new to me and very overwhelming. So that took a while to get used to and I was deaf for a good year before I got used to having a cochlear implant and being able to hear sounds and actually realise that anything that moved makes a sound. I could hear through walls and windows. I could hear my neighbours next door on the phone. So that whole world of sound was a revelation to me and with it being overwhelming I had to learn to go at my own pace and really take it bit by bit and be patient, and calm down as well because it is a bit like when you have too much sound given to you, you would want to take it off. I would take it off and go back to my world of silence because that is what I was used to. It has been amazing. I've always loved music and I can hear that a little bit better now. I'm very good with music actually, it is beautiful. It is amazing to be able to have a conversation without lipreading.



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JORDAN ARNOLD: So it was after this time that you founded your company, 121 Captions. How did it go from turning this idea that you have and a passion for inclusive communication to actually becoming a tangible company?

TINA LANNIN: I knew a lot of deaf people in the community and a lot of captioners as well because they used to support me in my job when I was an accountant, because I'd always been asked by people who would visit me. They would see the captioning service that I had; "This is a fantastic idea." So they would ask me how could they get it. So I set up my company and it just grew really, with lipreading being added on because I'm a forensic lipreader as well. So I do a lot of lipreading for the police and investigative agencies. We had the ITN offices across the road and they would ask me to do TV clips. Then I would add on the Royal Wedding and any Royal event I was asked to do, and that really helped with the publicity side of the business and all along I was building up the captioning side. I added on foreign languages and now I have 23 human languages as well. So for example, if you wanted Chinese, we can do Chinese captions with Chinese audio, and we now have several clients like Google, Twitter and Microsoft, big clients.

JORDAN ARNOLD: It is amazing what you have managed to build, huge global clients. As you look back on what you have achieved over the years, is there anything that stands out to you as a highlight?

TINA LANNIN: I think my favourite one was at the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton. I was doing that for Sky News in West London. They asked me to come into the studio and I was watching the wedding live and translating anything you could see. When William was at the altar he turned round and said, "This was supposed to be a small family affair."

JORDAN ARNOLD: I'm sure you have seen a lot of things we'd all be intrigued by. You have achieved so much. You are extremely highly educated and a forensic lipreader and a race track driver. You don't let



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anything hold you back. I wonder if you have any advice to anyone listening who does have dreams and passions they want to pursue, but they feel they have a barrier. What would you say to those people?

TINA LANNIN: I would say the main barrier to look at would be other people's attitudes and you can change those most of the time, and also look at the barriers within yourself. So if you think you can't do something, why do you think that? Because I would say to you, why not?

JORDAN ARNOLD: That is brilliant advice. Thank you so much for coming in to speak to me. It is an absolute pleasure to meet you and I wish you all the very best for the future.

TINA LANNIN: Thank you.