

FASHION FIGURES

HOW MISSY THE MATHLETE MADE THE CUT

Written by Melissa A. Borza

Illustrated by John M. Borza



Fashion Figures: How Missy the Mathlete Made the Cut

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*I dedicate this book to my parents:
To my dad, John, for teaching me
the art of the story, and to my mom, Edie,
for encouraging me to tell my own
and to write them down.*

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About the Author



Melissa A. Borza leads strategy, product management and marketing at a sales enablement software company. Before that, she worked as a product leader at CA Technologies. Prior to that she worked as a journalist and technical writer. Ms. Borza has taught technical writing, public speaking and product management classes and is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. She presents regularly at conferences around the world, such as the Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing, and she contributes frequent articles and blogs on change management, team transformations, product management and increasing the representation of women in IT

and other STEM careers. Ms. Borza holds a patent in an integrated impact analysis system. She received her MA in Communications from Syracuse University and her BA in English and Psychology from Cornell University.

About the Illustrator



John Michael Borza is a graphic designer and illustrator from Winter Springs, Florida. He has a BA in Fine and Studio Arts from Pfeiffer University. Mr. Borza's art can be found in various galleries and at art shows across Central Florida. Although his training is in traditional media, John has developed a passion for digital drawings and illustrations.

About the Technical Reviewer



Amy Willoughby-Burle is the author of *The Lemonade Year* and *Out Across the Nowhere*. She is a freelance fiction editor and book reviewer. She serves as assistant director of the Wildacres Writers Workshop. She also teaches language arts and creative writing at Elevate Life and Art, an enrichment program for grades K-12 in Asheville, NC. She lives in Candler, NC with her husband, their four children and numerous animals of varying sort. Visit her online at www.amywilloughbyburle.com.

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Thank you to girls everywhere who face challenges and persist to embrace science, technology, engineering and math along with fashion, art and design and all the rest of their hearts' desires. My hope is that you will create the world you want to inherit!

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Introduction

The inspiration for this story came to me when researching a blog, I discovered that girls as young as third and fourth graders were opting out of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) tracks. That means that at nine years old, girls are closing career doors they may not even know exist yet. The choices they make have nothing to do with skills or ability but rather are driven by unconscious biases and false assumptions. As we hear more about the dearth of women in tech fields, it's easy to connect the dots. We cannot wait to address this in college or even in high school, as foundational skills for STEM need to be built much earlier. This is a problem that has to be solved in elementary and middle school. Girls need to be encouraged to engage in STEM subjects as early as possible, not just to fill the pipeline but also to drive inclusion and diversity.

This book is written for middle-schoolers facing the pressures of growing up in a hyperconnected, technology-driven universe where traditional social, educational and personal pressures also persist.

This book shows how one girl struggles with social pressures, varied academic interests and a deep desire to help her friends, family and the world she lives in to be better. She embraces her inner geek, her artistic flair and her heart's true desires to find her way. I hope it inspires more girls to pursue their interests in math AND the arts and to grow their talents to help make our world a better and brighter place for all.