Sample networking questions for informal discussions with alumnae

In some examples below, you can replace the * with so many things! Be creative! (Sample topics for the alum include: her current profession, current company, current field, past jobs/internships/companies, past/current degree programs, professional/student organizations, etc.)

- How did you get involved with ___*_____?
- What do you love/enjoy most about ___*____?
- What qualities/skills/attributes do you possess which helped you get where you are today?
- If you could redo some time in your education/career, what would you do differently and why?
- What significant changes have you seen take place with _____*_____ over the years?
- What do you see as coming trends with _____*_____?
- What separates your _____*_____ from the competition?
- What would make someone a perfect fit for your company?
- What do you or your company look for in potential new hires?
- What advice would you give to someone who is not certain about which engineering major to choose? Which career path to take (academia, industry, professional degrees, etc.)?
- What problems, if any, should women engineers be prepared to face? (e.g., gender bias in the workplace)
- What advice do you have for finding and excelling in leadership roles?
- How do you maintain a work-life balance?
- What challenge have had to face in your career and how did you overcome that challenge?
- Do you know anyone in your company who works on __[insert your field of interest]__ and whom I might contact for more information (e.g., to ask questions for an “informational interview” – Google this term if you are not familiar with it – conducting these can help you to sort out what types of careers may be best for you by asking questions of people currently in that career field)
- What advice would you give to someone in my shoes?