

# Leading with Dignity

CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER FOR SABAN COMMUNITY CLINIC IN LOS ANGELES, **JACKIE PROVOST '98** BRINGS CASTILLEJA SPIRIT TO PUBLIC HEALTHCARE

In water polo, the goalkeeper has the best view of the game and is the last line of defense. It's a position that requires a depth and breadth of knowledge, coupled with sheer prowess and strength. Perhaps it's no surprise that **Jackie Provost '98**, former collegiate water polo goalkeeper, brings these same attributes to her position as Chief Operations Officer at Saban Community Clinic in Los Angeles, which serves the Medi-Cal population.

At Castilleja and in college, Jackie knew she wanted to pursue a career in healthcare, most likely in obstetrics. She was working at a neuroscience lab after college when a mentor suggested she consider public health. Jackie reflects, "I wanted to know what was happening at a community level. Why did certain populations have access to certain services or get afflicted with certain diseases because of where they live?" According to Jackie's mentor, public health would allow her to not only have a greater community impact but to also find her passion. Since then, Jackie has worked at various health centers to increase access to care for high-risk patients.

Access to equitable healthcare has never been more important than in recent years. When asked about what has kept her motivated throughout the pandemic, Jackie thoughtfully responded: "I've been extremely blessed with my health, so I feel lucky to be in a position where I can continue working. I have a purpose: my role is to fill the gap. I have to continue." She realizes, though, to serve others successfully, it's critical to work well as a team. These messages crystallized during Jackie's years around the Circle, where she learned the saying "teamwork makes the dream work," which is still repeated by current students.



**“At the end of the day I know that if I stay true to my values, then we’re winning. You have to just trust in yourself.”**



Aside from gaining valuable collaboration skills, Jackie credits Castilleja for preparing her to be a compassionate and confident leader: "In my career, I see that advantage, including when I work with other women of color. I've had to advocate for folks who were really strong and special but never felt they were in a position to advocate for themselves." Jackie leads by example and with dignity. Especially in healthcare, leadership often requires skillful and difficult decision-making. She shares, "As a medical provider serving the most vulnerable, we always stress leading with empathy and understanding where a patient is coming from."

From the Circle to the Community Clinic, Jackie has demonstrated that she is a leader who is adept at wearing many hats and navigating choppy waters. Her end goal, though, isn't about scoring points. It's about finding a common ground. It's about self-confidence. "At the end of the day I know that if I stay true to my values, then we're winning. You have to just trust in yourself."