

SHE'S A SMALL-TOWN GIRL with spunk, and a former beauty queen whose smile lights up a room.

Jamee Jolly took on the role of president and CEO of the Plano Chamber of Commerce six years ago and is the first woman to do so. It can't be an easy job overseeing a chamber that supports 1,100 members (and growing), but she's remained a consummate professional and is still excited to go to work each day. "I have the pleasure of leading a 70-year-old organization that is focused on supporting the vibrant business community here in Plano. I am also fortunate to work hand-in-hand with a 21-member board of directors, numerous community leaders, and a staff of eight amazing professionals."

From the beginning, Jamee encountered positive avenues for growth. "My transition into this role was tough, considering my father had passed away suddenly just two weeks before I started. I think this opportunity helped provide me with a renewed focus...."

A focus that keeps her busy and feeds her inner drive. "I can be very intense and driven...maybe *too* intense and driven sometimes," she admitted, "[but] I recently learned how important it is to laugh at myself, not be so critical, and to lighten up a little. It makes life more fun and helps alleviate some of the stress that comes with my role."

On top of an extensive accreditation process, in which the Plano Chamber received a five-star rating, Jamee was implemental in the relocation of the Chamber into their new facility. She said leading a chamber during a time of major growth and change has been both exciting and challenging, but she's learned patience, perseverance and that "the most rewarding outcome may not be the easiest path to go down."

Her positive attitude helps her to manage stress and look at every challenge as an opportunity. At the same time, she doesn't lose sight of herself. "It is easy to get so busy with work and life that you fail to make time for yourself. After recently turning

40, I made it a point to take better care of myself, which includes more down time with family and friends, doing Crossfit three times a week, traveling and finding ways to manage my stress." She added, "I feel fortunate that my organization believes in professional development and encourages me to continue learning and growing as an individual. I am currently working toward my IOM designation from the U.S. Chamber's Institute for Organizational Management."

Jamee also makes time for other women in business. "One lesson I feel is extremely important as a female executive is to always make time to mentor young women who are new in their careers. I had amazing women in my past positions that mentored me, had faith in my abilities and allowed me to expand my responsibilities in order to grow. If not for those women, I would not have been named to a senior management position at the age of 30."

Two women in particular whom she credits are Mary Jo Dean and Jean Newman. "They have been mentors and advocates of mine since day one. They were on the initial team that hired me for this role."

She additionally credits Mabrie Jackson, a former Plano City councilwoman and current Public Affairs Director for H-E-B/Central Market. She is also the first female president and CEO of the North Texas Commission. Mabrie served as interim during the transition and hiring of Jamee. "She encouraged me to take on the role as president and CEO and she is consistently a sounding board for ideas, not to mention a great friend."

Jamee concluded, "I am blessed to have a very tightknit group of girlfriends that are all in leadership roles within their organizations here in Plano. I know I would not be as successful as I have been in this role without their support and friendship (and all the happy hours)." 📍



Jamee Jolly

PLANO'S FIRST FEMALE PRESIDENT
AND CEO OF THE CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

BY BRIT MOTT

► *Join us as we salute some of Plano's finest leading ladies.*