



Women in Higher Education

Advantage Pamintuan: Ex-tennis Star Guides Future of National Accredited College as One of Country's Youngest Female Presidents

Despite the increase in the number of women college presidents, the percentage of female college presidents is disproportionately low. Results of some studies imply that mentorship is one factor that facilitates women's climb up the administrative ladder to the college presidency.

Mentorship and the Female College President

SYOSSET, NEW YORK (July 2007) – Lisa Pamintuan has experienced a number of outstanding mentors along her way to the top of the higher education ladder. Accustomed to traveling great distances to reach her goals this former tennis prodigy from Indiana is today, at 38, one of the nation's youngest female college presidents and at the academic forefront of a growing partnership between Eastern and Western medicine.

The daughter of a Filipino father and an Irish mother, Pamintuan was 35 in 2003 when she was named to the top post at New York College of Health Professions (NYCHP) in Syosset, Long Island, New York. Armed with a successful tennis career, a law degree from Wayne State University and experience navigating business deals in the Hollywood and entertainment business as well as other business ventures, Pamintuan was chosen to lead the college because she thought outside the box and possessed what the head of the school called "outstanding championship ability." Four years later, it's quite obvious she was the right choice.

Pamintuan has seen the college expand and diversify its program offerings and make tremendous strides in the community and outside the area in placing qualified practitioners of massage and other holistic disciplines. She also has helped steer New York College towards a financial surplus, an essential ingredient to growing any college. And this month NYCHP received its national institutional accreditation, which changes New York College from a career school to a higher level educational institution.

"I've held a variety of different jobs and loved them all," says the dynamic Pamintuan who, at age 14, became the youngest winner of the Irish Tennis Open. "All of the jobs, including this one, were challenges and I absolutely love challenges."

Pamintuan took up tennis at the age of 9, played in the Junior World Championships at 10 and within a year was practicing 4 hours a day (and living) at the legendary Nick Bollettieri Tennis Academy in Florida. Within a couple of years she was traveling the world to play in tournaments, including Wimbledon and the U.S. Open. Injuries cut her career short (she got her first taste of massage and acupuncture at a young age) and Pamintuan figured a law degree would help her in whatever business ventures she took on later. Her path at that time was uncertain; she only knew that she loved a challenge.

Pamintuan came to NYCHP through a chance meeting with Donald Spector, Chairman of the Board of Trustees and a successful inventor. Spector saw in Pamintuan what he also discovered in Mary Rodas who, at age 14, became the youngest marketing executive in America when he named her vice-president of his toy manufacturing company, Catpro. Today, Rodas (now 31) and Pamintuan work side by side at New York College. They are a formidable duo.

Upon receiving her law degree, Pamintuan had opportunities with IMG or to practice law in Michigan, but had a gut feeling that she wanted something else. She contacted Spector and he asked if she wanted to consult for one of his companies in California. She said yes, packed up and moved to Los Angeles where she ended up staying for seven years. In Los Angeles, Pamintuan consulted for some of Spector's entertainment holding companies in music and film. She eventually came back to Long Island in 2001 when Spector offered her a position in the business department of the college.

"To me, educational institutions have similarities to mainstream business," says Pamintuan. "I saw that the college needed help because it was not very profitable at the time even though it was a great school." She initiated programs that helped the college eventually gain a surplus and has maintained that since being named President.

Chartered by the New York State Board of Regents, New York College of Health Professions is one of the leading colleges of Holistic medicine in the U.S. The College offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs in Massage Therapy, Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, and a Continuing Education Certificate program in Holistic Nursing for RN's. This fall, the college will start a new program called the Science of Self Improvement. The innovative program will teach self awareness and insight into how people see each other in the workplace and in life. The 24-credit program will be taught by a group of psychologists, human resource and business executives.

Pamintuan not only loves the challenge of getting her school's message out to the public, she also is passionate about the way western medicine is embracing many of its practices. "People are becoming more aware of the other therapies," she says. "Getting a massage used to be considered a luxury but now it is more common for people to incorporate regular massages into their lives, whether for maintenance or for healing.

"We really are all about preventive health at New York College. Much of the Asian world has practiced this for centuries. It is a relatively new concept in the west but one that is gaining ground and followers every day. It is becoming more commonplace; whether it is in the form of people taking yoga or meditation classes or seeking acupuncture to help them heal. That bodes well for us as a college and for the community as a whole. And that is a challenge I really love."

Located in the suburban community of Syosset, New York, on the north shore of Long Island, New York College is a modern, 70,000 square foot facility designed to be comfortable and functional for students, faculty, patients and staff. Within the facility are classrooms for all educational programs, including Hatha Yoga, Qi Gong and T'ai Chi decks, the Integrative Health Center, the Academic Health Care Teaching Clinics, an herbal dispensary, a café and bookstore, student study room and lounge, and executive and administrative offices.

The New York College Academic Health Care Teaching Clinics are an integral part of the students' educational experience. With over 17,000 patients treated annually, the clinics also play an important role

in providing affordable Holistic health care to the community. New York College also owns a 30-acre modern medical center in Luo Yang, China, where students and faculty are able to participate in special life experience trips.

Lisa Pamintuan is available for telephone and in-person interviews.

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