

Former Marine whips athletic recruits into shape

ELENA BORYSKA
Sports Editor

Jim Jackson, who is CCC's Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics is easily recognized around campus by his booming voice and warm smile.

Jackson first came to Clackamas in 1989 as a part-time instructor in physical education and as a wrestling coach. After working this job for two years, he moved to a full-time position in student activities. About a year and a half later, the former director of the department retired, and Jackson was lucky enough to be chosen to fill the spot.

Jackson's job entails scheduling, budgeting and purchasing for all classes in the health and physical education department, along with the budgeting and organizational operation of the athletic department, which consists of 10 CCC athletic teams.

Jackson graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, after spending seven years in the Marine Corps. He has a master's degree in teaching with an emphasis in exercise science/exercise physiology. Jackson even coached a wrestling team and was involved with athletics at the Base where he was stationed.

"That's probably been the basis of my whole life: dealing with athletics and all of those types of things," said Jackson. "That's been my background forever."

Like all jobs, Jackson's includes both good and bad duties. His favorite part about the job is dealing with the students around campus.

"We've got some great students here. It really breaks the mold of what people think

about community colleges," said Jackson. "I simply tell people if they have those poor thoughts about community colleges, they haven't been here."

His least favorite aspect of his job is any time that he has to take disciplinary action. When he has to get involved with student athletes, whether it's trouble in the classroom or elsewhere and it reflects poorly on the college and athletics, Jackson doesn't enjoy it. But fortunately, these situations don't happen very often.

Jackson's colleagues know how much effort he puts into his work. Head Cross Country Coach Keoni McHone has only known Jackson since the fall of last year, but he says that Jackson is very hardworking and cares a lot about his job. He is also very supportive of the coaching staff, and the students respect him.

"I think he's very supportive, as far as what the coach's dreams are," said McHone. "Coaches are always coming to him excited about stuff, and Jim is the one to make it happen."

Head Track Coach Jack Kegg has known Jackson for eight years, and he also thinks that Jackson does a good job.

"He is very good at his job; a very enthusiastic, professional administrator," said Kegg. "I think he enables the coaches to be successful."

Jackson also has a great relationship with students here.

"He does a lot of personal tutoring for student athletes and stuff which a lot of other athletic directors wouldn't do," said Kegg. "I think he spends more time with students than his job probably requires."

In the years that Jackson

has been here, he hasn't seen the college change much. Besides the building of the Forum, Streeter Hall and Dye Learning Center, Jackson hasn't experienced very many changes, mainly because of the fact that Clackamas has been very slow to make any.

"We at Clackamas don't like a lot of change. And when I say 'we,' I mean everybody here," said Jackson. "We are now involved in things that will probably be the biggest changes for me in my career here."

Even with these slight changes, Jackson still sees Clackamas as being in relatively the same spot in the future as it is now: a leader.

"We've always been a leader. Anytime you have things happening around the state, people are looking at Clackamas. And not just in athletics, but academically, curriculum-wise; all of those types of things," said Jackson. "And whether we know it or not, we are the comparison that people are making."

"We have people calling us all the time to find out how we did it, what we did or what we are going to do. And they're basing many of their decisions on what we are doing or what we are going to do. Clackamas truly is one of the standards, in this state anyway, for what

Jim Jackson has been supporting athletes and coaches at Clackamas since he came here in 1989.



MAGGIE JIRASEK / Clackamas Print

is happening at the community college level."

According to Jackson, one of the reasons that CCC works so well and is such a leader, has to do with something called the "Clackamas Way."

"It is a different way of doing things. It has more to do with a collaborative effort and gets a lot of people involved," said Jackson. "So there a lot of people involved in the decision

making processes, all the way down through the students.

Our students are involved in many, many of the decision making processes that they're not involved in on other campuses. And when the students are involved, you realize everybody else up the line—the secretaries, the support staff, the faculty—everybody is involved in those decisions. I think it's why we're so good."

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