

Theater 'mom' helps everyone

Theater secretary Jennifer Schwartzman talks about her job and life outside the theater

Clackamas Print: What is your job here at Clackamas?

Jennifer Schwartzman: My official job is "Instructional Department Secretary," but my actual job is more like "Department Mom." I take care of everybody.

CP: Where did you last work?

JS: I was the Executive Secretary/Diversity Facilitator at Providence Milwaukie Hospital.

CP: What made you leave that job?

JS: I loved my job at Providence, but my oldest daughter, Molly, was going to start kindergarten soon and I didn't want her to be in daycare all summer. So with the unbelievable support of my Providence family, I started to look for something which allowed me to have summers off.

CP: How did you get this job?

JS: I started looking online at all of the school district sites around town, hoping I could get something at the same school my Molly would go to. After a few months, when nothing was coming up that interested me, I expanded my search to the colleges and universities in Portland.

The second I saw the CCC job opening for a "Department Secretary for Communications and Theater Arts," my jaw dropped, my eyes popped and I thought: "Theater? I have to get this job."

So, I told everyone I knew about it, hoping there would be a connection there, and there was. The public relations person at Providence, Renee King, knows David Smith-English, who is the theater director, and at the time, was the department chair. She saw him at a party and told him I was going to apply for the job. I researched David Smith-English on the Internet and found out what his background was. I found his e-mail address and e-mailed him some basic questions about the position, making sure to let him know how excited I was to have a chance to meet with him, and I made sure to mention Renee. That was really what got me my interview. Then I started in with my research to prep me for the interview. I called HR and asked who would be interviewing me, and when I got their names, I went to the CCC Web site and found out what their jobs are and if there were any pictures of them, to help me remember who they were when I met them. I also researched CCC and their basic philosophies and mission. There are always the same basic questions at an interview which can help you if you prepare as well. I really think that my preparation, coupled with my enthusiasm and desire to get this particular job, is what got me hired. Preparation is key.

CP: How long have you worked here?

JS: This is my third year.

CP: What drew you to this job?

JS: Theater and summers off!

CP: What do you like most about your job?

JS: I absolutely love interacting with so many amazing students. I can't seem to act my age, 37, because I always see myself as perpetually 20-something.

CP: Are there times when you hate your job?

JS: Of course. But when I'm having one of those days, I just focus on the big picture. No job is peaches and cream all the time, but since there are far more good days than bad, then I have it really good.

CP: Tell me about your boss—what do you think of him?

JS: My boss is whoever the current department chair is, which changes every three years. So I have a different boss every three years. Right now, it's Dr. Kelly Brennan, who is on the Speech and Communications side of my department. Kelly rules. He's fair, he listens, and best of all, he understands the workload that I have and therefore he sees beyond only his immediate needs.

CP: Tell me a little about your family.

JS: My husband, Joel, and I have been married for nine years. We have two daughters, Molly, 7, and Rosie, 3. We live in SE Portland between Woodstock and Johnson Creek. I have a mom and a sister in LA, a brother and sister in Reno and another sister in San Francisco—big family.

CP: Do you have any hobbies?

JS: Scrapbooking, singing, hiking, baking, trying anything new and exciting.

CP: What is your favorite food?

JS: Chocolate.

CP: What would you say is your weakness?

JS: Chocolate.

CP: What is a personal pleasure of yours?

JS: Chocolate and getting a massage.

CP: Are you happy with the recent election?

JS: Ecstatic—I cried and cried with tears of joy. I couldn't control myself.

CP: What do you like most about theater?

JS: I love the process of taking something from just an idea to making it into something really spectacular. I love that you work really hard with others towards a common goal and then you get to share the fruits of your labor with a live audience. Each time you experience live theater, it's different.

CP: Where are you originally from?

JS: I grew up in LA.

CP: What is your ancestry?

JS: My father was Irish/German and my mother was adopted, so I have no idea about her side.

CP: What, in your opinion, is your quirkiest trait?

JS: My laugh, I sound like a dolphin. I find it really annoying, but it makes other people laugh, so I guess that's all right then. Also, I get genuinely excited about little every day things.

CP: What are your beliefs—religious or otherwise?

JS: I'm a really liberal Catholic. None of my political views jive with the Church's administration. I believe in equal rights for all people. I believe in just being myself, like me or not. I believe that no matter what your day brings, end it with thanks. I believe that every girl is beautiful. I believe that my children will make this world a better place to live in. I believe that you are responsible for making your own happiness.

CP: What is your favorite movie?

JS: If I have to pick just one out of every movie ever made, it would be "The Color Purple" although I might change my mind when "Twilight" on Nov. 21.

CP: Favorite book?

JS: My answer to that has always been "Pride and Prejudice," but I have never been obsessed with a book than I have been with "Twilight." I've lost countless hours of dreaming about Edward! I know, once I'm forgetting my age.

CP: Do you enjoy being a mom? What do you enjoy most?

JS: Most days I enjoy being a mom. I love having my get-me-out-of-here-what-was-I-doing moments. What I enjoy most is seeing girls being kind to someone or thoughtfulness others and I think, "Oh my gosh, I taught them to do that and they actually listened to me." It's also really fun to snuggle and play and laugh as a family as well.

CP: What are your hopes for the future?

JS: I have so many hopes for the future. For my children, for my life, for the students in the world, I think you would have to write a book just on those. The greatest thing about hope for the future, is that I have hope. So people lose it. I always tell people who are through a rough patch, never lose hope. Put it aside for a bit.

— Compiled by Nick K...



Lisa Sellars Clackamas

Instructional Department Secretary Jennifer Schwartzman works from her office in the New Center, a job she considers as 'department mom' because of the direct contact with students.

Staying well in winter proves problematic



Jon Helmkamp

The Clackamas Print

Ever heard of the "Freshman 15"—the rumor of the ominous and ever-frustrating fifteen pounds that most freshmen pack on during their freshman year?

With the busy lives that most college students live,

it's easy to make your health less than your top priority. It's hard enough to stay healthy even with good weather, but it becomes even more of a difficulty when the weather turns ugly.

During the winter months, staying healthy is a must. It's important to not only keep safe from illnesses, but also to stay in shape. Here are a few tips to keep your body in peak condition:

1) Keep your wrists, ankles and the back of your neck protected from the cold. Because of the lack of muscle and fat on these places of your body, your blood temperature can easily be affected if these body parts are exposed to the winter conditions.

2) Find a way to exercise that you enjoy. Doing something active for at least half an hour a day will keep you and your immune system in shape.

3) Because cold weather strains the body—particularly the heart—be sure not to over-exert yourself. If you have to do strenuous activity outside, take frequent breaks.

4) Make sure you still eat healthy. During the winter months, when the bad weather forces you inside, stay away from the junk food. Eating healthy gives your body the nutrients it needs, helping it fight off illness.

5) Breathe fresh air. Because most people tend to keep their doors and windows shut during the winter, ventilation into the home decreases, which in turn decreases the quality of air that you are breathing. Even though it's cold, it's important to breathe clean air. Bundle up and open a window from time to time.

6) Pay attention to your

mental health as well. During the winter, the human psychology is also affected. It becomes easier to get depressed, and your emotions may be more sensitive. Take time to reflect, make sure you get quality sleep, and have fun and laugh. Laughter does wonders.



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