

Women in Science: Jean Silveri

Jean Silveri shares key insights from her legal career.

By Susan C. DiClemente & Gwendolyn Nabel | Nov 05, 2018



Jean Silveri, Global Head, R&D Intellectual Property

Ph.D. candidate-turned-lawyer Jean Silveri serves as Global Head of R&D Intellectual Property at the Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research (NIBR). In this installment of “Novartis Presents: Women in Science,” she describes the skills that have helped her succeed.

What personal qualities or skills have you found to be most useful in achieving your goals?

Persistence! I never cease to be amazed about how much persistence I have had to have in my career to be successful in my job – whether it is acting as an individual contributor or as a team leader. I am very aware of this and tend to put the effort into taking things step-by-step and keeping the pressure on to get each step completed in a competent, creative and timely manner. It’s the only way to achieve large goals.

Also, decisiveness! Over the years in my area of specialty, I have learned when I have enough information to make decisions, I [should] make them. I have worked with people in my past life who avoided making decisions and let evolving circumstances make the decision for them. Once in a while, there may be a place for this passive decision-making, but it’s not the route I tend to follow or that, in my opinion, leads to success.

I learned that if you follow your gut (even if it’s scary at the time), things tend to work out in the end.

Jean Silveri, Global Head, R&D Intellectual Property

What was a turning point in your career?

When I was 22 years old, I announced to my parents that I was leaving my Ph.D. program at Harvard to go to law school. It was a really scary time for me as I had to face leaving an excellent school and a Ph.D. stipend to

go to law school and live off of loans. But it was what I wanted to do. And from there, I had opportunities to use my science background in my law career. So I learned that if you follow your gut (even if it's scary at the time), things tend to work out in the end.

As a leader, how do you help others achieve their goals?



As an attorney and mother, Jean Silveri is a strong role model for her daughter.

I am all about substance and collaboration, and I strive to – as a leader – give everyone on my team opportunities to shine in these areas. Also, I am working hard to develop better listening skills, including taking notes in meetings to keep me focused on what others say. As a leader, your job becomes supporting and enabling your team to execute on a shared vision, and being a good listener is absolutely a key to being successful at this.

How do you want people to see you?

As appreciative as I am for all of the wonderful opportunities that I have been given in my career and the amazing position that I am now in, my greatest life achievement and biggest source of joy is being a mother to my daughter. She keeps me hopeful, she makes me laugh, and she makes me want to work hard to give her a wonderful future.

Get to know Jean Silveri, Global Head of R&D Intellectual Property at NIBR. #WomenInScience

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