

My Awesome Job: Jillian Cavaliere, Executive Assistant



"Being able to multitask is helpful, and so is thinking strategically," says Jillian Cavaliere, of her role as executive assistant in the Department of Neurology. "If I have a task in front of me, I think of everything that could go wrong, and the possible resolutions, ahead of time."

Jillian Cavaliere, an executive assistant at NYU Langone Hospital—Brooklyn, discusses the strategic, multitasking approach that keeps leaders of the Departments of Neurology and Surgery on schedule.

A resource for families and loved ones. I joined NYU Langone Hospital—Brooklyn in 2017 as an administrative coordinator in Patient Relations. My job was to answer phone calls from family members who wanted a better understanding of a loved one's condition. It was a rewarding but tough position. Sometimes you had to give people sad or discouraging news. What mattered most was being there for the

families and the patients. We have an open-door policy—if a family member wants to come in and talk, someone is always available to meet. Everyone appreciates having a human being to talk to in difficult moments.

Stepping up during Covid. Covid was a difficult time because loved ones couldn't visit the hospital even if a patient was very sick. So Patient Relations played a critical role in keeping them informed and connected. When our department gave the option to work remotely early on, I volunteered to work in the hospital because I believed people needed to see us and be able to talk to us. So we met them in the lobby. Families would email me pictures and notes from grandchildren or videos, and I'd get them to their loved ones' bedside. Those acts of kindness made a difference.

Seizing a new opportunity. In 2022, a friend showed me an opening for an executive assistant in the [Comprehensive Stroke Center](#). I was hesitant because it was a very different role, but my mentor, Paulina Koudellou, the vice president of Hospital Operations, said, "Throw your name out there, you never know." I got the job! Now I assist Anita Malhotra, the administrative director of the Departments of Surgery and Neurology, and [Dr. Aaron Lord](#), the chief of neurology. I manage their calendars, making sure they have enough time to get everything done and be where they need to be. I also help with presentations, collating research, and preparing reports. It's a challenging and satisfying role.

Making adjustments on the fly. My bosses have busy schedules, and they often need adjusting. Meetings run long and last-minute ones get added, creating a domino effect. You have to know which meetings are important and which can be moved. Being able to multitask is helpful, and so is thinking strategically. If I have a task in front of me, I think of everything that could go wrong, and the possible resolutions, ahead of time.

My job is awesome because ... Everything I do, big or small, is for the greater good of the department and the hospital. Some days may be stressful, but in the end, I always remember that my contributions are critical not just for my bosses but also for the patients.