

Catherine Suitor
Chief Development &
Communications Officer



Where **Exceptional** is the **Rule**

INTRODUCTION

- My name is Catherine Suitor and I am 50 years old.
- I work for Alliance College-Ready Public Schools.
- Alliance is largest charter school organization in Los Angeles. We have 26 middle and high schools. Our goal is to send all our students to college.
- I am the Chief Development & Communications Officer for Alliance.
- My job is to lead all the outreach, communications and fundraising for the Alliance. My goal is raise the visibility and funds for the Alliance and our network of schools.

The **Early** Years...

I was born in Knoxville, Tennessee...
and raised in San Diego, California.



I had a suburban childhood where kids ruled the neighborhood.

More **Early** Years...

A little about my family...



This is a picture of my family – my mother, father three younger brothers – Allen, Matt and Chad – and me.



I was the oldest and only girl. This picture explains a lot about who I am.

HIGH SCHOOL

- I attended Patrick Henry High School in San Diego, CA.



Think Breakfast Club.... that's my high school experience.

HIGH SCHOOL

- As a high school student, I was very active.... taking care of my three brothers, working, and running on the cross country and track team.
- I hung around with a lot of different kinds of people – I liked meeting different people, especially people who were different than me.



In my Punk Rock phase



At a track meet



At my senior prom

HIGH SCHOOL

THINGS I ENJOYED

Some Classes:

- English
- Anatomy

Sports:

- Cross-Country and Track Teams

Out of School:

- Listening to music and going to concerts
- Going to the beach

THINGS I DID NOT ENJOY

Classes:

- All things math!
- I was generally bored and not very motivated in school.
- Never feeling like a quite fit in anywhere.

HIGH SCHOOL

Activities/Athletics in HS

- Track and cross-country team
- Taking care of my brothers
- Half way through my junior year, actually studying

Jobs I worked while in HS

- Baby-sitting for kids in the neighborhood
- Selling clothes at Foxmore Casuals
- Selling ice cream

HIGH SCHOOL

Fondest memories from HS:

- Taking the school bus to track meets, radios blaring, people joking around with each other and then stepping off the bus at another HS to let them know we had arrived.
- Very specific concerts: Jimmy Cliff, Police and Rolling Stones.
- Getting accepted to college.
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Challenges in my HS years:

- My parents' divorce
- Stepping in for my mother; becoming the household leader out of necessity

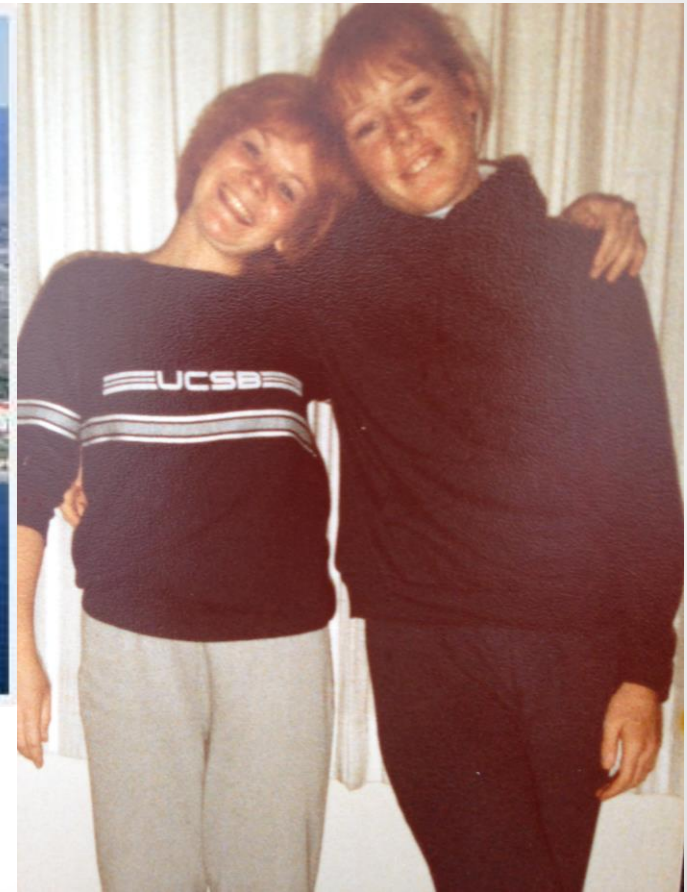
College

I attended college at UC Santa Barbara



The university on the beach....

My freshman year:
Short Cathy and Tall Cathy



College

Activities/Athletics in College

- Cross-Country and Track Teams
- Discovered my passion: Swimming
- History honors seminars
- Political work:
 - Anti-apartheid organizing and advocacy
 - Ending wars in Central America
- Travel: Taiwan & El Salvador

Jobs I worked in College

- Tutor for student athletes
- Summer jobs: Clothing store, ice cream shop, cleaning rental apartments at the beach, caring for handicapped man.

College or Graduate School

Favorite classes

- Almost every history class I took
- Honors seminars at homes of graduate students and professors
- Music Appreciation

Least favorite classes

- Computer Science – I had no idea what I was doing!
- Chemistry

College or Graduate School

Fondest memories

- Running around the lagoon, swimming and riding my bike – generally being outside and enjoying the natural beauty.
- Organizing cultural and political events to end apartheid in South Africa and wars in Central America.
- Hanging out with my friends and professors.

Challenges

- Being really broke all the time.
- Realizing I did not have the chops or the true interest to be a doctor. And then what???

Career Path



I followed my passion, working to end the wars in Central America. I made a ridiculously low wage, but I learned so many things that still serve me today.

I learned how to raise money for the issues that I cared about. I continued raising funds for nonprofits that were bringing more equity and fairness into the world/my community. I found a way to match my my passion and my skills....

Now I am the Chief Development & Communications Officer for Alliance College-Ready Public Schools.

I also teach a class at UCLA business school on nonprofit fundraising.

Career



Career

My first Job

- Baby-sitting for neighborhood kids.
- First “official” job was working in a clothing store – minimum wage was \$3.25!

My worst Job

- Cleaning summer beach houses – had to clean 12 apartments in three hours and there were only two of us!
- Nonprofit where my immediate supervisor was threatened by my success.

Career

Some challenges I had to overcome in my career

- Building something from nothing!
- Learning how to ask for money.
- Doing something that was not popular.
- Failing because I was in the wrong job for me.

How did I do it? What did I learn?

- Just do it!
- Ask forgiveness, not permission.
- Ask for help.
- Act as if.....
- Listen and respect others.
- Meet people half way.
- To thine own self be true.

Alliance College-Ready Public Schools

History

- Founded by business leaders and educators who wanted to prove that all students could learn at high levels. Their goal was to create a network of high performing schools.
- Opened first high school in 2004 at corner of King and Western

Size

- Today, 26 middle and high schools that educate more than 11,000 students.

Location

- Schools in south, east, and central Los Angeles, Huntington Park and San Pedro.

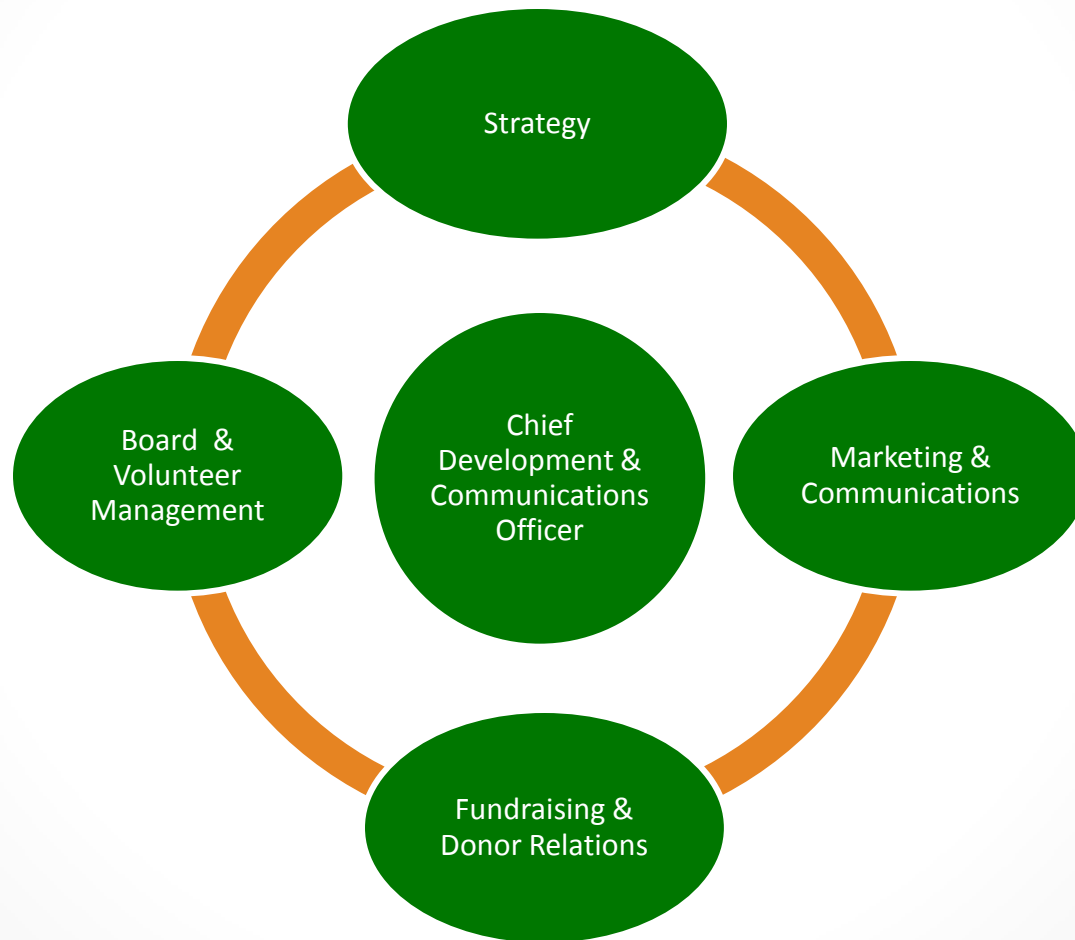
Products

- N/A

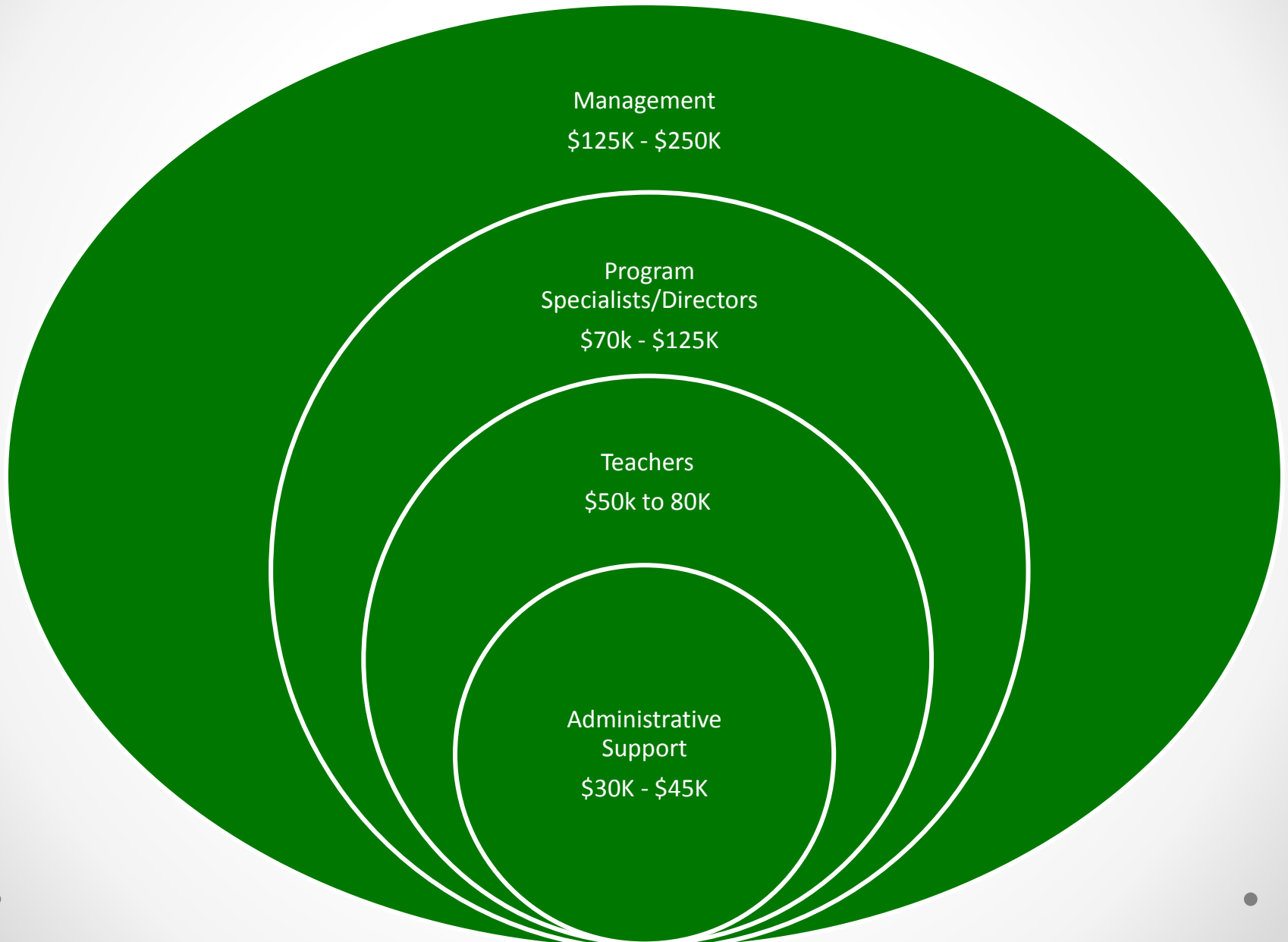
Services

- High quality, college preparatory education.
- 95% of Alliance graduates go on to college.

Current Role



Career Compensation



ACADEMIC EXERCISE

- We will now spend several minutes discussing the day's academic module and how it is relevant in the 'real world'

QUESTION AND ANSWER

