



USA Olympic Women's Gymnastics Team, Sydney 2000

Amy Chow '96 EVENT GYMNASTICS / GAMES ATLANTA 1996 AND SYDNEY 2000

Amy Chow '96 started gymnastics lessons at age 3; she moved to an elite team at age 5; and soon after she started Castilleja in 6th grade, she began competing nationally. While she was a Castilleja student, she balanced 30 hours of training each week with her schoolwork, and the summer after her graduation in 1996, she competed in the Olympics in Atlanta. She was on the team that became known as the Magnificent Seven, the first U.S. team to take gold in Olympic gymnastics. In Atlanta, she also won the silver medal for uneven bars and became the first Asian American woman to win an Olympic medal in gymnastics. Amy made the team again four years later and competed in Sydney in 2000. During her Olympic career, she brought home bronze, silver, and gold medals. After retiring from gymnastics, she went to medical school and became a pediatrician.

Thoughts on balancing school and athletics as Castilleja:

Having both in my life actually brought balance because I never had all my eggs in one basket. If I had a hard day in the gym and I couldn't get a new move, I could still do well on a test or a paper. And vice versa, if I wasn't having my best day in one of my classes, I could go to the gym and still feel strong and accomplished.

Favorite Olympic memory:

When we walked into the competition space for training before the games

began—usually the stands are empty for those practices, but that day there were already fans waiting. They were cheering for us, and suddenly we realized the magnitude of it all. We were at the Olympics. It was amazing to realize there were so many people pulling for us.

Castilleja experiences that prepared you for high-level competition:

Even though I was really quiet, I felt comfortable voicing my opinions at Castilleja. In places where you feel heard and you know that people care about your point of view, you are more willing to open up. That experience helped me speak up to get what I needed as an athlete.

Favorite Castilleja memory:

I spent a lot of time in the library. I would go there with my friends during my free time. We loved it there. Sometimes we were doing work, but sometimes we were just talking. I remember the feeling of community and camaraderie there.

Thoughts on balance now:

Through Castilleja and college, I learned how to manage my time from doing so many things at once. I became really good at balancing everything. Right now, I'm also thinking about priorities as much as balance, and I've taken time off from work to be with my kids because that's a priority for me. It's a different way to think about the things that are most important to you.

