



THE STAR

Media release

The women behind one of Australasia's leading integrated resorts and expansion

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Welcome to Broadbeach Island – a place where women rule and are leading the day-to-day operations of one of Australasia's leading integrated resorts, The Star Gold Coast, and its current and future development.

The Star Gold Coast COO Jessica Mellor and Destination Gold Coast Consortium (DGCC) Project Director Jaime Cali are the female faces responsible for driving the success and expansion of the transformational destination.

Appointed in June last year, Ms Mellor is The Star Gold Coast's youngest and first female COO and oversees thousands of team members at the property.

"I believe it's my team's job to put our guests first, but it's my job to put my team first," Ms Mellor said.

"In doing this, one of my key priorities is to create a work culture that supports acceptance, collaboration, and authenticity; while making sure people feel safe and accountable for their space.

"The property has been an iconic destination for over three decades, and its recent transformation across dining, leisure, accommodation, and entertainment is what drew me back to the coast – I wanted to be part of its history.

"It's a very diverse and dynamic place to work, so making sure we think ahead, and we have something to offer everyone keeps it interesting for me. I'm really proud to be part of defining how the property will adapt and transition as it expands, especially with the Dorsett hotel and apartments tower well underway.

"This tower will create hundreds of new roles in tourism and hospitality when it opens in 2022, which presents amazing new opportunities for women looking to grow their careers in our industry."

Originally from Brisbane, it's the second time Ms Mellor has lived on the Gold Coast after studying Property and Sustainable Development at Bond University. Recently completing her MBA at QUT, she has worked across infrastructure/property development, funds management, corporate advisory, and hospitality and entertainment.

"Women are inspired by seeing other women in senior leader roles – it's a tangible thing that helps stimulate positive 'self-talk' – and is very powerful in encouraging women to pursue opportunities they might have otherwise been uncertain about," Ms Mellor said.

"I want to lead a diverse and inclusive workforce, where capable and passionate women can thrive in being bold and can define their path to success.

"When I look back, I credit three factors that have helped my career – amazing mentors to guide and push me, a constant curiosity for learning new things, and an unwavering belief that I can do whatever I put my mind to."

Meanwhile, DGCC is the joint venture company – comprising The Star Entertainment Group, Far East Consortium, and Chow Tai Fook Enterprises – driving the construction of the island’s first mixed-use tower

Ms Cali is overseeing the build of the \$400 million, 53-storey tower, which will bring the internationally-acclaimed Dorsett hotel brand to the Gold Coast, and to Australia, for the first time; in addition to apartments.

She also led the team responsible for developing the application that would eventually achieve state government approval on The Star Gold Coast’s \$2 billion-plus masterplan, featuring another four towers and resort facilities.

“I’m thrilled to be part of this incredible project – we currently have 150 people on site and we look forward to seeing the Dorsett hotel and apartments tower come out of the ground from around April,” Ms Cali said.

Appointed in February 2017, Ms Cali’s role involves managing the consortium partners and their respective requirements; whilst overseeing the construction itself, including leading a small team of 10 employees and around 40 consultancies to ensure the design and build of the mixed-use tower and the sale of residences.

Originally from Innisfail, Ms Cali is from a sugar cane farming family but always enjoyed graphic design at school. It was this passion that saw her move to Brisbane to study Architecture at QUT, and spend two years of her studies working part-time for a series of architectural firms in Brisbane and in London.

Since then, she’s spent most of her 20-year career, working on a variety of construction and redevelopment projects – including residential, commercial/retail, and mixed-use – across South East Queensland.

However, she said being appointed to the role of Project Director was a turning point in her career.

“When you’re a female leader in a male-dominated industry, it’s really important to set the stage for other women to come up the ranks and help build an environment of diversity and equal opportunity,” Ms Cali said

“I make a point of mentoring and encouraging women in both construction and development fields to help build their confidence and network.

“While we engage a range of contractors, my core team is made up of 50 per cent women, and 50 per cent men.

“When I look back on my transition into my current role, it wasn’t without its challenges – I was a traditional development manager helping set up and manage a new joint venture company, while running an existing project site, and trying to get approval on a \$2 billion+ masterplan.”

Ms Cali said many women talk about having ‘imposter syndrome’ but most of the time they’re underselling their skills and accomplishments.

“We need to build each other up more, congratulate that person who just did a great job – those small actions go a long way in overcoming our biases, unconscious or not, about ourselves and what we’re capable of,” Ms Cali said.

In the last few years, Ms Cali said being true to herself had been a key learning on her path to success.

“The best advice I can give is don’t be someone you’re not – be yourself, be honest, speak up, ask questions, and importantly, leverage the skills of the people around you,” Ms Cali said.

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