



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WeCOACH Media Contact  
[info@wecoachsports.org](mailto:info@wecoachsports.org)

### **WeCOACH Announces 2025-26 Lifetime Achievement Award Recipients**

March 6, 2026 – As we prepare to celebrate our inaugural National Women Coaches Day powered by WeCOACH + Hudl, WeCOACH is excited to announce the six recipients of our 2025-26 Lifetime Achievement Award presented by Jostens. The prestigious WeCOACH Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to women in sports who succeed at the highest levels in their respective careers, while also displaying an unwavering commitment, pioneering spirit, and trailblazing leadership to empower and pave the way for girls and women in all sports and levels to breakthrough for many generations to come. This year's class boasts over 180 years of coaching experience, over 5,000 career wins, and over 46 national & state championships.

This year's recipients include: **Kathy Aspaas**, former Head Swim Coach, Minot High School (Minot, ND) & Century High School (Bismarck, ND), Founder and former Owner & Head Coach of ASK Swim, LLC; **Valorie Kondos Field**, former UCLA Head Women's Gymnastics Coach; **Dr. Tina Sloan Green**, former Temple University Head Women's Lacrosse Coach & Professor Emerita, Black Women in Sport Foundation Co-Founder; **Billie Jean King**, Founder, Women's Tennis Association and Women's Sports Foundation; **Lorene Ramsey**, former Illinois Central College Head Women's Basketball Coach & Head Softball Coach; and **Barbara Stevens**, former Bentley University Head Women's Basketball Coach.

"Each of these trailblazers has transformed the landscape of sport and expanded what's possible for women who aspire to lead. Their impact reaches far beyond championships and accolades—they have shaped generations, opened doors, and built a more equitable future for all of us. WeCOACH is honored to celebrate their extraordinary legacies and the powerful example they continue to set for our community of women coaches nationwide," said WeCOACH CEO Vanessa Fuchs.

Past Lifetime Achievement Award recipients include Pat Summitt, Tara VanDerveer, Jan Hutchinson, Dr. Ann Lebedeff, Carmen Jackson, Jill Ellis, Muffet McGraw, Violet Palmer, Dr. Nikki

**WeTEACH. WeINSPIRE. WeMOTIVATE. WeLEAD. WeCOACH!**

Franke, Carol “Hutch” Hutchins, Jodi Manore, Missy Foote, Dr. Christine Grant, Bev Kearney, C. Vivian Stringer and Sister Lynn Winsor. The 2025-26 honorees will receive their custom-designed awards by Jostens on May 18 in Denver, Colorado in conjunction with the WeCOACH Women Coaches Academies. To learn more about the WeCOACH Lifetime Achievement Awards presented by Jostens, click [here](#).



### **About Coach Kathy Aspaas**

Kathy Aspaas is a legendary North Dakota swim coach whose 45-year career produced 28 state championships, making her one of the most successful high school coaches in the state’s history. She began her tenure at Minot High School, where she led the program to its first state title in 1978 and sparked an unprecedented run of 11 straight championships. After her return to coaching at Bismarck Century High School, she guided the Patriots to six consecutive state titles beginning in 2015. In addition to her success at the high school level, Aspaas was the founder and owner of ASK Swim, extending her impact on swimmer development beyond the scholastic season. A dedicated mentor, Kathy has coached swimmers to Olympic Trials and World Championships, supported the USA Swimming National Junior Team, and guided athletes to national records. Her numerous honors, including induction into both the North Dakota and National High School Coaches Halls of Fame and being named National High School Coach of the Year, reflect her enduring impact and philosophy centered on sportsmanship, commitment, and helping every athlete end their season proud of their achievements.



### **About Coach Valorie Kondos Field**

Valorie Kondos Field—affectionately known as “Miss Val”—is the legendary former head coach of the UCLA Gymnastics Team, leading the program for 29 years and earning seven (7) NCAA championships, four (4) NCAA Coach of the Year honors, 18 Pac-12 titles, and induction into the UCLA Hall of Fame. Celebrated for her athlete-centered approach and commitment to developing “SuperHeroes,” she credits her mentorship with the late Coach John Wooden as a defining influence. She mentored numerous Olympians and elite athletes while empowering them to grow both as performers and as people. A former professional ballet dancer who transitioned into coaching in 1982 before becoming head coach in 1989, Miss Val has become an acclaimed speaker, author (including Chapter 1 of *Winning Ways of Women Coaches*), and creator of a TED Talk with over six million views questioning the meaning of success. She teaches graduate-level leadership courses at UCLA and the University of Arkansas, and as a breast cancer survivor, she shares life lessons grounded in gratitude and her personal motto: Life is Short, Don’t Wait to Dance.



### **About Dr. Tina Sloan Green**

Dr. Tina Sloan Green is a transformational coach and equity advocate who served as the first African-American head coach of a women’s college lacrosse team at Temple University, leading the program from 1975-1992. Under her leadership, Temple became a national powerhouse, winning three (3) national championships and making 11 consecutive NCAA Final Four appearances. A trailblazer on the field as well, she was the first African American to play for the U.S. Women’s National Field Hockey Team. Sloan Green has been inducted into multiple halls of fame and honored with the

**WeTEACH. WeINSPIRE. WeMOTIVATE. WeLEAD. WeCOACH!**

NCAA's Theodore Roosevelt Award for her lifelong impact on expanding opportunities in sport. As Co-Founder and President Emerita of the Black Women in Sport Foundation, she advanced opportunities for Black women and girls and supported several major national sport initiatives. A prolific author and mentor, she dedicated her career to promoting equity in athletics.



### **About Billie Jean King**

Billie Jean King is an iconic American tennis champion and social change leader who transformed women's sports both on and off the court. Named one of the "100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century" by *Life* magazine, Billie Jean King is the first woman athlete to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the first individual woman athlete to be awarded the Congressional Gold Medal. A fierce advocate for equality, she is founder of the Women's Sports Foundation, the Women's Tennis Association and the Billie Jean King Foundation. She is part of the ownership groups of the Los Angeles Dodgers and Angel City FC and a member of the Advisory Board of the Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL). In her legendary tennis career, King captured 39 Grand Slam singles, doubles and mixed doubles titles, including a record 20 Wimbledon championships, and was the year-end #1 player in the world six times. Her historic win over Bobby Riggs in the 1973 Battle of the Sexes, is one of the greatest moments in sports history. In 2020, Fed Cup, the world cup of women's tennis, was renamed the Billie Jean King Cup, making it the first global team competition to be named after a woman. Her advocacy and leadership helped to secure fair prize money and she continues to work tirelessly to expand opportunities for future generations of women in sport.



### **About Coach Lorene Ramsey**

Lorene Ramsey is a pioneering coach who built Illinois Central College's (ICC's) women's athletic program before Title IX, helping lay the groundwork for expanded opportunities for women in sport. She joined ICC in 1968 and went on to lead the softball program to an 840-309 record with two (2) NJCAA National Championships, and the women's basketball program to an 887-197 record with five (5) National Titles. Ramsey has the distinction of being the only coach in NJCAA history to win a National Championship in both Women's Basketball and Softball in the same year (1998). She has earned multiple National Coach of the Year honors and has been inducted into 14 Halls of Fame, including the National Softball Hall of Fame and the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame. Responsible for mentoring hundreds of young women, many of whom went on to earn college scholarships, the ICC gymnasium was named in her honor in 2003. Her leadership before and after Title IX demonstrated the competitive excellence of women's athletics and helped pave the way for greater gender equity in collegiate sports



### **About Coach Barbara Stevens**

Barbara Stevens is one of the winningest coaches in NCAA women's basketball history, becoming just the fifth women's basketball coach to surpass 1,000 career wins (the only non-Division I coach in that exclusive club) and retiring with an extraordinary 1,058-291 record across 43 seasons. Best known for her 34-year tenure at Bentley University, she led the Falcons to an undefeated 35-0 season and the 2014 NCAA Division II National Championship, the program's first. A five-time WBCA Division II National Coach of the Year and 16-time Northeast 10 Coach of the Year, Stevens

earned her place among the sport's greats through her many accomplishments on the court. She was inducted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in 2006 and the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2020, recognizing a career defined by excellence, consistency, and transformational leadership in women's basketball.

###

### **ABOUT JOSTENS**

Jostens, a trusted partner within the academic and achievement space, provides products and services that help its customers celebrate meaningful milestones. The company's product assortment includes yearbooks, publications, custom-crafted jewelry and consumer goods that serve the K-12, collegiate and professional sports markets. Jostens was founded in 1897 and is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minn. Visit [jostens.com](http://jostens.com) for more information.

### **ABOUT WeCOACH**

Founded in 2011, WeCOACH is a one-of-a-kind 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to recruiting, advancing, and retaining women coaches in all sports and levels through year-round professional growth & leadership development programs. Prior to Title IX, over 90% of women's collegiate sports teams were coached by women. Today, over 50 years later, the data indicates that number has decreased to 41% across all three NCAA Divisions, with only 7% women head coaches of color. Only 5% women coach men's teams. At the youth level, the data is hard to estimate, approximately less than 20% of teams are coached by women. WeCOACH launched MOVE the NUMBERS in 2022 to help change the landscape for women coaches and the student-athletes they lead. If she can see her, she can be her. For more information visit [MOVE the NUMBERS](#).

### **ABOUT THE WeCOACH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

The prestigious WeCOACH Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to women in sports who succeed at the highest levels in their respective careers, while also displaying an unwavering commitment, pioneering spirit, and trailblazing leadership to empower and pave the way for girls and women in all sports and levels to breakthrough for many generations to come. Jostens, as our official WeCELEBRATE Moments Partner, provides each honoree with a custom designed award to commemorate their lifetime achievements. To view past recipients, or to learn more about the WeCOACH Lifetime Achievement Awards presented by Jostens, click [here](#).