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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bjornsrud Hands Executive Director Baton to Kahn Leadership Transition to Begin August 1

Marlene Bjornsrud, who has served as Executive Director of the Alliance of Women Coaches for the past two years, will step down effective Aug. 1.

Bjornsrud, who has strengthened the organization's business foundation during her tenure while fine-tuning its programs to support and advocate for women college coaches, will serve as Director of Strategic Relationships during the transition to new Executive Director Megan Kahn.



"I was honored when the Alliance offered me the opportunity to build the coaching profession that I love so much," Bjornsrud said. "Now, having accomplished the goals the Board of Directors and I agreed upon, my goal is to support and mentor new leaders like Megan in carrying this important work forward."

Cecile Reynaud, President of the Alliance's Board of Directors, said "We have been fortunate to have Marlene lead us for the past two years. We will miss her leadership. Her experience in working with non-profit organizations allowed us to put sound policies and procedures into place. She has grown the membership tremendously and has established strong relationships with the NCAA, National Association of Collegiate Women Athletic Administrators, various sport coaching organizations and many others."



Kahn has been with the Alliance for four years, most recently as Director of Events and Communication. A former college assistant basketball coach in Texas, she has worked as an athletic administrator with the Atlantic Coast and Atlantic 10 conferences and formed her own consulting company.

"The fact that Marlene wants to stay on in a new role speaks to her passion for this work," Kahn said. "I adore Marlene both personally

and professionally. She just has this amazing ability to connect on so many levels. The Alliance is now in a unique position to be true difference makers, to create awareness and change cultures. I feel blessed with this opportunity to lead the Alliance in its important work for every current female coach and every young girl who may follow in her footsteps.”

An important aspect of the Alliance’s work is establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with the NCAA, the governing body of college sports, and with athletic administrators at the institutions where women coaches work.

“Marlene is a passionate advocate for women coaches and brought that passion and dedication to her leadership of the Alliance,” said Dr. Amy Wilson, Director of Inclusion for the NCAA. “Megan is well-positioned to guide the Alliance to continued success and I look forward to continued partnerships with the Alliance team to provide meaningful educational opportunities for women coaches.”

“Marlene is a true servant leader and I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know and work with her,” said Patti Phillips, CEO of the National Association of Collegiate Women Athletic Administrators, better known as NACWAA. “We are excited for Marlene’s next venture and equally excited for the energy and expertise that Megan will bring to the position.”

The Alliance of Women Coaches was founded in 2011 by Judy Sweet, a former athletic director at the University of California, San Diego and NCAA senior vice president, and Celia Slater, former head women’s basketball coach and senior woman administrator at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Fla. The Alliance has become an important and trusted voice, resource and community for all women coaches.

Before coming to the Alliance, Bjornsrud was executive director of the nonprofit Bay Area Women’s Sports Initiative in San Jose, Calif., which she founded with Olympic and World Cup soccer stars Brandi Chastain and Julie Foudy. BAWSI called female athletes to service as mentors and role models for school-age girls in high poverty communities.

She began her professional career as women’s tennis coach at Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, moved to Santa Clara University as an athletic administrator and then became general manager of the San Jose CyberRays, a member of the first women’s professional soccer league in the United States. In 2013 she was honored in Switzerland by the International Olympic Committee with its Women and Sport Award for the Americas.

For more information on the Alliance of Women Coaches, visit www.gocoaches.org.

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