



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WeCOACH Hosts the 55th Class of the NCAA Women Coaches Academy

November 10, 2025 - WeCOACH is thrilled to announce the upcoming 55th class of the NCAA Women Coaches Academy (WCA), set to take place November 16-18, 2025, in Indianapolis, Indiana. Hosted in collaboration with the NCAA, this impactful Academy offers a multi-day transformational experience focused on leadership development and personal growth for women coaches from all sports and collegiate levels, including both two-year and four-year institutions. Since its inception, more than 2,400 coaches have graduated from the NCAA WCA.

WCA Class #55 features 78 women coaches representing 18 different sports, and 679 total years of coaching experience. Participants come from a diverse collection of institutions across NCAA Divisions I, II, and III, as well as the NAIA and NJCAA.

"The NCAA is proud to continue its partnership with WeCOACH as we welcome the 55th class of the NCAA Women Coaches Academy to our National Office in Indianapolis," said DeeDee Merritt Guster, NCAA Managing Director of Leadership Development. "We are especially excited to help host this year's class in our home city, where our mission to educate and empower student-athletes, coaches, and athletics administrators comes to life every day through our operations and leadership programming. This Academy continues to deliver transformative learning experiences that strengthen leadership and support the advancement and retention of women coaches in collegiate athletics. WeCOACH remains an invaluable partner in this work - and through collaborations like this, we are able to broaden our reach and deepen our impact across the coaching community."

“The Academy experience is nothing short of transformational,” said Vanessa Fuchs, CEO of WeCOACH. “Bringing this program to the NCAA National Office further elevates the impact — immersing women coaches in an environment committed to advancing leadership and strengthening the future of college sports. Our participants leave feeling renewed and equipped with tools, strategies, and a powerful sisterhood of support that extends far beyond the Academy. Data continues to show that our graduates remain in the coaching profession at rates well above the national average — and that retention is exactly the kind of change we are dedicated to scaling alongside the NCAA. We’re also incredibly proud to expand access by awarding more than \$38,000 in scholarship funding for Indianapolis participants, thanks to the generosity of our donors and partners.”

A highlight of this year’s Academy will be the presentation of the 2024-25 WeCOACH Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by Jostens, to Tara VanDerveer for her lasting impact on the coaching profession. Attendees will have the opportunity to gain insights and inspiration through a keynote conversation with Coach VanDerveer.

The Academy will also feature a powerhouse panel of distinguished women—Raquel Atawo (WCA #52), Sharon Clark (WCA #4), Lin Dunn, Deanna Gumpf (WCA #25), Britt Harvey (WCA #42/A2.0 #2), Carol “Hutch” Hutchins, Lori Kerans (WCA #33), Muffet McGraw, Shonda Stanton (WCA #36), and moderated by DeeDee Merritt Guster, Managing Director of NCAA Leadership Development. The panel titled *Coaches Unfiltered: The Ask Anything Panel*,” will allow WCA participants to engage authentically with these trailblazers to share experiences, insights, and advice.

WeCOACH extends deep gratitude to the NCAA for its longstanding support. WeCOACH also wants to extend thanks to this year’s generous Academy Partners whose support makes these programs possible: BAND, BSN SPORTS, Gatorade, Hudl, Marines, Simple Modern, Alex Morgan Foundation, Athlete Assessments, Bakline, Becky Ahlgren Bedics Consulting, The Coaches’ Coach (Betsy Butterick), Equitable Advisors (Latrice Smith), Jostens, LoveAthlete (Nevin Caple), Natasha Watley Foundation, The Sports Bra Project, This One Media, and the Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport.

Several conferences and sport associations also stepped up to support our NCAA Women Coaches Academy as sponsors: College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin (CCIW), Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA), Great Midwest Athletic Conference (G-MAC), Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC), Liberty League, Mid-American Conference (MAC), National Collegiate Acrobatics & Tumbling Association (NCATA), New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference (NEWMAC), National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA), Pac-12 Conference, Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC), and Sunshine State Conference (SSC).

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November 16-18 NCAA Women Coaches Academy Class #55 Participants:

Jade Antolik | Eckerd College - Head Coach, Beach Volleyball
Lala Aviles Jimenez | Kentucky Wesleyan College - Head Coach, Volleyball
Mandi Baer | Penn State Harrisburg - Head Coach, Softball
Allyson Baker | University of Pennsylvania - Assistant Coach, Rowing
Anna Beck | Smith College - Assistant Coach, Field Hockey
Maliah Blakemore | Knox College - Head Coach, Volleyball
Lisa Brooks | Monroe University - Head Coach, Softball
Elle Buffenbarger | University of Dayton - Assistant Coach, Softball
Ari Cambio | Colby College - Associate Head Coach, Lacrosse
Tatiana Cava | Occidental College - Assistant Coach, Water Polo
Cori Chom-Rees | DePauw University - Head Coach, Lacrosse
Jen Clements | Shippensburg University - Assistant Coach, Soccer
Margareth Collantes | Trinidad State College - Head Coach, Volleyball
Caitlyn Corace | Catawba College - Head Coach, Lacrosse
Samantha Cozzolino | Tiffin University - Head Coach, Lacrosse
Natoya Davidson | University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff - Assistant Coach, Cross Country, Track & Field
Taya DiAngelo | Saint Joseph's University - Assistant Coach, Rowing
Abigail Ernst | Oregon State University - Assistant Coach, Rowing
Leslie Escobar | Whittier College - Head Coach, Lacrosse
Tatum Etchegoyen-Springer | University of Redlands - Head Coach, Flag Football
Samm Firestone | Saint Vincent College - Head Coach, Golf
Holly Frantz | University of Maryland - Head Strength and Conditioning, Softball
Lexi Funk | University of Pittsburgh - Assistant Coach, Gymnastics
Hannah Galloway | Adrian College - Assistant Coach, Volleyball
Sophie Gardner | Augustana University - Assistant Coach, Acrobatics & Tumbling
Ra'sha Gladney | Elizabeth City State University - Head Coach, Volleyball
Jerrica Grant | Emmanuel University - Head Coach, Cheer
Rachel Gray | North Central College - Head Coach, Golf
Venecia Green | Rust College - Head Coach, Tennis
Beth Greenwood | Vassar College - Assistant Coach, Baseball

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Lauren Grogan | Denison University - Head Coach, Golf
Samantha Guillaume | SUNY Morrisville - Head Coach, Softball
Chance Hendricks | Westminster College - Graduate Assistant Coach, Soccer
Cassie Hendrix | Indiana University - Assistant Coach, Softball
Rachel Hickey | Kalamazoo College - Assistant Coach, Cross Country, Track & Field
Kinley Hickok | Willamette University - Assistant Coach, Volleyball
Samantha Higgins | Eastern Michigan University - Assistant Coach, Gymnastics
Amanda Higgs | Kentucky Wesleyan College - Head Coach, Cheer
Renee Horton | University of Missouri - Associate Head Coach, Soccer
Jo Hyatt | UNCG - Assistant Coach, Softball
Jill Leibforth | Kalamazoo College - Head Coach, Soccer
Kiki Lorann | Heidelberg University - Head Coach, Golf
Caitlin Lowery | Concordia University Wisconsin - Head Coach, Acrobatics & Tumbling
Caressa Maichle | Susquehanna University - Head Coach, Softball
Nicole Marek | Michigan State University - Assistant Coach, Rowing
Abby McGue | DePauw University - Assistant Coach, Field Hockey
Reba McLennan | George Fox University - Director & Coach, STUNT
Emily Miller | Kenyon College - Head Coach, Softball
LtCol Evita Mosqueda | United States Marine Corps - Lieutenant Colonel
Lexi Nielsen | Long Beach State University - Assistant Coach, Golf
Davina Oriekwu | UMBC - Assistant Coach, Cross Country, Track & Field
Ellen Parkey, MS, CSCS | Tulane University - Strength Coach, Beach Volleyball
Leah Pearman | Washington State University - Assistant Coach, Rowing
Jordyn Perez Pugh | Loyola University Maryland - Assistant Coach, Cross Country, Track & Field
Lisa Powell | Alcorn State University - Assistant Coach, Basketball
Amanda Prather | Franklin College - Assistant Coach, Softball
Julie Pratt | Oberlin College - Head Coach, Softball
Jenee Rago | Aurora University - Strength Coach
Angelina Ramos | Southern Illinois University Carbondale - Head Coach, Cross Country
Ana Ramos | Mississippi University for Women - Head Coach, Soccer
Marnie Reidell | Lincoln Memorial University - Head Coach, Field Hockey
Jillian Roberts | Oberlin College - Assistant Coach, Track & Field

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Brittany Rueb | Francis Marion University - Head Coach, Acrobatics & Tumbling
Olivia Shagam | DePauw University - Head Coach, Field Hockey
Gabrielle Smart | DePauw University - Head Coach, Softball
Suzette Soboti | University of Redlands - Head Coach, Soccer
Morgan Stenson | Aurora University - Assistant Athletic Director
Breana Sumpter | LaGrange College - Head Coach, Flag Football
Katie Tenboer | Millikin University - Associate Athletic Director
Felicia Thomas | Kalamazoo Valley CC - Head Coach, Basketball
Jennifer Thomas | Seattle University - Assistant Coach, Crew
Mo Triner | Florida Southern College - Head Coach, Softball
Jessica Villegas | Elizabeth City State University - Head Coach, Softball
Morgan Vogels | Millikin University - Asst. Director of Athletics/Sports Information
Jess Vormelker | Thiel College - Head Coach, Basketball
Jenilee Voss | Wisconsin Lutheran College - Head Coach, Volleyball
Kathy Wagner | University of Texas at Arlington - Head Strength and Conditioning Coach
Abi Wild | Tarleton State University - Assistant Coach, Tennis
Gabby Wilson | University of Michigan - Gymnastics

To learn more about our Academy programs click [here](#), or if you are interested in funding an Academy Scholarship, click [here](#).

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ABOUT THE NCAA

The National Collegiate Athletic Association provides a world-class athletics and academic experience that fosters lifelong well-being for more than 520,000 student-athletes annually. The NCAA stages 91 championships across three divisions, and its 1,100 member schools provide nearly \$4 billion in athletics scholarships every year. Visit ncaa.org and ncaa.com for more.

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 6% of coaches of men's teams are women. At the youth level, the data

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are difficult to estimate, but approximately fewer than 26% 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](#).