



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## WeCOACH Announces 2023-24 Lifetime Achievement Award Recipients

February 7, 2024 – On National Girls & Women in Sports Day, WeCOACH is proud to announce five recipients of the 2023-24 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 recipients include **Coach Missy Foote** (retired), Middlebury College Head Women's Lacrosse & Field Hockey Coach; **Dr. Christine Grant** (posthumous), University of Iowa Director of Women's Intercollegiate Athletics & former Field Hockey Coach; **Coach Beverly "Bev" Kearney**, former University of Texas Women's Track & Field Head Coach and Founder of InPursuit of Dreams Inc.; **Coach C. Vivian Stringer** (retired), Rutgers University Head Women's Basketball Coach; and **Sister Lynn Winsor**, Xavier College Preparatory Vice-Principal of Activities, Athletic Director, and Co-Head Girls Golf Coach.

"WeCOACH is privileged to have these women as special members of our community. We are honored to celebrate their inspirational achievements and the profound influence they have had on the athletes they coached. Each of these remarkable women have demonstrated a pioneering spirit throughout their careers, paving the way for future generations of coaches and athletes. Through their groundbreaking efforts, they have not only achieved unprecedented success, they have also opened doors and created opportunities for others to follow in their footsteps. They have advocated for gender equity, diversity, and inclusion, striving to create a more equitable and inclusive playing field for all. WeCOACH could not be more thrilled to bestow upon them our highest honor, the Lifetime Achievement Award," said WeCOACH CEO Vanessa Fuchs.

Past Lifetime Achievement Award recipients include Jill Ellis, Muffet McGraw, Violet Palmer, Nikki Franke, Carol Hutchins, and Jodi Manore. The 2023-24 honorees will receive their custom designed awards by Jostens on June 17 in Denver, Colorado in conjunction with the WeCOACH-NCAA Women Coaches Academies.



### **About Coach Missy Foote**

Missy Foote's remarkable legacy at Middlebury College as both a coach and administrator were pivotal in shaping the institution's athletic landscape for nearly four decades. Over 34 years, she steered the Panthers women's lacrosse program to unparalleled heights, with an impressive streak of 14 consecutive NCAA final four appearances and five national titles. Her 422 career wins (422-114-1) ranked third in Division III history and placed her top four in all NCAA divisions at the time she retired in 2015. For lacrosse, Foote was a five-time National Coach of the Year, eight-time Regional Coach of the Year, and six-time NESCAC Coach of the Year. In field hockey, Foote's 21-year tenure saw significant success with an overall record

of 180-95-12, highlighted by an NCAA Championship in 1998. She earned numerous accolades, including Division III Regional and National Coach-of-the-Year honors twice (1994 and 1998) and two ECAC titles. Foote also coached basketball and swimming in addition to serving as Middlebury's Senior Woman Administrator and Director of Physical Education, further solidifying her status as a multifaceted leader within the athletic department. Foote's legacy is enshrined in Halls of Fame at the national, regional, and state levels, a testament to her enduring impact on the sport and her lasting influence on the Middlebury athletic tradition. Her decades of service exemplify a rare blend of coaching excellence, administrative leadership, and dedication to student-athlete development, leaving an indelible mark on Middlebury College and the broader athletic community. Read more about Coach Foote [here](#).



### **About Dr. Christine Grant**

Dr. Christine Grant was a nationally renowned athletics leader, trailblazing pioneer, and strong voice in the fight for gender equity in athletics. Grant, a native of Scotland played and coached field hockey in both her native country and Canada before coming to the University of Iowa to continue her education. In 1973, she made history by becoming Iowa's first director of women's intercollegiate athletics. As AD, her 12 Hawkeye programs won 27 Big Ten Championships, and in 1985, Dr. Grant hired fellow lifetime achievement recipient, C. Vivian Stringer, the first black women's basketball coach in Big Ten Conference history. A founding member of the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (IAAW), Dr. Grant played a significant role in the

full implementation of Title IX as a consultant for the Civil Rights Title IX Task Force. Dr. Grant's distinguished career earned her many accolades and honors including the NCAA's 2007 Gerald R. Ford Award, the prestigious Billie Jean King Award presented by the Women's Sports Foundation (1995), three honorary doctorates, and induction into the University of Iowa Athletics Hall of Fame (2006). This year, Dr. Grant will also be inducted into the Field Hockey Canada Hall of Fame and USA Field Hockey Hall of Fame. She retired from Iowa on August 31, 2000. From the beginning of the WeCOACH-NCAA Women Coaches Academies in 2003, Dr. Grant served as a faculty member presenting on Title IX and an Academy Scholarship has been established in her memory by WeCOACH co-founder, Judith M. Sweet. Sadly, we lost Dr. Christine Grant on December 31, 2021. Read more about Dr. Grant [here](#).



### **About Coach Beverly "Bev" Kearney**

Coach Bev Kearney's remarkable achievements and accolades set her apart as one of the most successful and decorated coaches in collegiate athletics. Over her 30-year career, Coach Bev's teams captured seven NCAA National Championships. Six championships were won while leading the University of Texas Women's Track & Field program (Indoor: 1998, 1999, 2005; Outdoor: 1998, 1999, 2006), and her first was secured as head coach at the University of Florida (Indoor-1992). While at Texas, Kearney's teams finished in the top three at NCAA's 14 times and an impressive total of 36 NCAA top-10 finishes. Additionally, Kearney clinched 22 conference titles across the Big 12

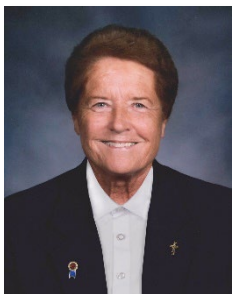
Conference, Southwest Conference, and the SEC. Kearney's individual achievements as a coach are equally extraordinary, including 39 Coach of the Year awards. In 2008, Coach Bev received the Lifetime Achievement Award from her alma mater, Auburn University. She is only the second woman in history and

the first ever African American to receive this esteemed award. Today, Coach Bev's coaching can be seen through her nonprofit, InPursuit of Dreams, dedicated to helping individuals reconnect with their life's purpose, passions, and dreams. Her methods are drawn from her coaching experience as well as her remarkable recovery from a near-tragic automobile accident that left Coach Bev paralyzed in 2002. Read more about Coach Bev [here](#).



### **About Coach C. Vivian Stringer**

Coach C. Vivian Stringer has been a pioneer, visionary, and leader during her four decades on the hardwood and her extraordinary achievements in women's college basketball solidify her as one of the most influential and successful coaches in NCAA history. Stringer holds the distinction of being the first coach in NCAA history to lead three different women's programs to the NCAA Final Four. She achieved this milestone with Rutgers in 2000 and 2007, the University of Iowa in 1993, and Cheyney State College (now Cheyney University of Pennsylvania) in 1982. Her Cheyney State Lady Wolves team remains the only HBCU program, women's or men's, to appear in an NCAA Division I Final Four or National Championship game. She surpassed the monumental 1,000 career victory mark in November 2018, the fifth NCAA Division I women's basketball coach and the first African American coach to reach the milestone. She retired ranked fifth all-time in NCAA women's basketball history with 1,055 career victories and became the NCAA record holder with 37 seasons of 20 or more victories. Stringer's contributions to the sport have been widely recognized and honored throughout her career. She was honored as the Naismith National Coach of the Year for women's basketball in 1993 and in 2020 received the John R. Wooden Legends of Coaching Award. Additionally, Coach Stringer has been inducted into numerous Halls of Fame including the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame (2001) and the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame (2009), further solidifying her legacy as a coaching legend. Read more about Coach C. Vivian Stringer [here](#).



### **About Sister Lynn Winsor**

Sister Lynn Winsor's exemplary leadership, dedication to excellence, and unwavering commitment to advocating for equal rights in high school athletics has earned her widespread admiration across the high school sports community and beyond. Leading as the Head Girls Golf Coach at Xavier College Preparatory in Phoenix, AZ since 1974, she has established a storied program, leading her team to a national record 37 golf state championship titles and an astonishing 28 titles in 30 years. Sister Lynn has also made significant contributions as the Athletic Director at Xavier College Preparatory, overseeing a remarkable 149 State Championships across various sports. Beyond coaching, Sister Lynn's role as Vice Principal for Activities at Xavier College Preparatory since 1977 underscores her commitment to providing a quality education and empowering young women in a Catholic high school setting. Sister Lynn's advocacy to ban sex-based discrimination in school athletics further highlights her trailblazing commitment to equity, inclusion and fairness across all playing fields, ensuring that all students, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities. Her tireless efforts over the past four decades have garnered an impressive list of well-earned honors that include numerous Athletic Director and Coach of the Year honors as well as the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) highest honor, the NIAAA Award of Merit (2006); NFHS National High School Hall of Fame (2023); NFHS/ AIA Title IX Woman Trailblazer of the Year (2021); and the 2022 Most Influential Woman in Arizona Sport. Read more about Sister Lynn Winsor [here](#).

### **ABOUT JOSTENS**

Jostens is a trusted partner in the academic and achievement channel, providing products, programs and services that help its customers celebrate moments that matter. The company's products include yearbooks, publications, jewelry and consumer goods that serve the K-12 educational, college and professional sports segments. Founded in 1897 and based in Minneapolis, Minn., Jostens is owned by Platinum Equity and can be found online at [jostens.com](https://www.jostens.com).

### **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 46% in Division I, 41% across all three NCAA Divisions, with only 6.2% women head coaches of color (Division I). 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. Prior WeCOACH Lifetime Achievement Award Recipients include: Jill Ellis (2019), Muffet McGraw (2020), Violet Palmer (2021), Nikki Franke (2022), Carol Hutchins (2022), and Jodi Manore (2022).