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Converse University Appoints Mike Pasquarella to Lead Institutional Advancement

SPARTANBURG, S.C. (October 31, 2022) –Following a highly-competitive, national search, Converse University has appointed Mike Pasquarella as Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Alumni Relations. Pasquarella begins his tenure at Converse on November 1, 2022.

Pasquarella most recently served as the Associate Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. At Kent State, Pasquarella led a team responsible for principal gifts, foundation relations, corporate relations, planned gifts, and prospect management for Kent State’s \$350 million *Forever Brighter* comprehensive fundraising campaign. His team’s work elevated year-over-year giving for multiple years, culminating in exceeding the fiscal year 2022 goal by \$48 million.

“Mike Pasquarella distinguished himself through his rich development experience, his care for the future of Converse, and his joy in connecting with our vast network of alumni and friends,” said Boone Hopkins, Converse president. “He will bring fresh perspective, data-informed strategies, and energetic leadership to our advancement team and our fundraising efforts at Converse, as we prepare to launch our strategic vision plan in 2023 and the supporting comprehensive fundraising campaign.”

Prior to Kent State, Pasquarella was an Assistant Vice Chancellor in the Office of Advancement for the School of Medicine at the University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora, Colorado. At the University of Colorado, he led a diversified team responsible for principal and major gifts, reorganized and deployed faculty liaisons and donor-centric generalist philanthropic advisors, and contributed to a three-year rolling average increase from \$40.6 million to \$121.6 million.

“The decision to pursue this opportunity with Converse was inspired by my appreciation of history coupled with my passion for building for the future,” said Pasquarella. “Philanthropy will be an accelerator for President Hopkins’ strategic vision for Converse. Through our efforts we will honor Converse’s loyal supporters and invite new alumni and friends to co-create possibilities for the future.”

Pasquarella began his career in student affairs, serving for nearly ten years as Dean of Students at Johnson & Wales University, Providence. In 1999 he shifted to fundraising and community engagement as the Dean of University Relations at Johnson & Wales, Denver, where he also led strategic communications, alumni relations, and marketing for the campus. Pasquarella left Johnson & Wales in 2008 as Vice President of Philanthropy at the Denver Hospice in Denver, Colorado for seven years.

Pasquarella holds a Master of Science in Higher Education Administration from Indiana University and a Bachelor of Arts in History from Canisius College.

Pasquarella's appointment is the last in a series of new hires and promotions for the executive leadership team at Converse University. Under President Boone Hopkins, who was named Converse's twelfth president effective March 1, 2022, two were promoted to leadership roles in the areas of marketing and communications and student development and success. Holly Duncan was promoted to Vice President for Marketing and Communications after serving as Chief Communications Officer at the university, and Danielle Stone was promoted to Chief Inclusive Excellence Officer after serving as Assistant Dean of Diversity and Inclusion and Title IX Coordinator. Following a comprehensive, national search, Dr. Joe Wilferth was named Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs in August 2022, and began his tenure at Converse October 1, 2022. Other members of the Converse University executive leadership team include Jenn Bell, Director of Athletics; Dianne Crocker, Vice President for Finance and Business; Jamie Grant, Vice President for Enrollment Management; and Kristin Lacey, Vice President for Operations and Strategic Planning.

About Converse University

Converse University empowers students to become transformative leaders who see clearly, decide wisely, and act justly. Converse was founded in 1889 by citizens of Spartanburg, SC, who aimed to create an educational experience for women, and in fall 2020 it welcomed its first undergraduate co-educational incoming class. The University encompasses the School of Humanities, Sciences, and Business; the School of the Arts; the School of Education and Graduate Studies; and the Converse College for Women. Converse students experience deep scholarship, transformative mentorship, experiential learning, and wonderful support for and belief in each other. Through this unique formula, Converse is a creator of opportunity for its students through a personalized education that also includes the professional and technical skills graduates need to be successful in their careers.

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