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### **Converse University's Jenn Bell Named Athletic Director of the Year**

**SPARTANBURG, S.C.** (March 27, 2023) – Converse University Director of Athletics Jenn Bell has been selected as one of the 28 winners of the Cushman & Wakefield Athletic Director of the Year Award (ADOY). The National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) announced Bell as one of the four winners in NCAA Division II. The ADOY Award highlights the efforts of athletics directors at all levels for their commitment and positive contributions to student-athletes, campuses and their surrounding communities.

“I am truly humbled to be chosen as one of the Division II winners of the NACDA AD of the Year Award,” Bell said. “Being selected as an award nominee by my conference peers was a huge honor, but being recognized as one of the four overall winners in our incredible division means so much to me personally and to our community here at Converse.”

While the Cushman & Wakefield ADOY is an individual award, Bell says it also recognizes the accomplishments of the entire Converse athletics community throughout the last year. “I am fortunate to be surrounded by colleagues who pursue excellence in every way possible, and it is my privilege to lead Converse athletics and serve our student-athletes, coaches and staff, and university,” she said.

Bell will be honored along with her fellow Division II winners, Matt Kilcullen (Mercy College), Danny McCabe (Adelphi University), and Kim Pate (Lenoir-Rhyne University), at the 58th Annual NACDA & Affiliates Convention at the World Center Marriott Resort in Orlando, Florida, on Tuesday, June 13, at 4 p.m.

“Converse celebrates this well-deserved recognition of Jenn’s excellent work as our director of athletics,” said President Boone J. Hopkins. “She encourages and develops our student-athletes to be bold and resilient; shares the values of teamwork, leadership, and growth; and empowers students to reach their full athletic and personal potential in accordance with our founder’s vision to ‘see clearly, decide wisely, and act justly.’”

Bell entered her fifth year as director of athletics during the 2022-23 academic year. She was originally nominated after receiving the honor from a vote among the current directors of athletics in Conference Carolinas.

“We were thrilled to learn that Jenn has officially received this well-deserved honor,” Conference Carolinas Commissioner Chris Colvin said. “We believe Conference Carolinas has some of the best directors of athletics and athletic departments in Division II, and this honor further emphasizes our belief. Jenn is an integral part of everything we do in Conference Carolinas. Her efforts over the course of this academic year and during all of her time at Converse have been truly special. This is particularly noticeable in her efforts around Converse's addition of men's athletic teams over the last two years. Converse has thrived in adding more staff and sports, and a huge reason for this is Jenn's efforts daily.”

Since arriving in the summer of 2018, Bell has made significant changes throughout the Converse athletic department. Under her leadership, the Valkyries have developed a winning culture – in the classroom, in the sports venue, and in the community. Throughout the institution’s recent model change, Bell led the department through a successful transition from a single-gender athletics program to a coed program by adding six male sports, esports, and a spirit squad to the list of athletic programs offered at Converse University. With these eight additions, Converse Athletics now offers 21 athletic programs, which more than doubles the number of student-athletes within the department. As new programs have been added, more staff members have been brought on board, and the department has nearly doubled in size with the addition of assistant coaches and additional administrators.

- See the official award release on the [NACDA website here](#).
- See Bell’s article on the [Conference Carolinas website here](#).
- See Bell’s full bio on the [Converse website here](#).

#### ***About the Cushman & Wakefield Athletics Director of the Year Award***

*The Cushman & Wakefield Athletics Director of the Year (ADOY) Awards program was created to honor intercollegiate Directors of Athletics for their commitment and administrative excellence within a campus and/or college community environment over the course of the last year. The award spans seven divisions (NCAA FBS, FCS, Division I-AAA, II, III, NAIA/Other Four-Year Institutions and Junior/Community Colleges) and annually honors 28 athletics directors (four from each division). Cushman & Wakefield is in its second year of sponsoring the award. The ADOY Award program is in its 25th year and has recognized a total of 556 deserving athletics directors to date.*

#### ***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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