February Diversity Spotlight Recipient: University of Transylvania

This year for National Girls and Women in Sport Day, the University of Transylvania wanted to offer the opportunity for our student-athletes to engage with leading females on campus in administrative and staff roles that participated in collegiate athletics. The goal of the evening was to allow the student-athletes to hear from different members of the campus community on how collegiate athletics affected them and how athletics helped them find their passions.

Student-Athletes were put into small groups and got to spend a few minutes with each staff member. They got to ask questions ranging from “Did you always know you wanted to be a coach,” and “Did you ever have to deal with injury and what was that like,” to “How do you translate sports to the real world,” and “Has being an athlete helped you and in what ways.”

Over a hundred and fifty student-athletes attended with staff members in the areas of Student Life, Study Abroad and Campus Ministries all participated to share their experience of participating in collegiate athletics and how it catapulted them into the careers they are in today. Some take-aways from the evening included connecting the student-athletes to the ladies that now head the Campus Ministries and the Director of Study Abroad program. There were also new coaches that have current or past professional playing experience, who gave great insight on what it takes to get to the next level. By giving the student-athletes more connections on campus, this will allow them the ability to not only have their coaches as a resource, but everyone in the department and campus community as well.

Comments from staff:

"As a non-athletics based employee I am very proud to have been able to participate and talk to our Transy student athletes, as my days as a college volleyball player shaped me in so many ways. Being able to share with the women of athletics the possibilities to complement their athletic experience with study abroad opportunities to prepare them for their future is something I am grateful for. Sharing my professional and personal journey from my time as an athlete until today is something I hope showed them that women, and more specifically women athletes, are powerful people who can be leaders and potentially change the world someday.” – Courtney Smith, Director of Global and International Engagement.

“I thoroughly enjoyed the Transy Athletics NGWS Lead her Forward event, the room was powered with driven, positive and inspirational female athletes, each with their own story of success. The night had a personal feel, it was a great opportunity to familiarize with and relate to athletes from other sports. As leaders of our crafts, I believe it is our right and responsibility to pay it forward, not only coaching these women, but helping to shape them as strong, upstanding female members of society. I believe events such as this exemplify the spirit of this endeavor.” – Ashley Reinecke, Assistant Women’s Soccer Coach
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NGWIS Day Program cover, all ladies from the event of an action shot of their playing days.
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National Girls and Women in Sports Day at Transylvania University
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Dr. Holly Sheilley, Vice President for Enrollment and Athletic Director
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Courtney Smith – Transylvania Volleyball alum ‘17, Director of Global and International Engagement