Gloria Nevarez Named West Coast Conference Commissioner

Nevarez becomes fourth full-time commissioner in Conference history

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SAN BRUNO, Calif. -- The West Coast Conference Presidents’ Council has selected Gloria Nevarez to serve as the fourth full-time Commissioner in the 66-year history of the West Coast Conference. She replaces Lynn Holzman, who departed in January to serve as the NCAA Vice President for Women’s Basketball.

Nevarez is one of 10 female conference commissioners serving in Division I Athletics and is the first Latin American woman to ascend to the commissioner’s chair in Division I.

“It is my great honor to welcome – on behalf of all ten member institutions – Gloria Nevarez, who returns to the WCC after very successful and enriching employment at the University of Oklahoma and the Pac-12 Conference,” said Rev. Paul Fitzgerald, S.J., President of the University of San Francisco and Chair, West Coast Conference Presidents’ Council. “Prior to her work at the WCC as an Associate Commissioner, Ms. Nevarez gained valuable experience at Cal, San Jose State and at the Hanson Bridgett law firm. I am especially proud of her teaching at USF in our Masters in Sports Management program. Building on the success of her predecessor, Lynn Holzman, Gloria Nevarez is poised to lead the West Coast Conference to new levels of academic, athletic, spiritual and ethical excellence.”

Nevarez joins the WCC after spending the last eight years with the Pac-12 where she served as the senior associate commissioner and senior woman administrator overseeing all Pac-12 championships with the exception of football. The Pac-12’s primary liaison for men’s basketball, Nevarez played a comprehensive role overseeing officiating, scheduling, television issues management, event management and the student-athlete experience.

"I am honored and proud to serve as the new Commissioner of the West Coast Conference,” said Nevarez. "The WCC has a storied tradition of educating the whole person and offers its student-athletes exceptional academics, winning athletic traditions and destination locations. I believe in the mission and core values of this conference, and it is a pleasure to return and have the opportunity to serve its members. I am grateful to Fr. Paul Fitzgerald, the Presidents Council, and the search committee, and I look forward to working with each member institution and leading the West Coast Conference to a new chapter of success. I want thank Larry Scott and all the wonderful people of the Pac-12 for allowing me to be part of such a dynamic era of that conference's history.”

While at the Pac-12, Nevarez played a key role in the creation and execution of league expansion, taking the Pac-12 membership from 10 schools to 12, and the launch and development of the Pac-12 Networks. In addition, Nevarez moved basketball championships to Las Vegas (men’s) and Seattle (women’s) and was instrumental in creating a six-conference men’s basketball officiating consortium, which includes the Pac-12 and West Coast Conference.
“Gloria has played an integral leadership role in so many of the achievements of the Pac-12 Conference over the past years,” said Larry Scott, Commissioner of the Pac-12 Conference. “Her commitment to the success and development of student-athletes and ability to deliver results will enable her to do a great job for the West Coast Conference and for its member university athletic programs.”

A veteran athletics administrator with more than 25 years of experience in Division I, Nevarez has served on campus at Oklahoma (2007-10) as the Senior Woman Administrator, California (1999-01) where she served as the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance and Legal and at San Jose State (1998-99) as the first full-time director of compliance. Her initial foray into conference work was at the West Coast Conference (2002-07) where she served as the Associate Commissioner and Senior Women’s Administrator.

“Gloria Nevarez will be an outstanding leader for the West Coast Conference,” said Renee Baumgartner, Santa Clara University Athletics Director and, Chair, West Coast Conference Executive Council. “She understands and is committed to what makes the WCC unique and special: ten private, faith-based institutions who value excellence in athletics and academics. Gloria’s passion and experience are critical as she leads our conference through this challenging time in intercollegiate athletics.”

Nevarez spent three years as Senior Associate Athletic Director at the University of Oklahoma overseeing marketing, men’s and women’s basketball, track and field, softball, soccer, rowing and strength and conditioning as well as serving as the university’s liaison for Title IX compliance and Big 12 governance issues.

Throughout her career, Nevarez has served on a wide variety of NCAA committees. She has served on the NCAA Management Council – the highest level within the NCAA’s governance structure that campus administrators may be appointed. She served on President Miles Brand’s Diversity and Leadership Strategic Planning Committee, an initiative created to look at diversity issues in collegiate athletics in all NCAA divisions. Through her service on that committee, Nevarez advocated and helped create policy changes that led to bilingual information and forms for the National Clearinghouse, the all-important certification group for all prospective NCAA student-athletes. She also wrote a proposal that gave the National Clearinghouse the responsibility to define amateur status and advocated for that proposal’s passage through conventions and national meetings.

Nevarez led the Green Team initiative for the Management Council and the NCAA’s Board of Directors that determined the need for the NCAA to “green” up its business operations. The changes from these efforts helped the NCAA minimize the environmental impact of its business, including meetings, championships and operations.

Nevarez serves on the Committee on Athletics Certification’s executive group and is Chair of the Gender and Diversity Subcommittee. In this role, she leads the review of reports and all materials submitted by each institution as part of the certification process and participates in the final certification determination. She also has served as a member of campus Peer Review teams for three years.

A four-year collegiate letter-winner in basketball, Nevarez graduated cum laude from UMass with a degree in Sport and Fitness Administration/Management in 1993. A Bay Area native, Nevarez earned a degree from University of California’s Boalt Hall School of Law in 1997 and briefly practiced in the private sector. She is married to fellow Boalt grad Richard Young.

About the West Coast Conference
The West Coast Conference was formed in 1952 and has evolved and grown to become a nationally recognized and competitive force in Division I intercollegiate athletics, with 15 conference-sponsored sports: baseball, men's and women's basketball, women's beach volleyball, men's and women's cross
country, men's and women's golf, women's rowing, men's and women's soccer, softball, men's and women's tennis and women's volleyball. The WCC is characterized by the stability of its membership and its unique emphasis on combining excellence in athletics with excellence in academics. For more information, visit WCCsports.com or follow the West Coast Conference on Twitter @WCCsports.