

SPORTSNEWS



(Photo by Tony Hertz)

New Director of Athletics Alison Cone Brings Leadership, Values to Post

Director of Athletics Alison E. Cone, named to the post in late January, brings a fresh approach and proven leadership to the department.

With the appointment, Cone becomes one of 19 female athletic directors at the NCAA Division I level, which includes more than 300 colleges and universities. She is one of 13 women heading athletic departments with football programs (I-A and I-AA). At Cal Poly, she will direct all university intercollegiate athletic programs, which involve more than 500 student-athletes and 20 Division I teams.

"Alison has provided excellent leadership both on and off campus," said President Warren J. Baker. "I'm delighted that she is going to lead Cal Poly's athletics programs. She has tremendous experience, and her first-rate leadership skills will help us move our athletics programs forward."

"She has represented the Big West conference at the NCAA extraordinarily well; she has a proven track record and a

strong commitment to the success and well being of our student-athletes – in the classroom as well as on and off the field. We see the fruits of her leadership and hard work in the continued positive academic records of our fine female and male scholar-athletes," Baker added.

Cone has been at Cal Poly since 1994, serving as interim director since 2004.

"I'm excited about the prospect of continuing to work with the talented coaches and staff we have in the department," Cone said. "The department has a very bright future."

"I look forward to providing outstanding opportunities for our student athletes – opportunities that include competing at the highest level – and supporting and enhancing their academic success."

Cone earned a bachelor's degree in physical education from Washington State University and a master's degree in education from Cal State Dominguez Hills. Her coaching and teaching career spans 30 years. ■



Sheldon Harden, 84

Sheldon Harden, emeritus professor and former Cal Poly wrestling and football coach in the 1940s, '50s and '60s, died Jan. 24 in San Luis Obispo. Harden began his coaching and teaching career at Cal Poly in 1948, retiring from the university in 1987. He is credited with elevating wrestling at Cal Poly from an intramural program to the intercollegiate level. Under Coach Harden, the program gained recognition as the best on the West Coast when it won the Pacific Coast Intercollegiate Wrestling Championships in 1957-1958. In May 2002 he was inducted into the California State Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Before becoming head football coach in 1962, Harden was an assistant football coach for 14 years. During his five-year tenure as head coach, he compiled a 17-42 record.

The Alturas native earned a dozen prep letters – four each in football, basketball and track – before graduating from Modoc High School in 1939. Playing both end and fullback, he was a member of teams that dropped only three games in four years.

At Santa Clara University he played guard and tackle, picking up two letters as a regular and earning a bachelor's degree in history in 1943.

While studying for his general secondary teaching credential at College of the Pacific in 1946, Harden played pro football with the Sacramento Nuggets.

A survivor of the Oct. 29, 1960, plane crash that claimed the lives of 16 Cal Poly players and the team manager, Harden was praised for his heroic efforts to save other team and staff members. He took over as head football coach one season after the crash.

"Coach Harden has served Cal Poly's athletic program with dedication during his 20 years on the football coaching staff," then-Cal Poly President Robert E. Kennedy said. ■