

What They're Saying About Sandy Barbour

James Franklin, Penn State Football Head Coach

Sandy and I have worked for the last eight years to improve the experience of the student-athletes we serve. I have admired how deeply Sandy cares for our students, providing them with the resources needed to have a world class experience at Penn State, while preparing them for a lifetime of impact beyond their time here. Her friendship will be missed but I look forward to cheering her on in her next chapter. Fumi, the girls and I will forever appreciate the time we spent together at Penn State. We Are...forever.

Char Morett-Curtiss, Penn State Field Hockey Head Coach

First, I want to thank Sandy for her progressive and positive leadership over the past eight years. I have been appreciative of her hard work, passion and support to all of our programs during her time at Penn State. It has been personally meaningful to see her rooting for our team on the sidelines, once a field hockey player herself, without providing coaching tips! Her core values have aligned with that of Penn State University as she has clearly impacted the growth and success of many coaches and student-athletes. She has been fully committed to academic and athletic integrity, preparing the student-athletes for a lifetime of impact. As coaches, we have witnessed her tireless efforts to guide us through COVID, as well as the ever-changing athletic landscape. The student-athletes, coaches and staff have been her WHY! We appreciate the time and energy she devoted to each of us.

Secondly, we want to wish her all the best in retirement, health and happiness.

WE ARE...

Erica Dambach, Penn State Women's Soccer Head Coach

On behalf of the Penn State Women's Soccer staff and our student-athletes, we'd like to wish Sandy Barbour a healthy and happy retirement! We thank her for her friendship, leadership and support of our program over the past eight years, and for her lifetime of dedication to growing women's sports. As a female leader in the male-dominated world of college athletics administration, Sandy is a true role model for me and all of our women's soccer student-athletes. Personally, I admire her work ethic, passion and personal touch she puts into every endeavor. Despite being pulled in so many different directions at a national level, she was always present in the lives of our student-athletes. For this reason and many more, she will forever be one of the very best in the business.

Micah Shrewsberry, Penn State Men's Basketball Head Coach

I am forever grateful to Sandy for believing in me and giving me the opportunity to be the head coach at Penn State. I wish her nothing but the best in her retirement. She worked tirelessly to make Penn State a better place for everyone in our department during her time here. I will miss her positive attitude, mentorship, but more importantly, her friendship.

Denise St. Pierre, Penn State Women's Golf Head Coach

I would like to thank Sandy for stepping up to the challenges over the years, facing the adversity with a positive perspective and leading us with our purpose of preparing our students for a lifetime of impact. She has left her mark on intercollegiate athletics and the Penn State community, always considering first the experience for our student-athletes.

Guy Gadowsky, Penn State Men's Hockey Head Coach

It has been an honor and pleasure working with Sandy Barbour during her time at Penn State and I greatly appreciate her support of our hockey program, our staff and myself. I specifically admire and respect that she walks her talk when it comes to preparing our student-athletes for a lifetime of impact. She consistently made sure our student-athletes were supported at the maximum level in every area which makes coaching at Penn State very fulfilling. Sandy is tough, fair, and cool and all of us in Hockey Valley are very thankful for her efforts on our behalf and wish her the very best in retirement.

Carolyn Kieger, Penn State Women's Basketball Head Coach

Sandy's impact at Penn State has been incredible and the relationships she has cultivated with our staff and student-athletes will last a lifetime. Her authentic leadership will no doubt be missed, but her legacy will live on. It has been an honor to work for Sandy and I am extremely grateful for everything she has done for me, our staff and our program. She is truly the best in the business. We Are!



What They're Saying About Sandy Barbour

Jeff Cook, Penn State Men's Soccer Head Coach

Today is a bittersweet day for Penn State Athletics and for our men's soccer program. First, and most importantly, I want to congratulate Sandy Barbour for her many accomplishments during her tenure at Penn State and for her remarkable career as one of the most impactful leaders in collegiate sports. Sandy's relentless passion for our student-athletes, her tireless work ethic, and her unyielding commitment to the values that our University represents will leave a lasting and powerful legacy.

Sandy's fantastic leadership during my four years as the men's soccer coach has been deeply appreciated. Her dedication and support have been hugely influential in our ability to have the success we have enjoyed both on and off the field. I know I speak on behalf of all members of our program in expressing our gratitude for Sandy's impact on our team. We will miss her greatly next year but know that she will remain our biggest fan for many years to come. Thank you Sandy! We Are!

Sarah Brown, Penn State Women's Gymnastics Head Coach

I am beyond grateful for Sandy's leadership and the time we had together over the last five years. She took a leap of faith on a young head coach and has provided me with nothing but support and love every step of the way. I am so sad to see her go, but I know she is looking forward to this next stage of her life. I wish her nothing but the best in retirement.

Greg Nye, Penn State Men's Golf Head Coach

My thanks to Sandy for guiding us through these last eight years filled with so many challenges. Her wide experiences and involvement with the collegiate athletics landscape kept us in a position to excel with our teams and specifically our student athletes.

I also appreciate how steadfast she has been in never compromising who we are and what we believe in as Penn Staters.

Sandy's lifetime of impact lies ahead for certain, and wish her the very best in the next phase.

We Are !

Rob Cooper, Penn State Baseball Head Coach

I have had the opportunity to work directly with Sandy at Tulane and Penn State. Her love for and commitment to student-athletes is something that truly sets her apart from others in college athletics. She has always been an advocate for student-athletes, coaches, and the impact athletics can make on a university. Thank you, Sandy.

Katie Schumacher-Cawley, Penn State Women's Volleyball Head Coach

I want to wish Sandy the very best in her retirement. I've really enjoyed getting to know her over the past 4 years and loved seeing her supporting the volleyball team in Rec Hall! I am forever grateful for her believing in me and giving me the opportunity to lead the Women's Volleyball program. She always brought a positive spirit to Penn State. I am happy she has this opportunity to retire and get some time for herself and family.

Jeff Tambroni, Penn State Men's Lacrosse Head Coach

I want to give a sincere congratulations to Sandy on her retirement from Penn State. Sandy is an authentic and compassionate mentor and leader, and she will be missed in Happy Valley. On behalf of the Penn State men's lacrosse program, thank you and good luck with your next endeavor.

Jeff Kampersal, Penn State Women's Hockey Head Coach

Thank you Sandy for your energy, passion and vision. Thank you for supporting and caring about our student-athletes on the ice and in the classroom. Thank you for being a role model we all admire and leading the way during these challenging times. We Are Grateful.



What They're Saying About Sandy Barbour

Mark Pavlik, Penn State Men's Volleyball Head Coach

Sandy has been nothing but a champion for men's volleyball. She understands the role of a broad-based athletic department and she made sure that we all knew that it was something near and dear to her.

On a personal note, I feel like I'm losing a friend who I don't get a chance to see after this summer. How she has always treated my family - Heather, Jackson - will always be treasured.

Congratulations on your retirement, Sandy, and thank you for being a champion of our men's volleyball program.

Tim Murphy, Penn State Swimming & Diving Head Coach

It has been an honor to work for Sandy, and we appreciate all her efforts on behalf of Intercollegiate Athletics. We especially her support of the women's and men's swimming and diving teams along with our Olympic sports. We wish Sandy all the best.

Missy Doherty, Penn State Women's Lacrosse Head Coach

The women's lacrosse program would like to offer our congratulations to Sandy on her retirement. As a woman pioneer in athletic administration, it was a great honor to compete under her leadership. We will always be grateful for her care and love for our student-athletes in some of the most difficult circumstances. Thank you so much Sandy for guiding our department for the last eight years and continuing to build Penn State into one of the premier athletics departments in the country!

Cael Sanderson, Penn State Wrestling Head Coach

The Penn State Wrestling program would like to thank Sandy for all her efforts in leading our athletic department. She had a passion for our student-athletes, and watching them succeed in competition and in the classroom. We wish her the best as she begins this new chapter.

John Gondak, Penn State Track & Field Head Coach

I have had the honor of working with Sandy during her entire tenure at Penn State. She has been an amazing athletic director for Penn State and a great supporter of our program. With her belief in our program, we have won multiple Big Ten Championships and have had multiple NCAA Champions. She has helped raise the bar at Penn State and we wish her well in retirement. She will be missed.

Dr. Eric J. Barron, Penn State President

We are incredibly grateful for Sandy's leadership and dedication to Penn State's athletics program, student-athletes, coaches and staff, and fans across the commonwealth and beyond. It's been an honor to work with her. Through her forward thinking, competitive spirit, and passion for people and sports, Sandy has built a collegiate model to aspire to and has helped the Nittany Lions thrive as one of the nation's most successful athletics departments. Above all, her commitment to supporting our student-athletes is commendable and will have a lasting impact on their lives both on and off the field.

Lynn Holleran, Penn State Deputy Athletics Director

First, congratulations to Sandy on her retirement. I am personally so happy for her and excited for what lies ahead! Sandy has been a mentor and friend for close to 36 years and I am forever grateful to her for her advice, guidance, leadership and, most importantly, friendship. It was almost 30 years ago a younger Sandy left a note for a very inexperienced and naïve me as she left Northwestern University for Tulane that said "Over the long haul we will have an impact and make a difference in many people's lives." Oh, how true that has been over her 40-plus year career. Making a difference in student-athletes' lives has been her "why" for 40 years and being a mentor, trailblazer and unbelievable leader for women and men alike in college athletics has been the fuel that fills her bucket. You have left your mark on college athletics and made a difference in people's lives Sandy Barbour, and I am forever grateful to have been one of the lives impacted and a small part of your magic Thank you.



What They're Saying About Sandy Barbour

Scott Sidwell, Penn State Deputy Athletics Director

Congratulations to Sandy on a tremendous career in intercollegiate athletics. I am honored to have worked with her the past three years and have known her as a friend for over 30. She has been a leader in our industry for over four decades with a track record of tremendous broad-based success at each institution she has represented. Her relentless pursuit of doing things the right way has served countless students along the way. Penn State is well positioned for continuing the culture of all-encompassing success, academically and athletically, while competing for championships. She truly embodies creating a lifetime of impact because of who she is and her passion in all she has accomplished.

Kevin White, Former Duke and Notre Dame Athletics Director

Sandy Barbour has long been truly the brightest individual within college athletics, and it's not even close! To be sure, Sandy has institutionalized the description of a 'natural leader,' who happens to drip with integrity, coupled with unqualified passion, while seriously empowering everyone within her immediate zip code. Sandy is a supreme 'rockstar,' who has been simply peerless, since like when Jesus was in junior high!

Kevin Warren, Big Ten Commissioner

Sandy is a trailblazer and visionary leader in college athletics who has profoundly impacted the lives of student-athletes, coaches, and staff for more than four decades. Her intuitive spirit and steady guidance of Penn State athletics for the past eight years has significantly impacted the department's increased academic and athletic successes. The Big Ten Conference has been blessed by Sandy's partnership and wise counsel, and we look forward to celebrating her extraordinary career as she transitions to a well-deserved retirement.

Patti Phillips, Women Leader's in College Sports CEO

Best in Class. High Integrity. World class leadership. These are all phrases that describe Sandy Barbour and her extraordinary career in collegiate sports. And her impact transcends the world of sports. Sandy is a trailblazer and an example of the power of women's leadership, especially at the Power 5 level where so few women have had opportunities to lead. She is consistently named one of the most powerful women in sports, and yet is always accessible to support and mentor others, especially women. Her legacy is embodied in our organization and in every person she has ever interacted with. We stand on Sandy's shoulders and celebrate all she has accomplished!

Gene Smith, Ohio State Athletics Director

I am extremely happy for Sandy. She is an icon in higher education and intercollegiate athletics. Her impact at all of her stops has been significant on student-athletes, coaches and the institutions she has served. Sandy has been a trailblazer for women who want to be leaders in intercollegiate athletics. She set an exceptional example of leadership and I am sure it has inspired others to follow her path. She is a great friend and colleague. I will miss her continued sage advice.

Heather Lyke, Pittsburgh Athletics Director

My heartfelt congratulations to Sandy Barbour on her extraordinary and impactful career. Sandy is a respected thought leader who our industry will deeply miss. She led athletic departments with vision, class, integrity and a deep appreciation for the student-athlete experience. Sandy's influence has been so significant—for the many of us who have long admired her as well as for those who have been so fortunate to work closely with her. Her commitment to helping others in our profession, especially women, through the Women Leaders in College Sports organization has been profound. We are eternally grateful and wish her the very best.

Jim Phillips, Ph.D., ACC Commissioner and Former Northwestern AD

Sandy is an incredible administrator who has been a trailblazer and transformational leader during her more than 40-year career in college athletics. Beyond what she's accomplished professionally, Sandy is an even better person who leads with kindness and integrity. Having worked directly with Sandy during our time together at the University of Notre Dame and as Athletic Directors in the Big Ten, I know firsthand what tremendous and consistent leadership she provides. Sandy will leave an amazing legacy in college athletics and this profession is better because of her dedication. On behalf of Laura and our five children, we congratulate and wish her nothing but the best in her upcoming retirement!



What They're Saying About Sandy Barbour

Danette Leighton, Women's Sports Foundation CEO

Sandy is one of the most admired executives in college athletics with a legacy of advocating for the wellbeing of student-athletes, establishing a positive culture, and developing the next generation of leaders. And as one of the few women to serve as a Division I Power 5 Athletics Director, Sandy has made a tremendous impact on the careers of many leaders today who count her as a mentor and role model for what is possible. Her voice and influence will be greatly missed. It is now incumbent on all of us to build on her legacy and continue to create a pipeline for strong female leadership in sports.

Charmelle Green, University of Utah Deputy AD & Former Penn State Senior Associate AD/SWA

Congratulations to Sandy Barbour on the announcement of her retirement!

I've had the great pleasure of knowing Sandy for nearly half of her career in college athletics, and over those years I grew to admire her courage, strength, and integrity that she demonstrated especially when tackling some of college athletics most challenging issues. I am also grateful for Sandy's tremendous leadership, mentoring and the impact that she's had on my career over the years. She's had a tremendous influence on me and many other women—and men—in the industry, and for that I am truly thankful.

Thank you Sandy for fighting the good fight, and for being a beacon of hope for all who aspire to be great leaders in college athletics.

