



Staff

Head Coach Charli Turner Thorne

Charli Turner Thorne always knew this day would come. Even when her first four Arizona State women's basketball teams had losing records. Even when the only postseason letters ASU knew were NIT. Even when there was nothing to hold onto but belief itself.

And now where the Sun Devils are, in the Elite Eight for the first time in school history....

"We took the next step officially today," Turner Thorne said.

East Valley Tribune Columnist Scott Bordow, March 25, 2007

And what a step it was. Almost 11 years after taking over as head coach of the Arizona State women's basketball program, Charli Turner Thorne had ASU one win away from its first ever trip to the Final Four. It seemed like a world away from her first season in 1996 when she was taking over a squad which had only eight scholarship players ready to suit up for the season, had not won more than eight games in three years and had played in only one NCAA Tournament Game in 13 years.

"A major part of me says, 'I know how to do this,' and I see all of the long-term potential here," said Turner Thorne during her first year in Tempe. "This program should be a top-20 program. With a few solid years of recruiting we will be back in business."

Fast forward to the present day and one can see that Turner Thorne, who enters her 12th season as ASU's head coach, was anything but kidding when she said ASU women's basketball could be one of the top programs in the country. With a determination and loyalty almost unparalleled, Turner Thorne has turned ASU into a Pac-10 Conference and national contender.

"The record of success Charli Turner Thorne's student-athletes



Charli Turner Thorne with her husband, Will, and sons, Liam (6), Quinn (3), and Conor (8).

have established on the court, in the classroom and in the community is one in which Arizona State University takes a great deal of pride," said ASU Vice President for University Athletics Lisa Love last April when she announced a contract extension for Turner Thorne through the year 2012. "Under Charli's guidance the women's basketball program has ascended to heights never before reached prior to her arrival.

We are committed to bringing National Championships to Arizona State and with Charli at the helm, we are confident that is precisely where the Sun Devils are headed. Not only has she constructed an outstanding competitive foundation,

she has proven her ability to elevate it."

Under Turner Thorne's guidance, the Sun Devils are currently in the midst of a school record eight consecutive postseason appearances, which includes invites to the NCAA Tournament five times in the last seven years. During that span, the Sun Devils have twice claimed Pac-10 Conference supremacy, winning their first Pac-10 title in 2001 and the inaugural Pac-10 Tournament championship in 2002. Three years ago, Turner Thorne had the Sun Devils in the Sweet Sixteen of the NCAA Tournament for the first time in more than 20 years. Last season, Turner Thorne led ASU to its best season in program history as the Sun Devils set school records for most wins (31), most Pac-10 wins (16) and most road wins (10) while concluding the campaign with the first the school's first ever appearance in the Elite Eight of the NCAA Tournament.

"I've always known that the opportunity at ASU is tremendous, and the potential for this program to be a perennial top 10 team is unquestionable," said Turner Thorne, who over the summer served as an assistant coach on the gold-medal winning USA Basketball U21 World Championship Team. "We've built a winning program and established a championship tradition here at ASU. People across the country know that Arizona State women's basketball has become one of the premier women's sports programs, and that is something that we have worked hard to build and take a lot of pride in."

But as anyone who has spent any time around Turner Thorne knows, she has no intention of allowing her program to sit back and bask in its recent success.

"A lot of people will tell you that maintaining a program is harder than building one, and we're finding that out," Turner Thorne said. "We've established a winning tradition, and now our challenge is to consistently win Pac-10 Championships and

"We've established a winning tradition, and now our challenge is to consistently win Pac-10 Championships and take the next step in the NCAA Tournament."



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— Charli Turner Thorne



Head Coach Charli Turner Thorne



take the next step in the NCAA Tournament. We've still got building to do in the sense that we haven't gotten to the NCAA Final Four yet, and we haven't won a national championship. The next step for this program is a Final Four berth. For us right now, it's about maintaining the championship level within our conference and taking the next step to a national championship level."

And as ASU fans have witnessed, Turner Thorne, who holds a 203-134 record in 11 seasons at Arizona State, only makes promises she intends to keep.

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When she came to Tempe 11 years ago, Turner Thorne told Sun Devil fans that ASU could be one of the premier women's basketball programs in the country.

If the last few seasons are any indication, the Sun Devil program has embraced Turner Thorne's expectations and is ready to take that next step toward making it to the Final Four.

Since 2004-05, ASU is 80-22 (.784) while its 56 wins the last two seasons are the most of any Pac-10 school. Last season, the Sun Devils concluded the season ranked No. 8 in the final ESPN/USA Today coaches' poll and No. 10 in the final Associated Press poll, which were their highest final rankings in each of the respective polls.

Two seasons ago, ASU tied its (then) school record with 25 wins, set the single-season school record for consecutive wins (10) and went undefeated at home for the first time ever (15-0).

In 2004-05, the Sun Devils turned in a 24-10 overall record, one victory shy of the school record, and earned a bid to the NCAA Tournament for a school-record sixth consecutive postseason appearance. The Sun Devils advanced all the way to the Sweet Sixteen, which was played at Wells Fargo Arena. The team's 12-6 mark in the Pac-10 tied a (then) school record for most conference wins in a season.

Arizona State finished the home half of its schedule with at least 12 wins for the fourth straight season. Included among those victories was a dramatic 61-50 win at Wells Fargo Arena over national power Connecticut. The UConn game drew the largest crowd in school history at Wells Fargo Arena, with 8,927 fans in attendance.

The 2003-04 season was another successful step in the building of the program, as the team went 17-12 and earned a berth in the WNIT for the second straight year. The year saw the Sun Devils earn a 13-1 home mark for the third straight season, including a win over then seventh-ranked Stanford.

In 2002-03, Turner Thorne led a very young team to a 16-14



record for ASU's fourth consecutive winning season despite having her top returning player, Betsy Boardman, go down in the preseason with a season-ending knee injury. With a starting lineup featuring three true freshmen and two sophomores and a roster with just two players who had been in the program more than one year, Turner Thorne and the Sun Devils upset three ranked opponents, won the Wells Fargo Holiday Classic, tied the school record for home wins with a 13-2 mark and earned a postseason bid for a school-record fourth consecutive season, advancing to the second round of the Women's National Invitational.

Turner Thorne's 2001-02 Sun Devils turned in one of the most successful campaigns in school history, notching a 25-9 record to tie the school record for wins in a single season. The team was ranked in the national polls in the preseason for the first time in 19 years and

THE TURNER THORNE FILE

Winningest Coach in ASU Women's Basketball History and No. 5 in the Pac-10 in career Wins

NCAA Tournament in 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006 & 2007

Women's NIT in 2000, '03 & '04

- In 2007 led ASU to its best season in program history as the Sun Devils set school records for most wins (31), Pac-10 wins (16) and road wins (10). The season was capped off by ASU's first ever appearance in the Elite Eight of the NCAA Tournament.*

- In 2005 led the Sun Devils to their first NCAA Sweet Sixteen appearance in 22 years.*

- Guided ASU to a share of the Pac-10 title in 2001 and the Pac-10 Tournament title in 2002 (the first league championships in school history).*

- Led her 2001-02 team to a 25-9 record, tying the (then) ASU record for wins in a single season.*

- 2001 Pac-10 and two-time WBCA District VIII Coach of the Year (2001 & 2006).*

- Is currently on the Women's Basketball Coaches Association's Board of Directors.*

- 2000 YWCA Tribute to Women Sports Leader Award and 2001 Students Against Discrimination and Racism award winner.*

- 2002 Athletes International Ministries Female Coach of the Year.*

- Served as an assistant coach on the 2007 USA Basketball U21 World Championship Team which won the gold medal at the FIBA U21 World Championship in Moscow.*

- Led NAU to consecutive winning seasons in 1994-95 and 1995-96, the first coach in school history to accomplish that feat.*

- Lettered four years at Stanford, three under Tara VanDerveer.*

- Graduated from Stanford in 1988 with a bachelor's degree in psychology.*

- Received her master's degree in education from Washington in 1990.*

Turner Thorne's Coaching Career

| Year | School | Overall Record | Conf. Record | Highlights |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|---|
| 2006-07 | Arizona State | 31-5 | 16-2 | School record 31 wins and ASU's first ever Elite Eight appearance |
| 2005-06 | Arizona State | 25-7 | 14-4 | Fourth NCAA appearance, school record 10-game win streak |
| 2004-05 | Arizona State | 24-10 | 12-6 | Advanced to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament |
| 2003-04 | Arizona State | 17-12 | 11-7 | WNIT, ASU's school-record fifth postseason bid |
| 2002-03 | Arizona State | 16-14 | 7-11 | Advanced to the second round of the WNIT |
| 2001-02 | Arizona State | 25-9 | 12-6 | Pac-10 Tournament Title; NCAA Second Round; Tied school record for wins in a season |
| 2000-01 | Arizona State | 20-11 | 12-6 | First ever Pac-10 title, NCAA Tournament bid |
| 1999-00 | Arizona State | 14-15 | 7-11 | WNIT bid, ASU's first postseason invite since 1992 |
| 1998-99 | Arizona State | 12-15 | 6-12 | Tied for 6th Pac-10; Best league finish since 1993 |
| 1997-98 | Arizona State | 10-17 | 6-12 | 1st double-digit wins since 1992-93 |
| 1996-97 | Arizona State | 9-19 | 3-15 | Most wins in four years |
| ASU Totals (11 seasons) | | 203-134 | 106-92 | |
| 1995-96 | Northern Arizona | 14-13 | 6-8 | 4th Big Sky; Second straight winning season |
| 1994-95 | Northern Arizona | 14-12 | 6-8 | 5th Big Sky; 1st NAU winning season in seven years |
| 1993-94 | Northern Arizona | 12-15 | 6-8 | 4th Big Sky |
| NAU Totals (3 seasons) | | 40-40 | 18-24 | |
| Career Totals (13 seasons) | | 243-174 | 124-116 | |

Head Coach Charli Turner Thorne

opened the year by winning both the Paradise Jam in the U.S. Virgin Islands and the ASU Holiday Classic in Tempe.

As the 2001-02 conference season started, ASU set out to defend its Pac-10 title, turning in its biggest win over intrastate rival Arizona in over 20 years and the team's first win at Oregon's McArthur Court in nine tries. The Sun Devils matched their school record for conference wins with a 12-6 mark and finished in a tie for second in the league standings. Next up was the inaugural Pac-10 Conference Tournament in Eugene, Ore. The Sun Devils made the first event an exciting one, coming from behind in all three games to win the tournament and earn the Pac-10's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. ASU opened tournament play with Arizona and rallied from a 10-point second-half deficit to down the Wildcats 66-58. Next up were the host Oregon Ducks who the Sun Devils dispatched 64-58 to the dismay of the hometown fans at McArthur Court.

In the championship game of the Pac-10 Tournament, Arizona State matched up with the second-ranked Stanford Cardinal, who had won the Pac-10 regular-season title with a perfect 18-0 record and were riding a 22-game winning streak. ASU played Stanford close in the first half but fell behind 40-31 with just over 18 minutes to play in the game. Turner Thorne and the Sun Devils were not quite ready to fold, though, and turned that deficit into a lead six minutes later, an advantage they would not relinquish en route to the 70-63 upset of the No. 2 Cardinal and the Pac-10 Tournament title.

With the Pac-10's automatic NCAA bid in hand, Arizona State's "comeback kids" traveled to Nashville, Tenn., where they once again rallied from a deficit to down highly-touted Wisconsin in the first round to win ASU's first postseason game since 1983 before falling to fourth-ranked Vanderbilt in the second round to end the stellar 2001-02 campaign.

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Turner Thorne and the Sun Devils first vaulted into the national spotlight in 2000-01, capturing the country's attention with a near upset of the second-ranked Tennessee Lady Vols in the first ever outdoor women's basketball game, the AstraZeneca Hoops for the Cure Classic, which raised over \$10,000 for breast cancer research, treatment and awareness in the Valley. ASU notched a school-record 12 Pac-10 victories to win the school's first Pac-10 Conference basketball title, defeating perennial conference powers Oregon and Arizona for the first time in Turner Thorne's tenure, including two wins over the Wildcats to snap a 14-game losing streak to the team's intrastate rival.

With a 20-11 record, the team's best in nine years, the Sun Devils broke into the national rankings for the first time in nine years and made their first return to the NCAA Tournament, earning an invitation to the Mideast Region and a first-round matchup with 18th-ranked LSU. And all of the successes on the court were wrapped around the birth of Turner Thorne's second son, Liam, who arrived less than an hour after the Sun Devils learned of their NCAA Tournament bid on Selection Sunday, March 11, 2001. That berth followed by a birth put Turner Thorne herself in the national spotlight with appearances in



Charli Turner Thorne thanks the Sun Devil fans following ASU's 67-49 win over Bowling Green in last year's NCAA Regional Semifinals. The victory propelled ASU to its first ever appearance in the Elite Eight.

USA Today and on ABC's "Good Morning America."

While ASU earned its return to NCAA play in 2001, indications that March Madness was just around the corner were plentiful during the previous season. The Sun Devils made their first foray into postseason play since 1992, earning a bid to play in the 2000 Women's National Invitation Tournament. ASU's 14-14 regular-season record and seven conference wins were the best for the team in seven years.

Turner Thorne's undying commitment to her program was obvious to anyone who followed the team in 1998-99. The feisty and always intense Sun Devil mentor did not miss a beat, despite giving birth to her first child at the height of Pac-10 competition. Her first son, Conor, arrived on Feb. 9, 1999, his birth date sandwiched between two overtime games.

Through it all, Turner Thorne kept Arizona State on track and in the thick of things, an amazing feat in itself. The Sun Devils notched double figures in wins for the second consecutive season and finished tied for sixth in the Pac-10 (6-12), their highest conference finish in six years. The final two weeks of the regular season were highlighted by near-upsets of two top 20 teams.

In fact, the Turner Thorne-led Sun Devils posted wins over NCAA Tournament participant St. Joseph's and WNIT team Washington. ASU played two other NCAA qualifiers, Arizona and Texas, within nine points. The season capped off another important accomplishment as she led her squad to back-to-back double-digit win seasons, the first time an ASU coach had done so in six years.

During her second season in 1997-98, Turner Thorne took the fast-paced rebuilding of the ASU women's program to new heights. The team tied for seventh in the Pac-10 Conference and won six conference games for the first time in five years. The Sun Devils also achieved their most overall wins since 1992-93, a mark that has been bettered in each of the last four seasons.

Turner Thorne's drive to return the program to prominence was evidenced strongly by the squad's 77-76 upset of then-undefeated and seventh-ranked Washington on January 8, 1998. The victory was one of the biggest upsets in ASU women's basketball history and marked an important milestone.

In just her first season in Tempe, Turner Thorne began laying the critical foundation for ASU's future successes, guiding ASU to its most victories in four years and moved out of last in the Pac-10 standings.

Turner Thorne hangs her hat on pressure defense and up-tempo basketball, a philosophy that continues to pay dividends for the Sun Devils.

"We try to take teams out of their comfort zone, frazzle them if you will," she says. "We are going to create offense with our defense. We go into to every game with a blue-collar persona. We will outwork you — win or lose.

"Defense, along with our team chemistry, has been the biggest reasons for our success. I've coached enough and watched the great programs enough to know that you don't get to the NCAA Tournament unless you're a great rebounding team and a great defensive team. While we love offense and want to score a lot of points, we will always have a major emphasis on being the best defensive team in the Pac-10 Conference, if not the country."

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Turner Thorne's initial head coaching stop appeared precarious at first glance. Before she arrived in Flagstaff, Northern Arizona had posted one winning season in 19 years and



This past summer Charli Turner Thorne and Furman University head coach Sam Dixon (right) served as assistant coaches the on the gold-medal winning USA Basketball U21 World Championship Team, which was led by Duke University head coach Joanne P. McCallie.

Head Coach Charli Turner Thorne



won just 28 percent of their games. Her immediate predecessor at NAU had gone 10-70 in three seasons.

But Turner Thorne breathed life into the program, leading the Lumberjacks to a 40-40 mark in her three seasons in Flagstaff, including a 14-13 mark and a fourth-place finish in the Big Sky Conference in 1995-96. In the process, she became the first coach in NAU history to lead the Lumberjacks to back-to-back winning seasons. In 1994-95, NAU went 14-12, the school's first winning season in nine years. Turner Thorne's Lumberjacks also beat the Sun Devils in 1994-95 and 1995-96. NAU had defeated ASU just twice in the 17 previous meetings.

But reviving programs was nothing new to Turner Thorne. Prior to her first head coaching stint, she was an assistant at Santa Clara University where she honed her pressure defense and served as recruiting coordinator for three seasons.

"Things were starting to fall into place when I got to Santa Clara," she says. "But our pressure defense was a cornerstone that helped us turn the corner."

In 1990-91, her initial season as an assistant, she helped the Broncos orchestrate one of the biggest turnarounds in women's basketball history. SCU, 9-17 the year before, went 28-3, won the West Coast Conference title and won the National Women's Invitation Tournament. Why the turnaround? At one point in the season, the Broncos were ranked as high as seventh in the country in scoring defense, eventually winding up 11th.

In 1991-92, the Broncos went 21-10 and advanced to the NCAA Tournament for the first time. Santa Clara upset California in the first round before falling to Texas Tech. In 1992-93, Turner Thorne's last year with the Broncos, SCU won its third straight conference crown.

Turner Thorne is no stranger to the Pacific-10 Conference. She played four years at Stanford University (1984-88) and served as a graduate assistant for two years at the University of Washington (1988-90).

"I worked with the guards at Washington and performed a lot of your typical GA duties," she said. "But I wasn't afraid to put my two cents in. I guess I've always been someone who will do as much as you allow me to do."

During Turner Thorne's stint at Washington, where she earned her master's degree in education in 1990, the Huskies advanced to the NCAA Tournament both seasons. In 1988-89, UW went 23-10



and beat Hawaii in the first round of the NCAA Tournament before bowing out to Stephen F. Austin. The following season was the best in Husky annals. UW went 28-3 and 17-1 in the Pac-10, sharing the conference crown with Stanford. The Huskies snagged the top seed in the NCAA Midwest Regional and advanced to the Elite Eight before falling to eventual national runner-up Auburn.

"Coach (Chris) Gobrecht and her staff were wonderful to work with," she says. "It was their influence that helped me truly believe in a unique style of pressure defense."

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A four-year letterwinner at Stanford, Turner Thorne was co-captain of the 1987-88 Cardinal squad that advanced to the NCAA Sweet Sixteen. The Cardinal went to the Sweet Sixteen again the following year, then, after sharing the Pac-10 title with Turner Thorne's Huskies, won its first national title in 1990.

"I learned an incredible amount in my four years at Stanford. We accomplished a great deal," she says.

And Turner Thorne was fortunate enough to play for three of her four seasons under the one of the nation's best in VanDerveer, who was inducted in the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in 2002.

Turner Thorne was twice voted Most Inspirational Player by her Cardinal teammates and was a Pac-10 All-Academic selection. She won Stanford's H-Block Award in 1988, awarded to the senior female athlete with the highest grade point average. She graduated in 1988 with a degree in psychology. She also studied at Oxford University for a semester during her junior year.

A native of southern California, Turner Thorne graduated from Bishop Alemany High School in Mission Hills in 1984. She was an all-conference and all-state selection as well as conference MVP her senior year.

Now Turner Thorne looks to utilize the lessons she's learned as a player and coach to maintaining the championship tradition she has instilled in her program at ASU.

"I have a very strong sense in regard to my basketball philosophy, and my goal is to recruit players that buy into it and who want to win a national championship," she said. "I'm very excited about what we have accomplished and know that the potential for our future successes is unlimited. It's not just the head coach — it's everyone involved with the program, right down to the managers."

**Turner Thorne's
Sun Devils pride
themselves on their
tough pressure
defense and
up-tempo basketball.
ASU has led the
Pac-10 in at least one
defensive category
in each of the last
nine years.**



Associate Head Coach Meg Sanders



Leaving a great situation is never easy, but for Meg Sanders who came to Arizona State from Northern Arizona as the all-time winningest coach in Lumberjack history, the opportunity in Tempe was too much to turn down.

Sanders enters her fifth season as ASU's associate head coach after spending the previous 10 years at NAU. She served as an assistant coach for then head coach Charli Turner Thorne for three years (1993-96) and then took over for Turner Thorne at the helm for the next seven seasons (1997-2003).

In her seven seasons as head coach at NAU, Sanders turned in a 107-92 record and led the Lumberjacks to three of the four best seasons in the program's history (22-6 in 1998, 17-11 in 1996-97 and 17-11 in 2001-02). In 1997-98, she became the first coach to lead NAU to a 20-win season, the first to win a

conference title, the first to be named Big Sky Conference Coach of the Year and the first to defeat the University of Montana.

"While my family and I loved Flagstaff and my experience at NAU was terrific, it was time for a new and exciting challenge," Sanders said. "Charli is a person whom I respect, trust and enjoy working with. Under her direction the women's basketball program is on track to compete for a national championship. ASU's staff, resources and facilities are second to none. It is a special place and I want to be part of its incredible future. The players here are highly committed to realizing their full potential. When I added everything together and then factored in the fantastic Sun Devil fans, I knew ASU was THE place to be."

For Sanders, the desire to work with young people was instilled in her from a young age. Raised by two deaf parents, she knew early on that she wanted to be involved in teaching and coaching.

"Growing up, my sister and I helped our parents communicate with the hearing world," Sanders explained. "This was years before computers, pagers and relay services were available. My early interactions with the deaf community inspired the desire to become a teacher. As my focus shifted to athletics, my dream evolved into becoming a teacher and a coach at a school for the deaf."

"Good coaching is good teaching. I view myself as an educator, and it just happens to be in basketball. I enjoy the competition and striving for excellence through sports, and growing up I looked to coaches as positive role models."

Sanders attended Poly High School in Riverside, Calif., where she was a teammate of eventual Hall of Famer Cheryl Miller. She played at Cal State Fullerton for current Yale Head Coach Chris Gobrecht, earning a bachelor's degree in physical education in 1985.

While at Cal State Fullerton, Sanders encountered another sport that would become a big part of her life: team handball. When the Summer Olympic Games came to Los Angeles in 1984, Fullerton was the site of the team handball venue. Sanders had a summer job working at the Olympics and decided that team handball was a sport she would like to try.

"I had never heard of handball but it was fast and physical and very similar to basketball," she said. "After completing my eligibility, I wanted to keep in shape and thought it would be fun to try something new. I played in a club tournament and then was contacted by the national team coach."

Sanders tried out for the U.S. Olympic Festival and was invited to play on the U.S. National Handball Team. She moved to the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo., to train and represent the United States at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, South Korea. She enjoyed her first national coaching experience as handball team coach for the West squad at the 1991 U.S. Olympic Festival. Sanders also remained involved in teaching and coaching by working at the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind and volunteering at both Colorado College and the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Sanders began her basketball coaching career as an assistant at Fresno State (1989-1993), working for Bob Spencer, the first women's coach to win 500 games. During her first year at Fresno State, the 1989-90 Bulldogs reached the National Women's Invitation Tournament. Sanders earned her master's degree in physical education administration from Fresno State in 1991.

The friendship and partnership between Sanders and Turner Thorne had begun on the court when Sanders was playing at Cal State Fullerton and Turner Thorne was playing at Stanford in the days of the Western Collegiate Athletic Association (the precursor of the Pac-10 Conference). The pair worked basketball camps together, and a few years later in 1993 when Turner Thorne was named head coach at NAU, Sanders was asked by Turner Thorne to join her staff.

"I've always had a tremendous amount of respect for the type of leader that Charli is, and it is very difficult to say no to Charli Turner Thorne," Sanders said. "She brings out the best in everyone around her."

At NAU, Turner Thorne and Sanders inherited a program that had turned in a 10-70 record the previous three years, including a 2-24 record the season before, and had lost its last 39 Big Sky games. In their three seasons together, Turner Thorne, Sanders and the rest of the staff turned around the Lumberjack program and produced the team's first winning seasons in nine years and the first back-to-back winning seasons in the program's history.

Turner Thorne took the ASU job in the summer of 1996, and Sanders was elevated to head coach of the Lumberjacks. She picked up right where Turner Thorne had left off en route to becoming the winningest women's basketball coach in NAU history.

Sanders led Northern Arizona to the Big Sky Tournament every year of her tenure. Her Lumberjack squads were among the nation's best defensive teams, leading the Big Sky in blocked shots in each of her last three seasons and ranking among the nation's best teams in field goal percentage defense during that span. She also coached eight All-Big Sky Conference selections and 18 academic all-league honorees in her seven years at the helm.

When the opportunity to be reunited with Turner Thorne came up, Sanders accepted the position.

"Meg is the total package as a coach, and I was thrilled to have her join our staff," Turner Thorne said. "We want to get to the NCAA Final Four and win a national championship at ASU, and I think it is an incredible statement for a successful head coach at the Division I level to step down for a chance to be part of winning a national championship. Meg is the next piece in reaching our goals, and I know that we will all accomplish some amazing things together."

Sanders' experiences as a highly successful head coach have and will continue to serve the Sun Devils very well. With Sanders, ASU now has three coaches with head coaching experience as Joseph Anders spent six seasons as the head men's basketball coach at Sacramento State.

"When you are a head coach, you are accountable and responsible for all aspects of a program," Sanders said. "It is crucial to have assistant coaches who support and actively contribute to the mission of the team."

"Meg has one of the best basketball minds in the country and really studies the game, particularly on the offensive end of the floor," Turner Thorne said. "Meg is an exceptional teacher and is a perfect fit for the talented players we have in our program."

Sanders and her husband, Mark live in Tempe and have two children, Ryan (12) and Naomi (7).



The Sanders family: Naomi, Mark, Ryan and Meg

Associate Head Coach Joseph Anders

For Joseph Anders, very little has ever come to him without hard work.

Anders acquired that mentality early on, starting with sage wisdom from his grandfather who said that his father did Anders a great service by teaching him to work. It is that approach that has enabled Anders to encounter success at every stop he has made throughout his coaching career which has spanned more than 20 years. From his first coaching position working as a student assistant at his alma mater to his six-year run as head coach at Cal State Sacramento and on through the present where he is entering his seventh season at Arizona State, Anders has never forgotten the philosophy that brought him to this point.

"I think of myself as a throwback, subscribing to the adage that no one gives you anything," explains Anders. "It has given me a great sense of appreciation, knowing that I had to work hard to succeed. My grandfather always told me that I would always be able to do something honorable if I knew how to work hard."

At the same time he was acquiring the values that would shape the rest of his life, Anders was also developing an interest for the profession that had influenced him so much as a youth growing up in Newport, Ark.

"I knew early on that I wanted to be a coach. By the time I was in seventh grade, I knew I wanted to be involved with teaching and coaching," he says. "I grew up in a small town in Arkansas, and the people I admired were my teachers and coaches. They were the people who were looked up to in the community, the people involved in the development of the young people who eventually shaped our community."

A self-described "late bloomer" who did not earn a starting role in basketball until he was a high school senior, Anders began his collegiate career as a walk-on at Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, Ark. Aided by his one-of-a-kind work ethic, he started 22 of 30 games as a freshman and earned a scholarship. As a sophomore, he was named a team captain and earned all-conference honors before transferring to the University of Arkansas-Monticello for his final two collegiate seasons. A two-time all-conference selection, Anders says that he became a dedicated student-athlete while at Arkansas-Monticello.

"My education became even more important to me," he says. "My focus was on being a student and an athlete, and I was named to the dean's and president's lists while I was there."

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in physical education in 1980, Anders took his first coaching position at his alma mater, spending one season as a student assistant for his college coach and adviser Doug Barnes.

From there, Anders moved on to Wilmar (Ark.) High School where he was the assistant coach of the boys' team in 1982. He was then hired as a full-time teacher and became athletics director and head coach of the boys' and girls' basketball teams and track and field teams. While at Wilmar, Anders was named Arkansas Class B Coach of the Year, helped guide the boys' team to the 1982 state title and led the girls to a runner-up finish at the 1984 state tournament.

"I was able to enjoy a great deal of success in my first job because I coached some wonderful young people who wanted to be the best. I was able to be the visionary who made them believe they could be the best."

After three years at Wilmar, Anders had the opportunity to return to the collegiate ranks and spent one season as an assistant coach with the women's basketball program at the University of Arkansas. From Arkansas, he joined the men's basketball staff at Sacramento State University in 1985. After one season as an assistant he was promoted to interim head coach in December of 1986.

"At Arizona State, we have an over-abundance of quality people who will do whatever we can do to help young women grow and mature and become dynamic leaders in their academic areas."

— Joseph Anders

head coach on a permanent basis the following year. Anders spent six seasons as the head coach at Sacramento State, turning in a 75-86 record and guiding the program to the Division I ranks in 1991-92.

"You have to be willing to work hard to be in a position to have success," he says. "We had a group of wonderful young people who refused to be anything but successful. We had one of the best teams in the history of Sacramento State and were able to use that success to move to the Division I level. That was a great experience for me and my family. It gave us an opportunity to take something in its infant state and watch it to grow into something special."

After spending five seasons at Sacramento State, Anders served two seasons at Northern Arizona as a men's assistant coach (1992-94). It was there where he first encountered Charli Turner Thorne, who at the time was the head coach of the NAU women's team. During his tenure at NAU, the Lumberjacks posted back-to-back winning seasons for the first time in more than a decade.

"Charli and I became friends at NAU, and she was very instrumental in me going back to the women's game," Anders says. "Charli told me she thought I had qualities which would be a good addition to the women's basketball world and helped me secure a

position at Mississippi State."

Following his stint at NAU, Anders returned to the women's game, spending two years as an assistant at Mississippi State from (1994-96), four seasons at New Mexico State (1996-00) and one year at East Carolina before coming to ASU.

When Turner Thorne called about the opportunity to join her Sun Devil family, Anders says it was the culmination of something the two had talked about for quite a while.

"Charli and I had often talked and joked about it, so when the call came to come back together, it was a dream come true. It was a blessing for me at the time."

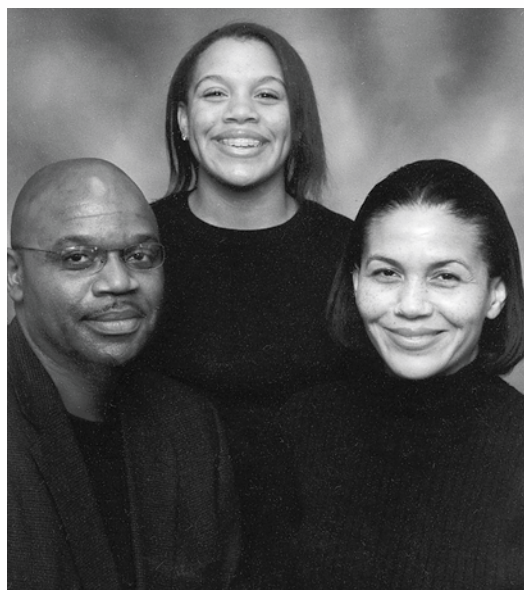
At ASU, Anders has been instrumental in helping Turner Thorne create the kind of atmosphere that offers student-athletes everything they need to be successful in basketball and in life.

"I have been involved in coaching for more than 20 years, and I have learned that there is one thing that makes the difference: the quality of the people," he says. "At Arizona State, we have an over-abundance of quality people who will do whatever we can do to help young women grow and mature and become dynamic leaders in their academic areas."

"Beyond the resources at ASU, there must be visionaries in place to use those resources and propel our young women into the positions that they will hold in the world."

According to Turner Thorne, Anders has already brought a lot to the Sun Devil program.

"Joseph is a great teacher and motivator. He's very enthusiastic and is a great communicator. He has been a head coach and really understands what it is all about. Joseph is committed to the overall development of our players, and he is a parent, so he brings that perspective as well. Joseph has also taken our recruiting to another level in terms of the organization, creativity, content and relationships he's built in a very short amount of time."



Joseph, his wife, Pamela (right), and daughter, Nicole (20), who is a junior on the ASU women's basketball team.



Assistant Coach Laura Hughes



Fourteen years ago, Arizona State assistant coach Laura Hughes was a college graduate making good money in her degree field. But life as a chemist wasn't exactly thrilling her.

"I was in a rut," Hughes said. "I didn't enjoy getting in my car every morning, battling the freeway traffic, working nine to five. It's like my life was going on with no real purpose. It was passing me by."

So when she heard Charli Turner Thorne had a graduate assistant opening at Northern Arizona, Hughes — who played two years under Turner Thorne at Santa Clara — shed her white lab coat and headed for Flagstaff.

"First I figured it was a great way to pay for college," Hughes says. "And then I remembered how much I missed basketball. When I graduated from Santa Clara, I really thought being away from the game was no big deal. But basketball is in my blood. That's why I took the job."

Hughes spent two years under Turner Thorne at NAU as a graduate assistant.

The 2007-08 season will be Hughes 11th as an assistant coach with the Arizona State women's basketball team and 12th with the program, after serving as the squad's graduate assistant in 1996-97.

"Laura is incredibly bright, efficient and organized," says Turner Thorne. "On the court, she was such a great player, and because she was a quick learner she has become a terrific teacher of the game. She's our surfer from San Diego whom we lured to the desert."

During Hughes' two years in Flagstaff, NAU posted back-to-back winning seasons for the first time in school history, while the Sun Devils have turned in some of the best basketball in school history, advancing to the postseason in each of the last seven years and winning back-to-back Pac-10 Conference titles (regular season in 2001 and tournament in 2002) and reaching the Sweet Sixteen in 2004-05.

"The first thing Charli did was step up recruiting," Hughes says. "But she also brings with her this attitude that you are going to win and the players believe that. In our mind, if you work extremely hard, it will pay off."

Hughes earned her master's degree in secondary education, with a concentration in biology, in May 1996.

The aforementioned chemist gig was at Choestech, a small biotech company in Hayward, Calif., outside San Jose. Hughes stayed there for a year and a half.

At Santa Clara, Hughes was a key member of the Broncos' remarkable two-year turnaround. The year before she arrived, the SCU went 9-17. Santa Clara went 28-3 in her first season with the team and won the National Women's Invitation Tournament, beating Indiana in the championship game. The Broncos advanced to the NAAs the next year, bowing out in the second round to Texas Tech.

"We had a well-respected coaching staff at Santa Clara," Hughes says. "The turnaround had a lot to do with Charli bringing in the pressure defense and instilling a different attitude in the players. She taught us to believe in ourselves as players."

Hughes, a two-year starter at power forward, averaged 15 points and seven rebounds a game. She shot 53.9 percent from the field in her two seasons as a Bronco, still a school record. She also holds the school record for single-season field goal percentage.

She started her collegiate career by attending Mira Costa College in Oceanside, Calif., for two years before heading to Santa Clara. She lettered in both basketball and track. She was selected conference MVP on two occasions and was the state's second-leading scorer as a senior. Hughes also cracked the California top 10 list in rebounding. She was a junior college state finalist in the shot put and discus as well.

A graduate of Orange Glen High School in San Diego, Calif., Hughes was a three-time all-conference basketball selection as a prepster. She was named league MVP and all-CIF as a senior. She was also a state finalist in the shot put and discus.

The San Diego native has teamed with Turner Thorne to produce winners at two schools. Hughes firmly believes this coaching staff can mold the Sun Devils into a national contender.

"The potential here is unlimited," she says. "At ASU you have great resources — in both academics and athletics — and the opportunities they present are endless."

According to Turner Thorne, although Hughes is the quietest member of the Arizona State coaching staff, she commands a lot of respect.

"Laura is extremely consistent and yet continues to grow as a coach. She has great rapport with our players, and, having played for me and coached with me for more than 10 years, she knows and has helped shape our coaching philosophy and basketball systems. Laura has really been able to take the lead with our team defense among the many things that she does. Laura is extremely effective as a teacher and is a positive role model within our program and the community."

"The potential here is unlimited. At ASU you have great resources, in both academics and athletics, and the opportunities they present are endless."

— Laura Hughes



Support Staff/Administration



Christina Wombacher
Director of Women's Basketball
Operations

Christina Wombacher enters her fourth year as Director of Women's Basketball Operations at Arizona State and her seventh year with the program after serving as the women's basketball administrative assistant for the previous three seasons.

A vital member of Charli Turner Thorne's staff, Wombacher is responsible for helping to implement marketing efforts while acting as a liaison with the local community, the university community and alumni in the promotion of Sun Devil women's basketball. She also coordinates team travel, Charli's Angels and the Hoop Devils Kids Club. Last season the ASU women's basketball team led the Pac-10 Conference and set a school record with an average of 3,502 fans per game.

Wombacher graduated from Boise State University in 2000 with a bachelor

of science in kinesiology with an emphasis in exercise science. She played basketball for two seasons at BSU and served as a graduate assistant with the program in her final semester.

The Arizona native transferred to Boise State from Yavapai College in Prescott where she played basketball for two seasons and earned her associate of arts degree in 1998.

Wombacher earned her master's degree in higher education at Arizona State in 2004 and aspires for a career in athletic administration. She and her husband, Michael, are the proud parents of a baby girl, Ella, born in May 2006.



The Wombacher family: Michael, Ella and Christina



Madelyn Becker
Administrative Assistant

Madelyn Becker joined the Arizona State women's basketball office in May 2007 after serving as an academic mentor and tutorial coordinator for seven years in ASU's Office of Student Athlete Development.

In her role with the Sun Devil program, Becker assists with all the daily operations in the office with emphasis on maintaining the recruiting base and assisting with marketing, special events and promotional activities.

A native of Douglas, Ariz., Becker holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Supply Chain Management from ASU. She and her husband of 21 years, Ron, and their daughter, Melissa (17), reside in Mesa.

ASU Staff



John Bieber
Equipment Manager



Don Bocchi
Senior Associate AD
Sports Operations



Jean Boyd
Associate AD



Mark Brand
Associate AD
Communications



Mike Chismar
Sr. Associate AD
Operations & Facilities



Lyla Clerry
Assistant AD
Compliance



Tyrone Figaro
Event Coordinator



Bill Kennedy
Associate AD



Prof. Myles Lynk
Faculty
Representative



Dawn Rogers
Senior Associate
AD/ Senior Woman
Administrator



Kelli Sampson
Assistant Ticket
Manager



Amy Schramm
Associate AD

Support Staff



Ashley Elliott
Graduate Assistant

Ashley Elliott enters her first year as a graduate assistant for ASU women's basketball. She assists the team in all aspects of the day-to-day operations.

Prior to coming to ASU, Elliott played four years at the University of Wyoming where she twice earned first-team All-Mountain West Conference honors in addition to being recognized with Kodak/WBCA All-America Honorable Mention notice her senior season. Elliott also played for the Uni-Neuchatel Basketball Club in Neuchatal, Switzerland following her collegiate career.

Elliott earned her Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from Wyoming in 2005 and is pursuing a master's degree at ASU in secondary education.



Karen Thies
Graduate Assistant

Karen Thies enters her first year as a graduate assistant for the ASU women's basketball team. She assists the team in all aspects of the day-to-day operations.

Prior to coming to ASU, Thies was a four-year starter at Fort Lewis College (one season, 2003-04) and the University of Nebraska-Omaha (three seasons, 2004-07). In her one season at Fort Lewis, Thies was named the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference Freshman of the Year. While at Nebraska-Omaha, she was named the North Central Conference Newcomer of the Year in 2005 and would go on to become a three-time All-NCC Conference selection in addition to being named the Women's College Basketball Association's Student-Athlete of the Year in 2007.

Thies earned her bachelor's degree in business marketing from Nebraska-Omaha in 2007 and is pursuing a master's degree in liberal studies at ASU.

Undergraduate Student Managers



Nicole Childers

Nicole Childers enters her third season as a student manager for women's basketball. In her role, Childers assists with coordinating the team's daily practices. A native of Mesa, Ariz., Childers attended Red Mountain High School where she was named the school's Athlete of the Year in 2005. At the time of her graduation, Childers was the school's all-time leading scorer in women's basketball.

Currently a junior, Childers is pursuing a degree in communications.



Chris Oyer

Chris Oyer is in his second season as an undergraduate student manager for the ASU women's basketball team. Among his many duties, Oyer assists with practice set-up, individual workouts, scout team coordination and film breakdown.

A Seattle native, Oyer played three years varsity on the football and soccer squads at O'Dea High School where he was a first-team All-Metro and All-Area punter (football) and first-team All-League midfielder (soccer).

Currently a junior at ASU, Oyer is pursuing his undergraduate degree in business.

Sun Devil Marketing



Sarah Pavelko

Sarah Pavelko was named a marketing specialist in May, 2006, after previously serving as a graduate assistant in the ASU marketing department. In her role, Pavelko implements and executes the marketing plan for the ASU women's basketball team.

Last season the ASU women's basketball team led the Pac-10 Conference and set a school record with an average of 3,502 fans per game.

Pavelko, who is currently pursuing her master's degree in higher education, came to ASU after earning her undergraduate degree in sport management from Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, N.C. The Chanhassen, Minn., native was a four-year letterwinner on the golf team at Gardner-Webb.



Sarah Yelenich

Sarah Yelenich is in her second year as a graduate assistant in the ASU marketing office. In her role Yelenich assists with marketing efforts for the ASU women's basketball team.

Yelenich came to ASU from Washington State where she earned her undergraduate degree in sport management in 2006. At Washington State, Yelenich worked as a student assistant in the WSU marketing department where she assisted with men's and women's basketball and baseball.

Yelenich is pursuing her graduate degree in higher education at ASU.