

Greetings to Coaches Wives

By Tracee Norris
President

I'd like to first begin by thanking everyone who helped to make Dallas a wonderful success: Carolyn Allen for putting together great programs, Sally Shannon and Julie Ayers for the great fun in the hospitality room (this pregnant momma really appreciated

the yummys), to Holly Shealy for organizing

our wonderful visit to Dallas Children's Hospital, Kelly Smith for organizing it all with the Dallas Hilton Anatole, to Grant and Donell Teaff for all their support

from the AFCA, and to all the other wonderful AFCWA board members who put in their hard work and dedication throughout the year to make sure everything runs smooth in January. Thank you ladies! I'd also like to thank Kathy Dudzinski for all her leadership and friendship. I know I have some big shoes to fill this next year.

For my first article, I thought it was important to talk about what the AFCWA means to me. To me, the AFCWA represents understanding, support, and friendship. All things we need in our lives. When my husband and I were first married there were no other friends or family in my life that understood what it was like to be married to a coach. They didn't understand the commitment my husband had to his job that caused him to work long hours, miss important events, or be gone from home a lot. I felt like I was constantly having him to defend him for doing something he loves and that he has the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the young men he works with. It wasn't until I joined the AFCWA that I found the acceptance and understanding I had been hoping for. Being able to talk to other wives and learn I wasn't "alone" in what I was experiencing was so reassuring. Even at my very first convention I got some great advice that I think of today about how it was important to be supportive



of my husband, but that it was just as equally important for me to be my own person and independent (thank you Debbie M. and Sue D.) That learning to fix the toilet or sink was something I could do rather than trying to wait for him to do it. Besides the fact it got done faster, it also gave me a great sense of confidence for doing it. The biggest lesson I learned though from the wonderful ladies of the

AFCWA was that I am not alone. That there is always someone who understands what it is I'm going through, whether it is dealing with my coach after being fired from a job or having to transition to a new school or town. There is someone who has been there, done that, or even in the process of doing it at the same time. I know this next season as I try to navigate my first football season with a baby that I can pick up the phone or send an email and another coach's wife will be there to support me, listen to me, and probably offer me some great advice.

That is what I hope for all of you wonderful wives. Even if you don't have the support and camaraderie from the wives on your own staff (which does happen), please know that myself and all the other great ladies of the AFCWA are here for you. We understand these chaotic and exciting lives we lead and we support you! Please don't hesitate to reach out to us when you need it. You can always get in touch with me or any board member or trustee by email at mail@afcwa.org.

I wish everyone a wonderful spring season and a relaxing summer holiday. Before you know it, football season will be here again! Be sure to keep up with AFCWA on Facebook (or join us if you haven't already). Facebook is a great way to keep up with your fellow wives or learn more about our mission or upcoming convention.

Have a great season and I look forward to seeing you all in San Antonio!

