

Nora Lynn Finch, Atlantic Coast Conference

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Photo: ACC

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t's difficult to encapsulate Nora Lynn Finch's career in one phrase. Even describing her path as a single career can be misleading. She has been a women's basketball coach (first at Wake Forest), an athletic director (at Peace College) and a mainstay in N.C. State's athletic administration before transitioning to the ACC in 2008. In that time, college sports has changed in innumerable ways. "When I started, the educational mission of athletics was paramount," Finch said. "Today, I think it's less clear. ... Today, our focus seems much more businesslike."

But through it all, Finch has been a builder of teams, from forging a program at Peace, a small private school in Raleigh, through shaping a department in a 31-year career at N.C. State, to integrating the ACC's newest school members into the conference's culture and traditions.

Nora Lynn Finch

Atlantic Coast Conference |
Senior Associate Commissioner,
Women's Basketball

Her path has included stints on national committees, as well. She chairs the competition committee within the NCAA's women's basketball oversight committee and recently spearheaded efforts to bring Division I rules closer to those of the WNBA. Along the way, she's learned the importance of facilitating communication among interests.

"The way you keep people engaged is to keep them informed and inspired," she said. And as an administrator, it has been what she calls her "mission" to help coaches succeed. "My goal was always to find out, 'Coach, what do you need? And how do we partner to get that?'" she said.

— *Preston Bounds*



- **Notable professional achievement:** Having been named No. 12 (along with Christine Grant) on the list of 50 Most Influential Women of the Century by the Orlando Sentinel in their Women of the 20th Century feature about American women in sports.
- **Biggest professional disappointment:** A decade of having N.C. State women's basketball games televised on a local channel crashed to an end when the producer was forced to end the relationship under the threat of his being ineligible to produce men's basketball games if he continued to produce women's games in the 1990s.
- **Best advice received:** No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care.
- **Causes supported:** The Kay Yow Cancer Fund, and the Pretty in Pink breast cancer foundation.
- **Woman in sports business I'd most like to meet:** Billie Jean King.
- **Most memorable sporting event attended:** Wimbledon.
- **If my colleagues were asked to describe me, they would say I:** Am energetic, passionate and friendly.