From elite female athletes to exceptional leaders
For all the places sport will take you
Welcome

Leadership. Teamwork. Perseverance. Discipline. Grit. Who knew, as children playing games in the schoolyard, that we were gaining attributes that would guide us through life?

Athletes have known it all along.

Research shows a direct correlation between girls’ participation in sport and greater achievement in higher education and employment – in fact, a majority of leading female executives first found success in athletics. Sport also nurtures acceptance by bringing people together across borders, cultures and belief systems. It can promote greater tolerance and understanding among individuals and communities.

By uniting the power of sport with the power of women leaders around the world, we believe the impact is increased exponentially. That’s why we are proud to launch the Women Athletes Business Network to help more elite women athletes become exceptional leaders as they retire from sport. By building a bridge between athletes and top women leaders, we can create a support network that will contribute to individual success, inspire the next generation, enrich communities and spur economies around the world.

At EY we have seen firsthand the power of workplace diversity, and we are committed to contributing to a sporting legacy of inclusion, excellence, integrity and respect. We believe that business itself is a team sport, and we strive to build a better working world by expanding opportunities for women leaders in all sectors. We have a long history of creating and convening networks, helping female entrepreneurs scale their companies and driving the global dialogue around the advancement of women.

We hope you will join us on this journey. Please visit www.ey.com/womenathletesnetwork for more information.

Beth Brooke, Global Vice Chair – Public Policy, EY
Jorge Menegassi, CEO, South America and Brazil, EY
Donna de Varona, Olympic champion and former President, Women’s Sports Foundation
Did you know?

- Brazil President Dilma Rousseff played volleyball.
- The first female head of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, was a member of the French national synchronized swimming team.
- Former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton played several sports, including basketball, soccer and softball.
- Former US National Security Adviser and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was a competitive figure skater and tennis player.
- PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi played cricket in India and later baseball in the US.
- Mondolēz International CEO Irene Rosenfeld was a four-sport athlete in high school and played basketball at Cornell University.
- DuPont CEO Ellen Kullman played college basketball at Tufts University.
- The co-founder of Marvell Technology Group, Weili Dai, played semi-professional basketball in China.
Did you know?

- London 2012 marked the first time in history that each of the 204 participating nations had female athletes competing in the Olympics, including, for the first time, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Brunei.¹
- Women made up 44% of Olympic competitors at London 2012 – the greatest show of gender equality in Olympic history. By comparison, in the 1908 Games men outnumbered women 53 to 1.²
- A survey of executive women found that 80% played sports growing up, and 69% said sports helped them develop leadership skills that contributed to their professional success.³
- Firms with the highest representation of women on their boards outperform those with the least.⁴
- A higher number of women in the workforce correlates with higher GDP growth.⁵
- By 2030, nearly a billion women will enter the economic mainstream. Called the “Third Billion” – the first and second are the populations of China and India – nearly 95% of these women are from emerging economies.⁶

² Ibid.
“Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand [and creates] hope where once there was only despair.”

Nelson Mandela
Making the connection

The collective leadership potential of elite women athletes who have retired from their sport is yet to be fully realized. With inherent confidence; high standards; and an ability to overcome obstacles, stay disciplined and work as a team, these women have tremendous value for businesses, governments and NGOs around the world.

Their transitions from the field or the gym to post-athletic success, however, can be daunting. Women athletes have told us that they often don’t know where to turn after the lights dim on their athletic career. Too often, they have achieved their biggest dreams at a very young age, with no idea what comes next. They crave guidance, connections and support to write their next chapter. They need role models to follow and mentors who have made similar journeys. We believe we can help.
“Forget China, India and the Internet: economic growth is driven by women.”

The Economist
Introducing the Women Athletes Business Network

Our areas of focus

*The leadership network.* We are building a powerful network of elite women athletes who are making an impact outside of their sport. We will connect these inspiring women with EY’s robust business network around the world. This network will be designed to share lessons learned from career transitions, mentor and open doors, create opportunities and inspire the next generation.

*Stories of inspiration.* We will highlight the success stories of elite women athletes who have made a positive impact outside of their sport and share how they made a successful post-sport transition into their chosen career. We will also show how sport has influenced some of today’s most powerful women worldwide.

*The impact of women’s advancement in sport and society.* To help guide this journey, we will commission new research to help us understand (1) the connections between sport and leadership and (2) the societal and economic impact that a woman’s access to and participation in sport can have on education, health and global economic development.
Our goal is to broaden the impact that elite women athletes – who are, by nature, high achievers, influential leaders and team players – can make on not only the next generation of women in sport but also on their communities and the world around them.

We hope you will be a part of it.

EY has a strong group of leaders participating in our program, including among others:

- **Adriana Behar**, *Olympian and Member, Brazil National Olympic Committee*
- **Deedee Corradini**, *President, International Women’s Forum, and former Mayor, Salt Lake City, Utah*
- **Donna de Varona**, *Olympian and former President, Women’s Sports Foundation*
- **Anita DeFrantz**, *Olympian, International Olympic Committee Member, and Chair of its Women and Sports Commission*
- **Nawal El Moutawakel**, *Olympian and Vice President, International Olympic Committee*

**Our criteria**

The Women Athletes Business Network will comprise:

- Women leaders, including retired elite women athletes who have taken what they learned in sport and transformed that into a successful professional career
- Current elite women athletes who are actively pursuing meaningful new careers
- Women who believe in the power of mentorship and want to help and inspire other women and girls to channel their strengths and potential

For more information or to sign up for the Network, visit www.ey.com/womenathletesnetwork.
EY’s commitment to women’s advancement

EY recognizes the power of women to spur business and economic growth around the world. Over the next decade, the potential impact of women on the global economy – as producers, entrepreneurs, employees and consumers – will be at least as significant as that of China and India. Yet there is a wide gap between potential and present-day reality.

Women’s access to boardroom seats is alarmingly slight, even in developed markets, and in many rapid-growth markets, women have few or no rights to
own property, little access to education, and stringent social and cultural restrictions against joining the labor force. While notable progress has been made toward gender equity, much more remains to be done to open the playing field for women’s equal participation in business, sport, society and the economy.

As a global organization of member firms with 175,000 people in more than 150 countries, we understand the critical business importance of gender equity. We have been recognized as a leader in fostering a global workplace culture where people can achieve their potential. We don’t pretend to have all the answers, but we want to advance the dialogue regarding leadership in a multigenerational, diverse workforce.
About EY

EY is a global leader in assurance, tax, transaction and advisory services. The insights and quality services we deliver help build trust and confidence in the capital markets and in economies the world over. We develop outstanding leaders who team to deliver on our promises to all of our stakeholders. In so doing, we play a critical role in building a better working world for our people, for our clients and for our communities.

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