

## **2008 Titan Hall of Fame to honor Lisa Melendez Van Wyk**

by Vanessa Virbitsky - Thursday, May 01, 2008

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/815/2008-titan-hall-of-fame-to-honor-lisa-melendez-van-wyk/>

[More information on the Titan Hall of Fame banquet to be held May 4.](#)

Lisa Melendez Van Wyk entered the highly successful women's track and field program at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh by trying to be good at a sport she wasn't great at, said UW Oshkosh women's head track and field coach Deb Vercauteren.

This is a bold statement, considering she won back-to-back National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III outdoor track and field titles in the 400-meter dash and contributed to national and conference team wins in 1995 and 1996.

What Vercauteren was referring to however, was the fact that Van Wyk stepped onto a track for the first time at age 20. Previous to her track and field experience at UW Oshkosh, Van Wyk's athletic achievements were on the basketball court, where she played guard on the University of Miami's women's basketball team, which won the 1992 Division I Big East title and a spot in the National Sweet 16 tournament.

Van Wyk earned two degrees from UW Oshkosh — a Bachelor of Science in Education in 1998 and a Master of Science in 2003.

National championship titles weren't the only awards earned by Van Wyk during her two-year career in track and field at UW Oshkosh. The Pompano Beach, Fla., native also accrued 10 All-American titles, nine Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) titles and helped to break the 400-meter relay school record with a time of 47.53 in 1996. She once held five records at one time, including the outdoor 400-meter dash record that held for 10 years.

Within the first few months of her track career in 1995, Van Wyk took home indoor All-American titles in the 55-meter dash and 1,600-meter relay. The rookie also claimed the conference title in the 200-meter dash, the 4x400-meter relay and distance medley. She then went on to become an outdoor All-American in the 200-meter dash, 400-meter dash and 1,600-meter relay.

Although Van Wyk put more pressure on herself during her second year of track and field, 1996 proved to be as successful as her rookie showing. Facing new and unusual circumstances in her second and final indoor season, Van Wyk raced to a third place finish and an All-American title in the 400-meter dash.

Disappointed and knowing the 400-meter dash was hers to reclaim in the outdoor season, however, she trained harder, overcame fears and ended strong by defending her outdoor 400-meter dash national title. She also claimed six conference titles and three additional National All-American titles that same year.

Since graduating from UW Oshkosh in 1997 with a Secondary Education degree in biology, chemistry

and health, Van Wyk has taught biology and chemistry while coaching girl's basketball and track and field in the Appleton Area School District. She also earned her master's degree in microbiology from UW Oshkosh in 2003 and has served as an accountant, project coordinator and vice president for Steel Homes by Design.

Currently Van Wyk is an IT Manager and Consultant for Appleton Lathing Corporation, the freshman girl's volleyball coach at Hortonville High School and an active member in the Appleton Alliance Church.

Van Wyk lives in Fremont, Wis., with her husband Tim and their children, Peter and Nicole.

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