

SMRI In The News

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Alumni Spotlight

Cal Poly Pomona Alumna Scores in Sports & Entertainment Business

Kathleen Davis '77

Founder, President and CEO, Sport Management Research Institute (SMRI)



Dr. Kathleen Davis has the competitive spirit that is needed to make a prominent name in the sports and entertainment industries. This innate quality has brought Davis to the top of her game, and she is currently a nationally-recognized expert in the field of Sport Economics and Sport Market Analysis.

Davis '77, who earned her bachelor's degree in kinesiology, is the founder, president and CEO of the Sport Management Research Institute (SMRI) where her impressive clientele list includes top-notch athletic teams and events such as the 2008 Super Bowl, Chicago Bears, New York Giants, New York Jets, Philadelphia Eagles, Oakland Raiders and Jacksonville Jaguars. SMRI has studied sports research trends in the marketplace for more than 19 years.

"I love my job because I work with a great staff and wonderful team members at SMRI," Davis says. "I get to experience the highs and lows of the sport entertainment environment. Persistence and tenacity in business pursuits pays off. Those attributes combined with passion about what you do all equate to the elements of success in business."

The years spent at Cal Poly Pomona helped spur Davis' interest in sports research. Professors took an active role during her undergraduate education, and the hands-on value proved to be an influential factor and means of preparation for her future career, she says.

"My involvement in research studies at Cal Poly Pomona helped guide me to the creation of the Sport Management Research Institute," Davis says. "My educational experience there had an impact in terms of my career pursuits, and I was provided insights and direction for later graduate work."

Davis furthered her educational pursuit and received a master's degree and Ph.D. in Sport Management from the University of Southern California. This led Davis to teaching positions with Tulane University, Rice University, Northeastern University and Florida Atlantic University.

The professional experience Davis has acquired in her field is vast, and she is more than willing to share her knowledge with others. She has presented and

published nationally and internationally on a variety of sport-related business topics including sport marketing, market research, sport economics and sport sponsorship research. She has also published a textbook titled *Sport Management: Private Sector Business Strategies*, which provides readers with the “how to” of sports management.

Eventually Davis was drawn back to her roots in Southern California, and she is active in providing wisdom to the students at Cal Poly Pomona with her positions as Alumni Association board member and mentor.

“I never had the chance to actively engage with Cal Poly students, having lived in other parts of the U.S. for several years,” Davis says. “Moving back to SoCal has allowed for me to reach out and assist, in any way possible, the future success of the bright and enthusiastic Cal Poly Pomona student body.”

Davis is also the CEO and managing partner for GIG Consulting Group. Their mission is to provide tailored advice for all venue and event operators to ensure that their specific entertainment objectives are met for a more satisfying and rewarding experience for all involved in staging a successful entertainment experience for customers.

When asked if there were another career path she would be interested in pursuing, Davis states that she wouldn't change a thing about her occupational decisions.

“I am very happy with the current hand life has dealt me,” she says.