

SETON HALL | LAW

Sports Law Symposium: Sports in Time of Change February 15 – 16, 2023



Joan C. Cronan

Athletic Director Emeritus

University of Tennessee

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Joan Cronan is a University of Tennessee and women's athletics legend. She has served the university diligently since 1983 by establishing a Winning Athletic Program based on "Passion, Pride and People". She has excelled in building lasting relationships and creating opportunities for success for all UT athletes, coaches, staff and fan support.

A proven leader with her success being measured through both personal and professional accomplishments. The late great Pat Summit said, "Joan's vision, passion, and tireless efforts to grow women's athletics and to promote women's opportunities have made a huge difference across the nation for women in sports. Joan was a driving force elevating the prominence and brands of Tennessee Lady Vols athletics through strategy, excellence, and priceless relationships."

A graduate of Louisiana State University with an honorary doctorate from the United States Sports Academy, Joan began her career as an assistant basketball coach and math teacher at Opelousas High School in 1965. In 1968, she got her first appointment with the University of Tennessee as basketball coach and professor. After a 10-year career as Athletic Director at the College of Charleston which was named the #1 Women's Athletic program by Women's Sports Foundation.. Joan came home to Rocky Top for good. She has served as women's Athletic Director, Vice Chancellor, Advisor to the Chancellor and consultant, and currently as Athletic Director Emeritus.

Joan has served in numerous leadership roles including Leadership Knoxville founding class and past president, National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics president, SEC Executive Committee, Carson-Newman College Board of Trustees, and the Pat Summit Foundation as Chairman of Bd. Joan's list of accomplishments is impressive and includes inaugural recipient of the NCAA Pat Summitt award, YWCA Lifetime Achievement Award, Women's Basketball Hall of Fame, and most recently the SEC's Michael L. Slive Distinguished Service Award as the first woman to receive the award individually. She has been inducted as a member to 10 Halls of Fame for her many accomplishments.

Joan has two daughters Stacey Bristow and Kristi Benner, two son-in-laws Kent Bristow and Rhett Benner, and 5 grandchildren; Chase, Reed, Larkin, Quinn, and Reese.