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For Immediate Release: May 22, 2017

University of Iowa Reaches Settlement with Tracey Griesbaum

CHANDLER, Ariz. – The University of Iowa announced on Friday that it has reached a settlement with former field hockey head coach Tracey Griesbaum. The settlement ends all pending legal action against the university.

Griesbaum had filed a gender bias lawsuit against the university, and will receive a nearly \$1.5 million settlement with a sum of \$300,000 in wages and another totaling \$1,187,588.98 in emotional distress. The athletic department will also pay for attorney fees totaling over \$1 million. Griesbaum filed a Stipulation for Dismissal with Prejudice for all of her claims against the university.

Griesbaum spent 14 seasons as head coach at Iowa before her dismissal just prior to the start of the 2014 season. She led the Hawkeyes to six NCAA Tournament appearances, including a Final Four run in 2008, and Big Ten Tournament titles in three straight years from 2006-08.

Griesbaum had filed suit against the university for gender discrimination, alleging that the athletics department had pushed her and other female employees out of their positions. The university also reached a settlement with former senior associate athletics director Jane Meyer.

The settlements will be funded by the Iowa athletics department, and the university will hire an independent counsel to conduct an external review of employment practices.

Andy Whitcomb, the President of the National Field Hockey Coaches Association (NFHCA) and head coach at Mount Holyoke College, provided the following statement in reaction to the settlement.

"This was a great outcome for not only Tracey Griesbaum and Jane Meyer, but for the countless other female coaches who have faced similar discrimination and unjust dismissals or demotions.

We know the facts from the Women's Sports Foundation study, *Beyond X's and O's*, that there is gender bias in women's college athletics. This, to me, is the shot heard round the college coaching community and a warning for those administrators that this unlawful behavior will no longer be tolerated and there are serious repercussions for such discriminatory firings.

For all those women who have pending legal cases against their institutions for gender or sexual orientation discrimination, or retaliation, or unequal pay or whistle-blower violations, I sincerely hope that this case gives them the necessary faith and steadfastness to pursue and seek justice.

True vindication, I believe, would be the ability for Tracey to pursue a collegiate coaching job in the sport she loves without prejudice; a luxury countless male coaches have been afforded post litigation."