

Diamondbacks hire 1st female head trainer

Monique Griego, KPNX 11:28 PM. MST April 18, 2016



(Photo: 12 News)

When it comes to a baseball field, winning can be about the small things.

A great pitch, hit or catch.

But behind every great play is a body exerting everything it can to be the best.

"It's number-one, you've got to stay strong, you've got to stay healthy," said Alex Sorenson, a baseball player for Mesa

Community College.

"It's really important for them to trust you," said Kelly Boyce, an athletic trainer for MCC's men's baseball team.

Twenty-four-year-old Boyce is responsible for helping players protect their biggest commodity: their body.

When a player is injured, she helps get them strong enough to get back on the field.

"They definitely identify themselves as athletes, so once that's taken away from them through an injury, it's a process," Boyce said as she talked with 12 News in the community college's training room.

Now, after two years of rehabbing collegiate players in Mesa, Boyce is heading to the Big Leagues.

"I love the sport of baseball and although I never played it myself, I get along with the guys really well," she said.

The Arizona Diamondbacks just hired Boyce as the organization's first female head athletic trainer.

"It's going to be a surreal experience for me because it's my dream job," she said.

She'll soon take over sports medicine for the DBacks' rookie league team, which mostly consists of recently drafted, first-year players.

"I'll be in the dugout with the players, so I need to have eyes on the field at all times watching for potential injuries and safety hazards," she told 12 News.

The major leagues were always her goal even if some people thought it was out of reach.

"I had so many people tell me, 'oh you know, they usually don't hire females, so get a backup plan' and things like that," Boyce said. "I was just always really persistent."

It definitely paid off.

She'll soon go from cruising around MCC in a golf cart, to Chase Field.

"The team is sad," said Sorenson as he headed out to practice before a game, "all of us are bummed, but she deserves it and we're happy for her."

As for Boyce, she's more than ready to make her mark.

"It's important to know that anybody can do it, male or female," she said. "Shoot for your dreams and don't let anybody tell you you can't."

Boyce will start with the Diamondbacks after MCC's season ends in May.

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