**December 2015**

**NEWS FROM THE LION'S DEN**

We are so excited to be underway with the '15-'16 season! After 5 weeks of practicing against ourselves, our players were ready to start playing some games! We opened up the season with a trip to the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and won by two in overtime. I am so proud of the composure our players displayed in that game and the maturity they have shown throughout the beginning of this season. We then won back-to-back games against Vermont and UMass-Lowell, lost by 8 to Stony Brook, and beat Loyola Maryland. My staff and I are very proud of the grit that our players have played with. In our last two games, we challenged the team at halftime to raise their level of focus and show more toughness. In both games, the players responded and did what we asked them to do. The team is excited about starting the season 4-1 for the first time since 2002-2003. We will use this momentum going into our next couple games, which include a tournament in Arizona - the home state for senior Kayla Patton and sophomore Camille Zimmerman.

With a flurry of non-conference games to start the season, we try to find time for some off-the-court team activities. One of my favorite events was our #GoddessApproved night, during which our team dressed up in pink. The event served many purposes - raise awareness for women’s cancers, understand the importance of directly helping people with cancer, and build chemistry through team building activities. Our players created dancing and singing routines that conveyed information about the #GoddessApproved Campaign and the Kay Yow Cancer Fund. We had a lot of fun laughing with each other and sharing the important messages with others through social media.
In mid-November, Columbia Women’s Basketball welcomed a visit from Cat Anderson, founder of Food of the Goddesses and the #GoddessApproved Chef Challenge. Through social media, the team and Anderson are raising awareness for the fight against all women’s cancers.

Partnered with the Kay Yow Cancer Fund, Food of the Goddesses is a blog dedicated to sharing ideas about how to live a healthy and fabulous lifestyle. This fall, Anderson created the #GoddessApproved Chef Challenge which invites chefs from across the world to #Cook4Kay by creating delectable, creative, healthy dishes with cancer-fighting ingredients. Once a chef prepares a dish that meets the #GoddessApproved criteria, all donations from the event go towards the Kay Yow Cancer Fund. The mission of the #GoddessApproved Campaign, similar to that of the Kay Yow Cancer Fund, is to not only raise money for research, but also to provide direct help to the people battling cancer. This direct help can fund a range of needs, from essential medical procedures to innovative treatments that enhance one’s quality of life.

The team dressed in pink to show support for the fight against breast cancer and presented routines relaying the messages of the Kay Yow Cancer Fund and the #GoddessApproved Campaign. Thriving on the players’ (and coaches’) competitive spirits, the team had a competition for best-dressed and best performance. The players had fun working together and showed a great deal of creativity and enthusiasm.

Follow #GoddessApproved and #Cook4Kay on social media channels and tune into The Goddesses Network on YouTube to watch the Chef Challenges!
NYC HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade

Thanksgiving in New York City has long been celebrated with the annual Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade. The parade originated in 1924 when many of the employees at Macy’s were first-generation immigrants. The employees wanted to start the tradition of having an exuberant celebration similar to the festivals that took place in Europe. The early years of the parade featured live animals borrowed from the Central Park Zoo, until 1927 when Felix the Cat was the first balloon introduced.

The 2015 parade highlighted over 8,000 participants - including 1,000 clowns, 1,000 cheerleaders and dancers, and 12 marching bands. The Snoopy and Woodstock balloons made their 38th appearance, while several new floats and balloons were added. Two of the more popular new balloons included Ice Age’s Scrat and Angry Birds’ Red. Throughout the day, several famous musicians performed at Herald Square on 6th Avenue between 34th and 35th Streets. These artists included Mariah Carey, Andy Grammar, the group Train, and the cast of School of Rock on Broadway. More than 3 million people gathered in Manhattan to celebrate, along with 50 million observers watching the balloons fly high from their televisions at home.

Christmas Tree in Rockefeller Plaza

The holiday season is here once again, and the lighting of the Rockefeller Christmas tree remains one of New York City’s most celebrated traditions. Wednesday, December 2nd marks the 83rd annual tree lighting, during which tens of thousands will gather at Rockefeller Plaza or tune into the live broadcast to witness. The 78-foot Norway Spruce will be illuminated with more than 30,000 environmentally friendly lights attached to five miles of wire. The tree is then crowned by a Swarovski crystal star.

The 2015 tree weighs over ten tons and arrived at Rockefeller Plaza from Gardiner, New York after living on the Asendorf’s family property for four generations. Several of the Asendorfs have fond memories of climbing the tree’s branches before it outgrew the family’s yard. The tree will remain illuminated for all to see until January 7th, when it will be milled into lumbar for the nonprofit organization Habitat for Humanity.
Congratulations, Camille!

Sophomore Camille Zimmerman was named the Ivy League Player of the Week on Nov. 23 after an impressive performance in a 2-win week for the Lions. Zimmerman becomes the first Lion to earn the Ivy League Player of the Week honor since Kathleen Berry received it on Jan. 31, 2010. Zimmerman adds to her conference accolades as she was also named Ivy League Rookie of the Week six times last season.

Zimmerman proved herself deserving as she averaged 24 points, 10 rebounds, and 2.5 steals per game while shooting 52% from the field and 71% from the 3-point line.

Opening the week against Vermont, Zimmerman had a career performance where she posted 31 points, 12 rebounds, 4 steals and a pair of blocks while shooting 5-of-6 from 3 point range. Zimmerman helped to lead the Lions to a 3-0 start for the first time since the 2002-03 season, and only the third time ever.

SAVE THE DATE - ALUMNAE WEEKEND

January 29 and 30, 2016

Come join us for Alumnae Weekend 2016! The weekend will be filled with exciting basketball, and will feature a lunch during which the current players spend time building relationships with alumnae. We will also be hosting the annual alumnae game, during which our former stars can show off their skills and rekindle that competitive spirit! More details are coming, but please RSVP HERE!

Friday, January 29
Columbia vs Dartmouth 7:00pm

Saturday, January 30
Alumnae Game
Pregame Meal with the Players and Staff
Columbia vs Harvard 6:00pm
Post-Game Gathering

Thank you for being a member of the Columbia Women’s Basketball Family!