

Name: Gabe Meyers

School: Emmaus High School

Circle category: 1Y 2Y 3Y 5N 6N 7N 9E 10L 12B

Athletic Directing: the real truth

Sarah Higgins journey to Penn State

Underneath the cool glow of the stadium lights lies the biggest name in college football, the infamous Penn State. Between the roaring crowds and the arm-hair raising plays lies hardwork, determination, meticulous planning, and sleepless nights, but the name behind that: Sarah Higgins.

Higgins, a self-proclaimed "fastyake addict" holds the position of Assistant Athletic Director at Penn State University, and takes it upon herself to help these college athletes to grow into big name stars and create themselves into a brand. Higgins guides them through this process, while being fun-loving and "unapologetically herself."

As an Arizona State graduate, Higgins has a degree in journalism, as well as a masters in AlM and digital audience strategy.

"While I love the written word, it's my first love. There's so

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Much more opportunity out there to tell stories in a way that connects with different people," Higgins said. "... So finding different ways to connect with audiences in ways that are authentic to them that humanize our student athletes that really tell these incredible stories."

One of Higgins biggest beliefs is in equity, and she won't stop until she ensures all teams have equal representation.

"Not everyone can be Penn State football. We know that. But at the same time there's no reason that a golf or tennis or gymnastics or field hockey shouldn't feel as special as football," Higgins said.

Joining in Spring of 2023, Higgins has had her position for a year, and she describes the difficult process of her transition.

At first, Higgins was unsure of even applying for the position, but after some peer pressure from friends, and winning a bet with her father, Higgins applied, and got the position.

"It's changing people from being complacent, to really pushing them and giving them the ability to be innovative," Higgins said as

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She describes her transition to Penn State. "You have the permission to test the boundaries and permission to try new things. Be a little crazy and out there, and fail fast."

Higgins is constantly out there, taking creative liberties and pushing against the standard for college athletes. She describes the workday to be hectic and long, often getting last minute news and being in the office until 11 P.M.

Despite this, she persists and works hard until she creates a final product she can be truly proud of.

Even with all this success, Higgins is a woman working in a typically male dominated field, she has faced some challenges.

"Everyday is tough. Right? You're walking into a room where almost all of your colleagues are men... what you've got to have is confidence, and I think for a really long time, I didn't have confidence, and I was really used to sitting back and taking whatever anyone said to me," Higgins said. "I'm also unapologetically myself at this point in my career... I've learned that brings value to the table. And I want my legacy to be empowering others to do exactly that."