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## **CHICAGO BANDITS WELCOME UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA'S SHARONDA MCDONALD AS HEAD COACH FOR 2017 SEASON**

Rosemont, Ill. – The National Pro Fastpitch League's Chicago Bandits announced today that University of Florida softball assistant coach Sharonda McDonald will serve as the Bandits' new head coach for the 2017 NPF season.

McDonald has been an assistant coach with the University of Florida Gators for the past two years. She oversaw the development of the University of Florida outfield and was a key proponent of the team's success last season that included the program's first ever SEC & NFCA Freshman of the Year Amanda Lorenz.

"We are excited to have Sharonda McDonald join the Bandits program. She comes highly recommended by her peers and when it came to filling our head coaching position, she was our first candidate to consider during this process," said Chicago Bandits General Manager Toni Calmeyn. "The amount of knowledge and experience that she has gained through not only having a successful playing career in the NPF, but also most recently as an assistant coach at Florida gives us the utmost confidence that she is the right fit to lead the Bandits."

The Bandits have won the NPF's title, the Cowles Cup, in back-to-back seasons and have hoisted the cup a total of four times – the most by any team in the NPF since the Cowles Cup was introduced in 2004.

McDonald is no stranger to the NPF as she spent six seasons playing in the league. In 2014, she spent the season with the USSSA Pride after playing the 2010-12 seasons with the Akron Racers and the 2007-08 seasons with the Philadelphia Force. Aside from the NPF, McDonald spent the 2009 season playing with the Fiorini Softball Club of the Italian Professional League.

A three-time all-NPF selection during her career, McDonald garnered the prestigious Diamond Spikes Award in 2012 after hitting .303 with 13 stolen bases while with the Racers. She ended the 2014 season with a career average over .270 to go along with more than 100 runs scored during her professional career.

"I am humbled to return to the NPF and such a historic program like the Chicago Bandits organization," said McDonald. "After spending several years in the league as a player, having the opportunity to gain more experience working with so many talented players is something that I look forward to in the coming months."

The Houston, Texas native is considered as one of the brightest young minds in the game, McDonald has made strides in each of her four different coaching stops prior to University of

Florida including Texas Tech (2015; associate head coach), LSU (2013-14; volunteer assistant), Ohio (2010-12; assistant coach) and Texas Southern (2008; assistant coach).

The NPF season starts in June with it set to conclude in August with the 2017 NPF Championship series starting August 17. The Bandits full schedule can be found [HERE](#).

### **About the Chicago Bandits**

Since 2005, the Chicago Bandits have been members of the National Pro Fastpitch (NPF) league. Located in Rosemont, the Bandits provide an opportunity for female fastpitch players to further their careers at a professional level, and the roster has included such names as Jennie Finch, Stacy May-Johnson, Monica Abbott and Tammy Williams. The four-time and back-to-back NPF Champions play at The Ballpark at Rosemont, the only stadium in the country built for a women's professional team. The 2016 season marked the Bandits fourth championship in their 12th season in the NPF.

**About The Village of Rosemont, Illinois:** Rosemont, Illinois, Chicagoland's business and entertainment suburb, is conveniently located five minutes from O'Hare Airport and twenty minutes from Chicago's downtown. Rosemont is home to the Allstate Arena, Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Fashion Outlets of Chicago, MB Financial Park entertainment district, Rosemont Theatre and a wide variety of hotels and restaurants. Rosemont continues to grow and evolve based on the new vision of Mayor Bradley A. Stephens. For more information, visit [www.Rosemont.com](http://www.Rosemont.com).

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