

Girls on the Run International Welcomes Two New Board Members: Marisa Kwiatkowski and Kelly Coker-Daniel

CHARLOTTE, NC, UNITED STATES, January 6, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Girls on the Run International](#) is proud to announce the appointment of Marisa Kwiatkowski, director of journalism at the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and Kelly Coker-Daniel, retired principal, assistant superintendent, and former chair of the Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) school board, to its board of directors. Their diverse expertise will help further the organization's commitment to inspiring girls to build confidence, connection, and lifelong healthy habits.

Kwiatkowski brings a distinguished 20-year journalism career, most recently serving on USA TODAY's national investigative team before joining Knight Foundation in 2024. Her award-winning work has sparked national conversations, driven policy reform, and strengthened protections for children. She is widely recognized for her investigative series with The Indianapolis Star on USA Gymnastics and its handling of child sexual abuse allegations, including those involving former team doctor Larry Nassar. She has received more than 60 journalism awards for her contributions to public service and the protection of vulnerable populations. At Knight Foundation, Kwiatkowski manages a portfolio that includes more than \$200 million in grants and endowments relating to local journalism, the First Amendment, legal support, and more. She regularly evaluates new proposals and has led the development and refinement of one of the foundation's strategic focus areas, while also contributing to others.



Marisa Kwiatkowski

"As a former board member for both Girls on the Run Indiana Crossroads and Girls on the Run Central Indiana, I know the difference this organization is making in the lives of so many girls," said Kwiatkowski. "Throughout my professional life, I've seen the profound impact that safe, supportive environments can have on young people, and I look forward to contributing as a national board member to a mission that empowers girls to share their ideas, embrace their

uniqueness, and step boldly into their futures.”

Coker-Daniel brings a wealth of experience as an accomplished educator serving as a teacher, principal, regional superintendent, and assistant superintendent. During her career, she expanded school choice options for all children, oversaw a 69-million-dollar budget, and led multiple divisions across the school district. Working with parents, local business leaders, and school principals, she successfully established new workforce development programs, expanded dual enrollment options, and achieved record-high district graduation rates. Following three decades at Duval County Public Schools, she served as a school board member for District 1 in Jacksonville, Florida, representing a constituency of over 92,000 voters. She has also served on the board of Girls on the Run Northeast Florida, the leadership team for Leadership Jax, and the board of the Adult Literacy Alliance of Northeast Florida. Currently, she serves as secretary to the board of directors at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens.



Kelly Coker-Daniel

“As a lifelong runner, mother of a participant in Girls on the Run, and former Girls on the Run board member in Northeast Florida, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to support the work being done internationally by this amazing organization,” said Coker-Daniel. “I spent decades of my life as an educational leader in schools, watching this program have a positive impact on its participants. Being a part of this program gives young girls a sense of belonging, fosters positive self-esteem, and gives them the confidence to truly be their best selves. I look forward to supporting the dedicated staff and countless volunteers who make this work happen on behalf of young people throughout all of the [Girls on the Run programs!](#)”

Girls on the Run Chief Executive Officer Elizabeth Kunz celebrated the appointments, noting the impact both leaders will have as the organization enters its 30th anniversary year. “Marisa and Kelly bring remarkable expertise, unwavering integrity, and a shared passion for empowering young people. Each has experience supporting safer and stronger systems for youth, and we are honored to welcome them to our board of directors. Their leadership will help fuel our mission and expand the impact Girls on the Run is having on the lives of girls across North America.”

For more information about Girls on the Run International, please visit girlsontherun.org.

About Girls on the Run

Girls on the Run creates and offers empowering after-school programs designed for girls in

grades 3 to 8. The nonprofit helps participants build confidence, increase physical activity, and develop life skills like managing emotions, resolving conflicts, and forming friendships. With the support of trained coaches, team members activate their limitless potential through a blend of physical activities and engaging lessons. The research-based curriculum explores topics relevant to 8- to 13-year-old girls, such as building resiliency and standing up for oneself and others. The program includes a Community Impact Project and culminates with a celebratory 5K. Since 1996, Girls on the Run has served more than 2.7 million girls across all 50 states and Canada. Discover more at girlsontherun.org.

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