

UAB Athletics Meets With "The Speaking Specialists"

UAB athletes, coaches and administrators get helpful lessons in social media and interviews

Aug. 16, 2011

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. -- The UAB athletics department welcomed Sue Castorino, founder of "The Speaking Specialists," to campus for the past two days (Aug. 15-16) to give presentations about proper media procedures, social media and interview etiquette.

"This was terrific," Castorino said. "I had such a great time. Everyone was respectful and we had fun. I really enjoyed working with the UAB athletes. I received some great feedback from them, and I couldn't be more excited to be here."

Castorino's initial presentation came on Monday morning, the day before classes started at UAB, when she spoke in general with the Blazer student-athletes. Throughout the rest of the day, she gave multiple smaller group sessions in a more intimate setting.

"I was really pleased with their active participation and the fact that they asked questions," Castorino said about the Blazer student-athletes. "I was so pleased when athletes came up afterwards and wanted personal development and individual help. That really warms my heart because truly I am here to help, and I want to help anyone that needs it by sharing my expertise and getting them in the right direction."

"We show a lot of videos, which I know have been crowd-pleasers, and some make us laugh a little uncomfortably because they are real situations that show people what to avoid. I do want to make them aware of how much the media has changed and continues to change. It's just so important that everybody knows now how much social media seems to be driving the whole media ship. Everything people say and do, whether it comes out of their mouths or out of their fingers, is on the record."

On Tuesday morning, Castorino gave a private session to the UAB senior administration, which included Athletics Director Brian Mackin and Senior Associate AD's Shannon Ealy and Derita Ratcliffe. Also included in the group was the head of nearly every department within athletics.

Castorino founded The Speaking Specialists, which is based in Chicago, Ill., in 1986. She now runs the company with Randy Minkoff, who is also her husband. The pair provides media training, crisis communication, issue management, public speaking instruction and private coaching to individuals and groups around the nation.

Castorino and Minkoff have developed an outstanding reputation through the years and their list of clients includes corporations, associations, more than 100 colleges and universities, the NFL, Major League Baseball, and USA Olympic teams.