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Tuite lands new job despite scandals

Tuite resigned in 2021 after multiple scandals erupted in Athletics Department

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ERNIE GONZALEZ | THE SPEAR ARCHIVES

Then-Athletics Director Marie Tuite watches the San Jose State football team ahead of its game against the Utah State Aggies on Sept. 23, 2017, at CEFCU Stadium. Tuite's employment at Southern Utah University was announced on Monday.

Marie Tuite, the former San Jose State athletics director who resigned in light of the Scott Shaw sexual abuse scandal in August 2021, will be the new deputy athletics director for external relations at Southern Utah University in Cedar City, starting in the position on Wednesday.

SUU Athletics Director Doug Knuth said the SUU athletics department is thrilled to bring Tuite to the university, in a Monday SUU Athletics news release.

"Marie has incredible knowledge, skills, and abilities in athletic administration and leadership," said Knuth in the release. "She is well respected throughout Division [1] athletics and has earned great support from coaches, athletes, and university administrators who have worked directly with her over the years."

However, during her tenure at SJSU, Tuite was named in three wrongful termination and retaliation lawsuits as a consequence of the sexual abuse scandal involving SJSU athletics, according to a Monday article by the East Bay Times.

In one of those cases, she was accused of bullying the SJSU women's swimming and diving head coach Sage Hopkins, who reported sexual misconduct from Scott Shaw, former SJSU director of sports medicine, according to the East Bay Times article.

The FBI formally charged Shaw with sexually assaulting student-athletes, according to a March 15, 2022 Spartan Daily article.

Hopkins, who sent a 300-page dossier to the Mountain West Conference and NCAA officials in 2019 reporting Shaw's sexual misconduct claims, also detailed claims of retaliation by Tuite against him according to an April 17, 2020 article by USA Today.

The reports led the way to an external investigation requested by former SJSU President Mary Papazian in December 2019, according to an April 15, 2021 campuswide email.

Then Interim President Steve Perez released a campuswide email on Dec. 1, 2022, informing students and faculty about the Department of Justice investigation regarding the sexual misconduct within the SJSU athletics department.

"SJSU failed to properly respond to an SJSU Athletic Department employee's subsequent reports between

TUITE | Page 5

TUITE

Continued from page 1

2010 and 2018 that the 2009-2010 investigation was inadequate," Perez wrote in the email.

Despite the controversies and the retaliation lawsuits, Tuite obtained a leadership position at a Division 1 university.

"SUU is aware of the situation at San Jose State and based on a thorough review, reference checks and standard hiring protocols, the university is confident welcoming Marie to Thunderbird Athletics," Knuth said in a Monday Sportico article, a news website for the sports industry.

Michelle Smith McDonald, SJSU senior director of media relations, said in an email sent to the Spartan Daily she is unaware of any contact with SJSU's University Personnel department regarding Tuite's hiring.

The Spartan Daily reached out to the SJSU athletic department for a statement about Tuite's hiring on Tuesday, but did not receive a response.

Several people who worked with Tuite at SJSU throughout the years praised her work and leadership.

Former SJSU President Don Kassing congratulated SUU President Mindy Benson and Knuth for hiring Tuite, according to the SUU Athletics press release.

"I worked with Marie on several campus initiatives and was impressed with her priority of building relationships with faculty and staff. She's a student-centered administrator who had an incredibly positive impact on SJSU. SUU got a good one," Kassing said.

Smith McDonald also said Tuite's hiring did not interfere with any investigations at SJSU.

"There are no current investigations. There is a system-wide assessment of CSU campuses taking place through the Chancellor's office," said Smith McDonald in the email. "We expect the results of that assessment and recommendations later this spring."

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