Ruth Candler 00:14
Welcome to W&L After Class, the lifelong learning podcast. I'm your host, Ruth Candler. In every episode we'll have engaging conversations with W&L's expert faculty, bringing you again to the Colonnade even if you're hundreds of miles away, just like the conversations that happen every day after class here at W&L. You'll hear from your favorite faculty on fascinating topics and meet professors who can introduce you to new worlds and continue your journey of lifelong learning.

Our guest today is Jan Hathorn, the Michael F. Walsh Director of Athletics and a professor of physical education at W&L. Jan joined the Washington and Lee faculty in 1987 and coached women's lacrosse for 19 seasons and women's soccer for 14 seasons. She was promoted to be athletic director in 2007, the first woman to hold this position at W&L. Under Jan's leadership, W&L's athletics programs have enjoyed some of their best seasons ever, having won more than 60% of their athletic contests and 104 conference championships in addition to numerous other accolades. In 2019, Jan received the NCAA Division III Administrator of the Year award. She's also an excellent athlete and has competed in soccer, tennis, softball, basketball and swimming. Jan is a Hall of Fame member at both her high school and at State University of New York, where she received her Bachelor of Arts in education.

Jan, it is great to be with you today. Thanks so much for joining us.

Jan Hathorn 01:43
It's a real pleasure to be here. Thank you.

Ruth Candler 01:46
Let's begin by talking about the relationship between athletics and academics. You mentioned something to me the other day, which I found so interesting: the athletics department is the only department at W&L that every student passes through during their college career. Why do you think W&L has mandated that all students must participate in physical education?

Jan Hathorn 02:13
I think it boils down to a simple fact that we all do better when our minds and our bodies are active and in shape, so to speak. Besides virtue, there's real value in the fact that you learn, through a PE class, the things that are lifelong experiences that you can take with you anywhere that you go, that would allow you to find and enjoy recreation and have a life of health and well-being.

Ruth Candler 02:42
As a Division III school, W&L seems to have a different or, I don't know, perhaps a more focused emphasis on athletics than many of our peer schools. Here we don't call members of teams simply athletes, but identify them as student athletes. Would you explain why that distinction is important, and how that approach benefits both our athletics program and our academics?

03:08
I would love to tell you that, because it's probably the thing that... It is the piece of our overall philosophy that really supports the mission of the university. And that is that we're students.
students come here to go to college. And so the fact that we have athletics, it's... I love to call it educational sport, because you're going to college and then you get to play your sport. And so it's intentional on our part to make sure that our students understand that that's our priority, is that you're a student, and then you're an athlete, so we call them student athletes intentionally. It's a well used -- overused, possibly -- term anymore. But I will tell you, I personally, whenever I catch myself saying athlete, I stop and put student in first because it's a real value. And it's of real import to what we're doing.

Our students... For example, there's a policy on our campus that when you have a class that overlaps with your practice, finish the class you're in, and then come to your PE class, which is your team sport. It's going to happen, because it's the nature of when practices happen. But you finish the class you're in, and then you go to your next class, and your next class happens to be your PE sport class. But those things are important. We want you to be a great student in all the things that you're doing in any classroom on campus, and then play your sport to the highest level as well.

**Ruth Candler 04:42**
The covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on W&L's athletics programs, unfortunately, forcing a long pause in competition. We've recently begun hosting athletic competitions again on campus, and it was wonderful to hear the announcers, you know, over the loudspeakers again. It gave me goosebumps. How did you feel when that happened? And did you notice a change among our student athletes?

**Jan Hathorn 05:11**
Well, I will speak first to how I personally felt. So the very first competition we had at Washington and Lee in the 2020-2021 academic year was a basketball game. And it was a women's basketball game. And I went, and, you know, we have all these rules, there's nobody can be in there except the people actually participating. And so it's a pretty empty gym. But there's... there are women running up and down the court playing an opponent, and they're actually doing what they feel like they're created to do, it's part of this... part of their soul to be an athlete, they were made that way. And I've always known that that's an important piece of what makes athletics an important... such a valuable part of everybody's career and college, but I stood there and I realized, for myself, that what I was missing, the depth of what I was missing, and therefore the depth of the joy that I experienced when I saw that game was... it was stark. And it was memorable. Because for days I thought about that, and how different I was just from being a spectator on the sideline at that game, and I... so... takes you right into your second question.

This changes our student athletes and our coaches and all our staff that do what we do for the better. I stood there in that moment and thought, "You know, all the hoops we've had to jump through and all the things we have to do to make this happen were the right thing to do, and it's been worth it." The joy on the faces of the athletes, the opponents as well as W&L, the joy in the room, the spirit of it all. It was phenomenal. And it was... it was its own little gift, because it had been taken away, and it had been given back. And I just think our students are in a... and I know our coaches are because I talk to them regularly -- they're in a much, much better place than they were when they couldn't play, or could only practice to a point and not compete at all. It was a phenomenal experience. One I'll never forget.
Ruth Candler 07:19
It sounds like it's a reminder for everybody to pause and really appreciate what we have.

Jan Hathorn 07:26
I think that's what's happening.

Ruth Candler 07:28
I know that we're all tired of talking about the pandemic, but I do enjoy finding the silver linings. One development has been our Coffee with the Coaches alumni engagement series, which is an informal conversation with the coaches. Why is it so important to keep alumni connected to athletics? And what are the benefits of doing so?

Jan Hathorn 07:51
Well, I think it's... some of it might seem obvious, but I think it's worth saying that, you know, the experiences of our alums, in particular who were student athletes, are some of the greatest memories they'll ever have. And so it's important for our alums to have that connection back to a piece of their life when they were on W&L's campus and that they are carrying with them somewhere in their heart and soul. Because that's part of what this is about. And that's part of what we all experience when we're doing what we do athletically in an educational setup like we have at Washington and Lee.

So, I think it's incredibly important that that connection gets maintained and sustained. Because it fills a space in people that is an important space in their life, and also important in their memories, in their connection to the university that was so profound when they were here. So it's a key piece of how we... I think... and I think we take it for granted at times, but how we continue to make it a priority that we stay in touch with our alums because of the value they brought when they were here. The bridges they built for the people that came after them in order to compete. And then for them to take part in some way is this sort of, like, the icing on the cake. They've... they were a part of the program they're watching now. And they made part of it, part of what it is today.

Ruth Candler 09:21
So how often do you hear from alumni?

Jan Hathorn 09:25
I personally hear from alumni, wonderfully, very regularly now, because I'm old enough that the women that I coached, their children are looking to come to W&L or are on W&L's campus as we speak. So I hear from alums quite regularly in that personal aspect, but also regularly when it comes to our alums who have questions, interests, connections to students that would like to come to Washington and Lee, questions and connections to our current coaching staff or historic questions, you know, for our sports or athletics communication office about where, you know, the statistics and records and, you know, remembering their days, and is this person still the best whatever in that sport. And so the Hall of Fame is one of the ways that we do that. It's a really important collaboration we have with Alumni Engagement. And to me that's sort of the lifeblood of what we do in athletics in particular is bring those
folks who have been part of our family back into what we're doing, and help them feel that connection that was so important when they were an athlete, student athlete.

**Ruth Candler 10:35**
How fun it must be to see it come full circle and also see the next generation coming up through the ranks.

**Jan Hathorn 10:41**
Oh, absolutely, which is what... I think most of us... I'll speak for myself. When it comes to education, that's why I got into education. Because it's this... it's this lifelong thing that you're always connected to. And educational sport is in more ways than one that exact thing, a lifelong connection.

**Ruth Candler 11:00**
Well, it's probably safe to say that all W&L alumni remember their swim test, but maybe not everyone may remember it fondly. University swim tests are sometimes criticized as an unfair burden for students from cultures or backgrounds in which swimming is not typically taught during childhood, or for those who didn't have access to swim lessons or a safe place to swim while growing up. How has the W&L swim test changed over time to address these differences in cultural diversity?

**Jan Hathorn 11:34**
I really appreciate the question, because it is an important aspect of what we're doing. And we have changed it as a result of feedback from our students, feedback from folks across campus, and their concerns about the efficacy of it, the importance of it. And so we've adjusted as we go, in many ways to accommodate the fact that we still think this is an incredibly important skill that all of our students should have when they leave Washington and Lee.

So, for example, if there's a person whose faith demands that they're... the only other person that can be in the pool with them is their instructor, then we close the pool down to everyone else. And we teach that person one-on-one. And we do that for anyone who might have a reason for that to be the setup and the teaching environment in which they need to feel comfortable, and that it's appropriate. So if... Anybody who is unable to swim does not have to try to jump into the pool and prove to us they can't swim, they just need to tell us that. And then we arrange our swim instruction classes to fit their needs and their capabilities.

So it used to be that you had to take the PE Fundamental Swim class until you could actually literally pass the swim test in the class. But we have changed that now to accommodate those folks who just may not ever be able to pass the swim test by taking the class over and over and over again. So we took that piece out, and you take Fundamental Swim, if you don't know how to swim, you take that class, you take it until it's complete, you pass the class by attending and doing whatever is required of you. And then if you can pass the swim test while you're in the class, you also pass the class and you get to check the swim test as completed. But if you are unable to pass the swim test during that class, we still allow you to complete the class, get the grade and count that as a swim test. Because it's reality that there are those folks who are going to struggle to swim and make the swim test requirements happen for them. So we've acknowledged that and moved to a space where we feel like taking the
class and finishing it and completing everything that's been asked of them, with the exception of the ability to pass that piece of a test, is sufficient. And we've had a lot of positive feedback about that.

Ruth Candler  14:12
Part of the university's new Strategic Plan is to create a W&L softball team. This seems pretty straightforward, but you've mentioned that it's more meaningful than just adding another sport to W&L's list of offerings. Why is that? And when do you think the program will be up and running?

Jan Hathorn  14:34
Well, what makes it meaningful, and exciting, I think, is the fact that we'll be able to reach out to and draw young women to campus from all areas of the United States and, and maybe the world. It's a really popular sport that's played in a lot of places. We are the only school within our conference, the ODAC, that doesn't have a softball team, and it's an offering that we should be offering if we're in a league that has softball, and it's offered. So that's... Also another reason that makes it important is that it's a bit of an equity issue. So I think most important for Washington and Lee is the kind of young woman that is a softball player that would end up being a student here, and therefore enriching our campus in all the ways that all the rest of our student athletes do, you know, coming from the various worlds and places that they live and belong.

So, you know, right now, the Strategic Plan has it stated that it would be 2025 and 2026, that we would hopefully be again building... We'd have to build a brand new stadium. So obviously, the fundraising and the efforts to get that up and running have to happen yet. So those are the dates at the moment that I'm familiar with that happen to be our target and what we're aiming to do. And the exciting piece is that we get to build a brand new stadium, and it gets to be as elite and high level as our baseball stadium. So it's going to be a fantastic facility, because we have a fantastic baseball stadium. And I think it's really going to be another feather in the cap for Washington and Lee athletics, when it comes to the quality of our facilities and the draw it will be for women who play softball.

Ruth Candler  16:22
Yeah, no doubt, no doubt. Now, do you know the location of that? Will that be next to the baseball field, or...?

Jan Hathorn  16:28
That's where it's gonna go. It's gonna go in very nearby. It's gonna be great, because it'll be that sort of space on campus for those two sports that are so similar and so compatible.

Ruth Candler  16:41
W&L athletics was revitalized this past fall when the university opened the brand new, state of the art Duchossois Athletic and Recreation Center. I just walked through for the first time yesterday. It's amazing. What was it like for you walking into that building the day it opened?

Jan Hathorn  17:00
Oh, my goodness. Well, I... it's a little bit like a kid in the candy store, you know, it's like, look at all this stuff. It's awesome. And I have, as... being one of the elders stateswomen of our department, I've been
here a long time and [crosstalk]. And some of that just drives home the amazingness of it. I think I just created a new word.

**Ruth Candler 17:23**
It fits.

**Jan Hathorn 17:24**
It does fit, it's, if... if you did walk around, you will see there's so much to it that is just so amazing. And it's... and the thing is, they captured, they were able to capture some of the feelings of the old facility that we had. So we still have Doremus, which is its own thing and its own sort of spirit and its own history. But then they captured some of the things from Warner Center and made it part of this building, so that there's this bridge between Doremus and the old building and the new Duchossois Athletic and Recreation Center. So it has almost on a daily basis proven to be an a-ha moment of, "Oh, my gosh, we have that," or "This is..." You know, so here we are in COVID, everybody's indoor facilities have to be checked for this HVAC system that's compatible or at a high enough level that there's not a worry or a fear of spreading the virus. And we step into this brand new building that has the latest and so we've not had one reason to be concerned about that aspect of our indoor facility as it applies to us coming to work in a pandemic.

I mean, just how fortuitous is that? And on top of that, it's just such a relief and such a sense of security, it's... But we have so much here. Like they took down the old building and rebuilt on that footprint and were able to put in so much more, because they took out all the spaces that just weren't necessary, and they put things in them that we needed. So it's been fantastic. It really is still... it still smells like a new car, you know.

**Ruth Candler 19:10**
Love that smell. You know, what stuck out to me with your description, during the pandemic and the safety issues, is that, you know, the students need that, you know, that... the endorphins during the pandemic, and so to have that safe space to go and work out and, you know, be together...

**Jan Hathorn 19:31**
Absolutely.

**Ruth Candler 19:32**
...from a safe distance is so important. Well, every time I ask a staff member who works there about the building, you know, they light up.

**Jan Hathorn 19:40**
Yeah.

**Ruth Candler 19:40**
How has the new Duchossois Center changed the athletics and physical education experience for students? And what would you say are some of its most popular features?
Jan Hathorn 19:52
Well, the popular feature before and the popular feature after is the fitness center. It's fantastic. And it was fantastic to begin with. And then we made it even larger, which, you know, like, I know, it sounds sort of trite and canned when I say this, but I couldn't be more sincere when I say I just am so thankful I work at a place that allowed us to do this right when we did it. So we enlarged the fitness center, and so now it's possible for student athletes who are part of a varsity team to possibly have their strength and conditioning session at the exact same time that anybody from our community who's allowed to be using the fitness center can be in there. And in the past, it would... One would overtake the other, especially with the larger teams we have.

So I would say probably the most popular space is the fitness center, in part because our fantastic people have been able to keep it open throughout the academic year in this pandemic. So, you know, obviously lots of restrictions and things that you have to follow. But the protocols and the mitigation things that we're doing have allowed that to happen. And -- I gotta find something to knock on wood -- so far, it's not... There hasn't been able... We haven't been able as as a university to point to athletics or physical education or the fitness center as a cause of spreading the virus on campus. So major, major kudos to the folks in the fitness center who run that. Patti Colliton, Hayli Yetter, Aron Gibson, who all run our strength and conditioning and our fitness center operations have just... The work that they've done to make that a safe space so that everyone can continue to work out and deal with the mental health of their physical health when it comes to being in a pandemic. So that's been a really, really big bright spot for us.

Ruth Candler 21:48
Well, the Duchossois indoor tennis facility, which opened several years ago, allowed W&L to host some important regional tennis competitions. Do you expect that the new Duchossois facility will permit additional regional competitions that we were otherwise not able to host previously?

Jan Hathorn 22:05
Yes, absolutely. That's another bright spot. So the way that our former gym was built, we didn't have a ceiling that was high enough for us to host a regional NCAA volleyball match. So now we can, because... It was the coolest thing this year, we're in the first volleyball match and the ball, a ball got hit, and it went high into the ceiling, and it didn't run into anything, it just kept flying instead of going through all the steel I beams that used to be above the floor, it's just not there anymore. So that and men's and women's basketball, which we've never really been able to host because of just the size and the makeup of the court. So we have hosted wrestling regionals indoors, and we can continue to do that. But the... I think the exciting piece is that now our men's and women's basketball and our volleyball team are going to have that opportunity. And then I think...

Ruth Candler 23:02
And what a great opportunity for the student population too, once we are able to gather back again, is to have that sporting event to attend.

Jan Hathorn 23:10
There are a couple other things I want to mention. One is our athletic training clinic. It's bigger than it ever was. And it's fantastic. And it's giving our very capable and expert athletic training staff space to do what they need to do. And then we have a rec gym that we put in where the pool used to be. So this is really phase two of this project. We built the natatorium so that we could build this project and have that extra gym. So that rec gym is now in, so when we get back to normal use of our building, anyone can go in and play a pickup game of some kind, down on the rec gym while we're having practices in the other gyms upstairs. So really cool.

Ruth Candler  23:48
It's going to be a very, very busy place when things open back up. I want to switch gears a bit and discuss what it means to be a woman in the world of college athletics, particularly at W&L. You began your career here as a coach in 1987, just a couple years after coeducation. During that period, you were able to observe the first class of female students who made their way through W&L. You're also the first female athletic director at W&L. Would you share with us some of your observations of those challenges and rewards of coeducation faced by female student athletes during those early years?

Jan Hathorn  24:30
Absolutely. It's such a great story. The women that I knew that were student athletes, but also by extension their friends and classmates in those first few classes, especially the Class of 1989, were just undaunted, and it was impressive and inspirational because they knew what they were doing. They knew what they were getting into. And you know, especially now that they're alums, and I know them as alums, and we sometimes talk about what their experiences were like here, it's just, it's sort of, we're sort of awestruck with how bad it was, in some ways. And I say bad just because everything was oriented towards men. And so they'd go to the... the place to eat was called the Cockpit. Well, then we had to change the name of the Cockpit. It became the Generals' Headquarters, right. But so, you know, these are the things we laugh about today, because most of the things that... W&L was transitioning when they got here, and it just, they sort of set the place on its ear, because they just were unfazed. I'm sure they, I know, they dealt with a lot of things that just, you can't know what you're not prepared for until you get people here and you start going, "Oh, right, we should have thought of that." The university, though, let me just say this, because it's so true. The university was as prepared as they could be. It was all in. Like, no one held back on what it was going to be for these women to get here and start taking part in athletics, or music, or dance or whatever it was that we were going to offer them. It was ready to go. And if it wasn't ready to go, the feedback was, "This isn't in place." And so then we'd look at it, and people would take care of it.

But it was such a cool experiment, in some ways, because we all knew, it was, "Here we go, here we're starting and we'll just walk through it." And obviously, it's been highly, highly successful. And I think there's, you know, there's more than one reason for that, and there's a lot of variables at play. But I think in part, a lot of the credit goes to the women and their ability to continue to just walk through whatever presented itself. They wanted to be here, it was palpable. And they were happy to be here, as trying as it probably was for a lot of them for a lot of the time. But they had excellent experiences on the other hand. And I think at some point, those things balanced themselves out. And when I talk to those women today, they are some of the most gratified, satisfied women, because of the growth from their
moment until today and what's going on on campus today. So they set the bar very high. And I'd like to think that we've met that bar and sustained it. But I tell you, they were groundbreaking people and very amazing people.

**Ruth Candler 27:29**
Well I'd even say maybe excelled with the addition of a softball team.

**Jan Hathorn 27:34**
Exactly, exactly.

**Ruth Candler 27:37**
All right, Jan, I have to ask: What is it like to be a woman in a male dominated profession?

**Jan Hathorn 27:44**
Well, it's a lot like that experience of the women who first came here. You know what you're getting into. And if you're not aware, you're probably not awake, right? If you've been in athletics long enough, you just know, it's a guy's world. That doesn't mean that women aren't welcome, but you have to make a place for yourself at times, too. And, you know, there have been numbers of meetings where I'm the only woman in the room. And if there are other people from physical education and athletics with me, they usually were male. Not so much anymore, but at least in the beginning. And so if there was a group of men and myself around the table, the men would talk to the men. And at some point, I would just literally have to insert myself and say, "Well, as the director of athletics, this is what I think." And it wasn't really... it wasn't really well received. They just, it's just automatic and natural. So sometimes you have to break the cycle, so to speak, or you have to, you know, just sort of pick people's memory that, "Oh, yeah, right. Right. Right. Right. Like, she's here. And she's the director. And so what do you think, Jan?"

Most people that I've dealt with throughout my career in this role have learned that women in this role is a really good thing. And they're not sorry, you know, it's not like, "What a mistake!" It's the same thing with when we coeducated. It was never a mistake. It's an adjustment, and it's a modification to the things that you do automatically, and the things that are automatic about athletics and in some ways administratively in particular. And it's not... It's better today. It's not equal, especially on the Division I level, but in Division III it's... we've made a lot of progress. There are a lot of women in my role around the country. I think it's safe to say that, very much like those pioneers of our coeducational class, that we keep walking and we keep making a difference every day, and it changes things, and there's impacts and it's a benefit, and it's a positive and it's welcomed. And it's becoming more and more welcomed. It's a really cool thing to have been a part of. It's not always been easy, and it's often been maddening and frustrating, yet I wouldn't change it for the world, and I couldn't be more honored to be the first woman to be in this role.

**Ruth Candler 30:04**
Thank you for sharing that. I really appreciate that. Alright, so you just touched on this a little bit. What do you think it means to our female student athletes and coaches, not to mention other women in the college sports arena, to see you in this role?
Jan Hathorn 30:22
I'm glad you've asked that question, because I can say with much more confidence and certainty in the last three, four years... it has been brought to my attention, the difference it makes to the women who work in this department, the women student athletes, in part because our women students are interested in... It's interesting how things sort of come around in the cycle, but they're interested in the history. And we have coaches in our department, women in particular, but also some of our male head coaches, who draw attention to the fact that women haven't been on campus for very long, and they're proud of the fact that there are women on campus. And so they sort of go through the history with their teams and/or with their PE classes. And, you know, just for example, there's a student athlete on one of our teams who's in Women and Sexuality and Gender Studies and is doing a capstone on the history of women at Washington and Lee in athletics, you know, and it's...

Ruth Candler 31:26
Oh, I can't wait to see that.

Jan Hathorn 31:27
So it's... and I'm sure she's got several iterations of where she's ended up on that. But we've been in conversations about what was it like, and what does it mean. And then she's told me what it means to her to see a woman in this role and have a woman coach, and so on and so forth. And I can say with confidence it's impactful, and it's meaningful, and it's valuable and necessary. And it just needs to keep getting better. We've got to continue to do a job of keeping women in the forefront of all these positions, because it's time and they're good at it. They're the experts. We need them.

Ruth Candler 32:07
That we do. So what do you think your legacy will be at W&L?

Jan Hathorn 32:14
This is a hard question, only because somebody asked me years ago, when I first took over, "What do you want your legacy to be?" I'm like, I've never even thought about a legacy, I just get up and do my job, right? I have been blessed with the opportunity to be part of constructing this facility. That'll be something that will be part of my legacy. It seems so cocky to talk about a legacy. But I guess in the end, you leave a trail, right? So I think being the first woman is a huge piece of that path. And the people before me in this role did this well, too. But our... as athletics and our culture in general evolves and the way that our culture puts so much emphasis on athletes and athletics, I think the fact that we are still all about being a student, and then you're an athlete, is really huge. And it fits this institution and this institution's mission.

And I think for me, the most important legacy is the record of students who are scholar athletes at Washington and Lee, and/or scholar athletes on a higher regional or national level, or within our conference, postgrad scholarship numbers, you know, how they excelled in the classroom and in their sport together, and then got recognized for that, is probably the most important legacy of all for me.

Ruth Candler 33:35
When you look back over your career, is there anything that you would have done differently? You've been a trailblazer, so...

**Jan Hathorn 33:42**
Oh, Lord. Who doesn't look back on their life and go, "Geez, wish I didn't do that"?

**Ruth Candler 33:46**
I know, my list is very long.

**Jan Hathorn 33:48**
Absolutely. Um, I think the one thing I would change when I was coaching and then when I started in this role is to be a little more comfortable being... to talking about women and athletics and women in charge. You know, I think I could have been a little bolder and a little more confident about that. Just because, you know, at the same time, you don't come into a spot and just change everything, and you're not going to change people necessarily until... you might change their minds or their attitudes towards some things through living things out. And I acquiesced, I think, a little more than I probably would if I were to start today. That's much more important to me today than it was then, and I wish I'd recognized that, I think.

**Ruth Candler 34:37**
Well, thank you for sharing that. I appreciate it. Well, before we wrap up our conversation today, I'd like to do a quick lightning round with you. And so I'm gonna ask you a question, and you respond with the first thing that comes to your mind.

**Jan Hathorn 34:50**
Okay.

**Ruth Candler 34:52**
What's the most memorable thing you have seen happen in a W&L sports competition?

**Jan Hathorn 34:58**
Well, the most recent one is the women's basketball game after COVID. But there's a gazillion.

**Ruth Candler 35:07**
Alright, so what do you like to do when you're not on campus or watching athletics?

**Jan Hathorn 35:11**
Yeah. Garden, read, walk my dog.

**Ruth Candler 35:15**
What are you reading?

**Jan Hathorn 35:18**
Right now I am reading Ruth Bader Ginsburg's autobiography.
It's on my list. So we were talking the other day and you said that you are not ashamed to admit that you're a crier. So I hope you don't mind me sharing that with all of our listeners. What makes you cry?

Jan Hathorn 35:37
Oh, Lord, lots of things. Purity and innocence. Just skill or a situation where skill and preparation come together, and it's just magic. And it's just, it's awe-inspiring. Love, and pain and shared positive relationships with people that are deep and real. Truth. You know, honesty, those things that are sort of virtues but also values. They make me cry.

Ruth Candler 36:14
I love that. Alright, and now for something completely different. You have a pretty... you have a pretty sweet side gig...

Jan Hathorn 36:22
Yeah.

Ruth Candler 36:23
...no pun intended with that, as co-owner of Lexington's nationally renowned chocolate shop, The Cocoa Mill. How did you become involved with an industry so different than that of the world of athletics?

Jan Hathorn 36:37
Oh, I... You know, honestly, it's a little bit of luck and a little bit of just being in the right space at the right time. And my business partner and I just really felt like this was something that we should do. And I didn't even know I was going to apply to become the athletic director, let alone be appointed the athletic director, so it was going to be something that I, you know, could spend bits of my summer doing, and... But anyway, we... It just became a thing that we thought we should do. And we were fortunate to make it happen and the goal all along was for it to be a family business, and it has become that for her family. So it is a sweet side gig.

Ruth Candler 37:19
That it is! Yeah. Well, Jan, thanks so much. I've really enjoyed our conversation today. I appreciate you joining us.

Jan Hathorn 37:28
It's been such a pleasure. Thank you, Ruth, for having me.

Ruth Candler 37:32
And thanks as always to you for listening. We hope you've discovered something new. To read more about today's podcast and check out other ways to continue your lifelong learning with W&L, you can visit our website, wlu.edu/lifelong, where you'll find our two previously recorded webinar series:
"Prejudice, Discrimination and Antiracism" and "Truth, Opinion and the News Media." We hope you'll join us back here soon. Thanks again, and until then, let's remain together not unmindful of the future.