

Jody Bennett

Senior Vice President

Aquarius Sports & Entertainment

Jody Bennett is Senior Vice President of Aquarius Sports & Entertainment, a leading sports sponsorship and event marketing agency based in Gaithersburg, MD. Ms. Bennett works closely with the agency's largest partners such as Target, AAA and M&T Bank. During Ms. Bennett's tenure, Aquarius has twice been named one of *Inc. Magazine's* fastest growing private companies in America, and was most recently named one of *SportsBusiness Journal's* outstanding sports event and experiential marketing firms in America. Before joining Aquarius, Ms. Bennett founded Velocity Sports & Entertainment, since acquired by Aegis and merged into Team Epic. Her extensive experience in sports marketing includes work on behalf of internationally recognized brands including FedEx, IBM, Texaco, Cingular Wireless and NASCAR.

As the founder and Director of Marketing for Velocity Sports & Entertainment, Ms. Bennett managed multi-million dollar marketing budgets and was instrumental in developing Velocity's long-standing relationship with FedEx. While working with FedEx, she managed all aspects of the naming rights for FedExField in Washington, DC, acting as key liaison between FedEx and the Washington Redskins, as well as other NFL's franchises. She developed and implemented annual strategic marketing plans to enhance the FedEx brand, generate revenue, develop a world-class hosting program and positively impact FedEx employees. She worked with her Velocity team to leverage national and international sports sponsorships for both the National Basketball Association and Professional Golfers Association, while simultaneously maximizing return on investment for Velocity's extensive roster of Fortune 100 clients. Ms. Bennett played a role in the acquisition of Velocity by Aegis and remains as a consultant to FedEx, working closely with FedEx Chairman and CEO Frederick Smith. She is the first and only non-employee to ever win the coveted *Bravo Zulu Award* for excellence from FedEx.

A visionary and entrepreneurial leader, Ms. Bennett has launched several successful businesses prior to founding Velocity and more recently joining Aquarius. She was instrumental in the launch of Protocol International, Inc., serving as Director of Project Operations where she managed all logistics surrounding international protocol at the highest levels of government and international affairs. She planned and executed international visits from delegations including the President of Argentina, President of Azerbaijan, the Mayor of Moscow and Air Marshall for the Royal Thailand Air Force, among others, spanning 25 nations and nearly 100 cities. During that time, she also hosted events for Motorola's Racing Team and logistics at international trade conferences in Switzerland and Rio de Janeiro. During her four-year tenure, Protocol International grew exponentially, leading to the acquisition of the firm.

An avid cyclist and sponsored athlete, between 2007 and 2012, Ms. Bennett launched and operated Freshbikes/Conte's Bicycles, a premium bicycle sales and service business in Washington, DC for professional cyclists and die-hard aficionados. The venture quadrupled initial sales projections to log more than \$2.2 million in revenue its first year. Utilizing innovative marketing strategies and innate relationship building skills, she developed a cadre of clients spanning the U.S. Secret Service, Fortune 500 corporations, and the nation's most influential politicians. She eventually franchised the company, after growing revenue five-fold to more than \$10 million in less than five years. A socially conscious senior executive, Ms. Bennett exercised her vision of a healthy community by providing bike safety seminars at local companies and volunteering at "Bike to Work" day. She has participated in the Race Across America (RAAM), bicycling across the United States in seven and a half days to raise over \$45,000 for Children's Melanoma research. She also participates in 24-hour mountain bike and trail running races. While Ms. Bennett continues to enjoy the sport of cycling, she agreed to sell her interests in FreshBikes/Conte's Bicycles to one of her partners, enabling her to move forward with other interests.

Ms. Bennett began her career at Prudential Preferred Services, earning Series 6 and Series 63 accreditations to provide financial planning services to small business owners and individual estates. Those services included wealth accumulation, succession planning and estate taxes. She finished in the top 10% among 25,000 agents in her first year.

A graduate of the University of Iowa, Ms. Bennett earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in 1987 and is a passionate Hawkeye fan. Ms. Bennett currently resides in Washington, DC and often bikes 20 miles each way to work. When she's not at work or on the bike, she loves to ski, a passion she mastered during a short stint as a ski bum at the Big Sky Resort in Big Sky, Montana. A self-described business junkie, her ski bum vacation resulted in a volunteer position as the liaison between U.S. and Canada for the State Department for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperative (APEC) Conference, and later a year-long post as National Sales Manager for the Big Sky Resort where she generated over \$3 million in new business. She presently mentors small businesses, employees and students in customer service, corporate culture, marketing and the art of deal making and lectures at Georgetown University, George Washington University, and the University of Maryland. In addition to her business and sports endeavors, Ms. Bennett has also served as a volunteer for Search and Rescue, conducting search operations for missing persons and aircraft and rescue operations in the wilderness.