

Statement from Jim Bartko, June 13, 2018

I am releasing this statement to respond to recent press inquiries and to publicly thank all of you who have reached out to me and offered support since my sudden departure as Fresno State's Athletic Director last November.

I have been asked by the press if I filed a claim concerning my employment at Fresno State. The answer is yes. Despite what the public has been told by Fresno State, and despite cruel rumors spread about me personally and professionally both before and after my departure, I did not leave Fresno State by choice or for "personal reasons." Given the facts about how I was treated over the last ten months of my employment, I believe Fresno State's actions against me and the handling of my forced exit were unlawful. I filed an administrative claim in order to preserve my right to file a lawsuit. At this time, I will not comment further on this matter.

I have also been asked if I would change certain decisions I made in my life, and in particular my decision to be open about being a survivor of sexual abuse. The answer is no. I do not regret telling my story. I wish I had been given more support and compassion from my employer, including a more appropriately-handled departure. But, I have learned over the course of my nearly 30-year career that things don't always happen according to plan. One of my favorite quotes from Joseph Campbell says it best, "We must be willing to get rid of the life we've planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us." I am looking forward to the life that is waiting for me.

I will continue to share my story as a survivor and to help other survivors in any way I can. One of the keys to my success thus far has been living my truth. I strive every day to be a man of integrity and honor, and I choose to live in the light and to be transparent with respect to my experience and recovery from the trauma inflicted in my youth. If you know someone going through what I went through, it means the world to have others reach out and offer support and compassion. I have learned that there is much help and hope for those who experience PTSD and anxiety illnesses.

I am eternally grateful to all of you who have stood by me and raised me up with unconditional support through what has amounted to a very challenging time. You will forever have a place in my heart.

Jim