



Alliance Wide Call

The first Alliance-wide call of 2021 will be happening in the next few weeks. It will feature one of our co-chairs from the Youth Sports Committee, Vanessa Robinson-Doooley. She will be speaking to a youth organization. Please keep your eyes open for an email with details. We will also be sending out information regarding the data that was collected with topics suggested in the survey that was completed.

New Members

Welcome to our new members: John O'Neil, Suzette Jacob, Tony Austin, Neha Uberoi, Carlos Sayles, Mark Davis, Stephanie Rosales, Marjorie Del, Ashley Fielding, Gina Scalzo and Sam Bates, Deidre Porter, Tyler Fishbein.

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A Letter from the President

Greetings my fellow Sport Social Workers! I am thrilled to serve as President of this phenomenal organization and happy to be back.

I asked the E-Team to let me share why I needed to step away. On January 29th, I experienced an electrical fire at my home. I was attending the Clinicians Committee meeting and jumped off to run an errand before my next client. In that short 15-minutes, my house sustained major fire damage, and my 12-year-old Chihuahua died from smoke inhalation the next day. I lived in a hotel for almost 45 days before moving to temporary housing while my house is restored. The anticipated move home date is September 11th. Inanimate objects can be replaced, but the loss of Chico has been tough! All animal lovers can relate, I'm so sure . . . Thank you for your emails, texts, and words of encouragement although you had no idea what I have endured. Blessings to YOU!

The E-Team is off and running with several different projects. As you know, we established formal email addresses for President, Treasurer, and Administration, so we can respond more quickly to your requests for information and feedback. We hope you have found this change to be helpful and minimize confusion about emails to you from the E-Team.

We are in the preliminary stages of planning our 7th Symposium which will be virtual again. The coronavirus surges as well as new variants are reason enough for us to keep ourselves and colleagues safe for at least another 12 months. We will see what the future holds for an in-person Symposium as our country moves forward with vaccines. The E-Team will discuss topics at our meeting April 19th and invite you to submit ideas you may have to president@aswis.org. I will share your ideas with the E-Team.

Our immediate Past President, Dr. Matt, our Vice-President, Jerry, and I met with the leadership from Clinical Counseling Sport Psychology Association (CCSPA)/BigSky to discuss collaborative opportunities. This is the conversation we have been hoping for, as athletes are best served when we hold hands and stick together. We would like for them to speak at one of our Alliance-wide calls as well as participate in a panel during our Symposium. We also agreed to have quarterly meetings and will meet again tentatively on June 10th. As we discussed working together, we used the example of hospital teams that have a variety of professionals serving patients. It is an opportunity for us to model a team approach, e.g., sports psychologist, sports social worker, licensed clinical mental health counselor, as well as nutritionists, trainers, physical therapists -all bringing unique skills to the athletes' professional team.

We will start posting the E-Team meeting minutes on our website for your review once they are approved. They will be in a link under the E-Team for the membership to know the different topics we discuss to strengthen our Alliance each month.

We also want to increase our membership and hope you will invite social workers you know who are interested in serving the athlete population to join us. VP Jerry and I met last week to discuss ways to address this topic. We believe our Alliance is enhancing opportunities for social workers to enter the sports arena as professionals as well as their work with all of our committees. Each committee lends opportunities to advance in the sports world professionally. If you have not joined a committee, I hope you will. ASWIS committee work is very rewarding.

I still plan to address two other items I mentioned in my platform, both of which are associated with our National organization. I would like to have a Sport Social Work specialization added to the current list, and I believe a designated seat on the Board for the former President of ASWIS will help expand knowledge and support of Sport Social Work in our field. Sport Social Workers ROCK!

Many thanks to Matt, Jerry, and the entire E-Team, Ginger, Tark, Kelli, Stacy, Victor, and Stephanie for pulling together during my absence. I am forever grateful.

Anita Daniels, President

Be sure to check out the ASWIS Job Center for emerging opportunities in the sport social work field.



Social Workers are Essential by Christine A. Mosher, LICSW

Social workers are essential. What are our essential services? They are validation, emotional support, positive reinforcement, education, encouragement, inspiration, teaching coping skills, providing insight, comfort, healing, growth, recovery.

How does one quantify that? We don't have numbers to keep track the number of lives we've saved. How many suicides did we prevent today? How many relationships did we help repair today? How many goals did we help clients reach today? How many coping skills did we teach today?

It's hard to really know the impact that we have. We are the behind the scenes workers who lift people up, the support system that replaces the absentee family, the loving mom who fills in for the abusive parent, the trusted friend who provides unrelenting encouragement, the devoted coach who believes in their athlete's potential, the insightful pastor who provides spiritual guidance, the comforting dad who provides strength and stability.

We believe in the ability of our client's ability to grow, to learn, to see themselves in a different light, to achieve, to recover, to heal, to blossom. We provide the water, the light, the nutrients that make it possible for our clients to create a brighter future for themselves, to grasp on to any shred of hope they may have to strive towards a better life. . .

A life worth living a life filled with hope and joy and love a life of mindfulness, of forgiveness, and letting go of painful pasts, of moving on towards happier futures.

We respect the dignity and worth of all human beings. We acknowledge and embrace each others differences. We celebrate diversity, we promote acceptance. We stand up for others, we fight for social justice. We promote equality, we try to improve the lives of those who are struggling We speak up for the voiceless, we empower the weak, We cheer for the strong, we celebrate successes.

We say, "You got this, you can do this, you are amazing, don't give up, you are worthy."

This is what we do, this is who we are. Yes, social workers are essential!

Committee Updates

- *Pro-Sports Committee*- The Pro Sports Committee held its first meeting with Co-Chairs Valon Alford and Jill Patent on 3/31/2021. On the last day of Social Work Month, participants introduced themselves, their passion and work in the pro sports social work arena, and discussed their goals for the committee. Afterwards, an email was sent to each member who expressed interest in the committee to complete a Doodle survey (https://doodle.com/poll/ivzhaiyri4fmarye?utm_source=poll&utm_medium=link) to establish a regular day for monthly meetings (still TBD), as well as a Survey Monkey link (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8QRX9RW>) to provide demographic information about ourselves that will be shared with the group for networking purposes. If you are interested in joining this committee, please complete the surveys and reach out to the Co-Chairs at aswisprosports@gmail.com. We look forward to collaborating with everyone!
- *Committee on College Sports* - last met on February 1, 2021. We are currently working on a statement to address athlete abuse. Our next meeting will be scheduled in late spring/early summer. If you are interested in supporting any of our projects or joining our committee, if you have any ideas for upcoming webinars please contact Dr. Lorin Tredinnick at lnmordecai@gmail.com.
- *Research Committee* - with the help of our interns, the committee made substantial updates to our RESEARCH CENTER on the website. At our upcoming meeting, we would like to begin the discussion related to the vision for our Strategic Plan Goals and how our committee can forward the mission, vision, and values of ASWIS. Please email Dr. Tarkington J. Newman or complete our DOODLE POLL to provide your schedule for the week of January 11th, 2021.
- *Committee on Youth Sports* -stay tuned for further movement from this committee. It's been a challenge to get people working so we are moving to meeting monthly and see if that helps. We are going to use our meetings as mini-work sessions.
- *Committee on International Sport Social Work* - See page four.

The Athlete's World: Intersectionality of Covid-19, Social Justice, and Mental Health

By: Christine Mosher, LICSW

I am a psychotherapist and my full-time job is working for Walden Behavioral Care, which is an eating disorder clinic based in Massachusetts, with additional facilities in Connecticut and Georgia. I also have my own private practice part-time, currently using Telehealth, where I treat clients of all ages, including children, adolescents, adults, and seniors. I have several clients who are athletes, ranging from the youth to high school and college level. Some of the sports they participate in are gymnastics, golf, cross-country running, basketball and soccer. I also work with several former athletes who have participated in football, tennis, wrestling, and hockey.

In today's climate, with the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic and the rise of social justice issues in our country, athletes are struggling with an increase in mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, adjustment disorder, insomnia, body image issues and eating disorders. Some of the types of eating disorders my clients have been struggling with are anorexia, bulimia, binge-purge, and orthorexia (fixation on eating "healthy" foods).

I have also noticed a difference in how athletes of different ages have been reacting to not being able to play their sport at this time. With youth athletes, their primary struggle is not having physical activity to keep them moving, not being able to see their friends, and not keeping busy with sport practices and games that used to fill their afternoons and weekends. This has been very challenging for kids and their parents. Parents may see an uptick in irritability and increased need for attention as well as angry outbursts, and other behavioral issues within this age group.

With high school athletes, they've not only lost their ability to play their sport for their school, but they've also lost their sense of identity, which is very important during their adolescent years. Being a student athlete in high school is something that gives teens a sense of self-esteem, self-worth, and acceptance amongst their peers. Many of my clients are having difficulty coping with this lack of interaction with their friends and teammates, which leads to an increase in depression and anxiety, an increased use of social media to replace in-person socialization, and insomnia. This insomnia is causing teens to sleep later in the day, which can lead to not eating on a regular schedule and skipping meals (leading to lack of adequate nutrition and weight loss). Eating disorders commonly develop as a coping mechanism to deal with emotional distress.

The college athletes I've dealt with who have also lost their ability to play their sport are dealing with anxiety, depression, adjustment challenges, and eating disorders. Having to move home with their parents after living at school with their roommates, friends, and possibly teammates has been very stressful for these young adults.

It's as if the rug has just been pulled out from underneath them. Full seasons have been lost... games, practices, road trips and tournaments are suddenly gone. Collegiate student athletes are usually on a very tight schedule, trying to fit in classes, study time, practice time, game time, meal time, etc. They are now having difficulty figuring out how to make a new schedule. Some athletes missed their whole spring season, and may have graduated without any ceremony or sense of closure. Some went back to college this fall, not knowing if they were going to be able to play their sport or not, and if so, wondering what would that look like. It's very difficult for them to cope with this level of uncertainty and so many unanswered questions.

Collegiate student athletes are also very aware and disheartened by the current world climate in regards to racism and other social justice issues that have been highlighted in the media over the last year. One of my college athletes who is struggling with anxiety, depression and an eating disorder said to me, "Why should I try to be the best person I can be if we have to live in such a terrible world like this?" So feeling a sense of loss of hope for the future is also a serious problem, which makes it harder for athletes to keep motivated.

Clinical Interventions:

Some of the interventions I have used include trying to help athletes to modify their thoughts and behaviors to help improve their moods. I have tried to encourage clients to identify other areas of interest, such as pursuing art or music, cooking or baking, or doing crafts or puzzles or other creative activities. Many clients have a difficult time identifying another activity they would like to try.

I have also found good success using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, which can help athlete clients to try to look at things from a different perspective. By challenging cognitive distortions and reframing their thoughts, clients can help adjust their behavioral response to problems and improve their mood. Also, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy has been helpful for some of my athletes. With DBT, clients learn mindfulness, distress tolerance, interpersonal effectiveness, and emotional regulation skills to help them better respond to stressful situations.

To read this full article, visit the ASWIS Blog by clicking this [LINK](#).



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We are excited to offer individual access to all recordings from the 6th Annual Social Work in Sports Symposium. The cost of these recordings is \$40 and comes with an opportunity to earn Continuing Education Units. You can learn more by visiting the Symposium [WEBPAGE](#).

Thank you to everyone who made our first virtual symposium a success. We had over 100 attendees across two days of presentations. A final thank you to our sponsors: LifeSports at The Ohio State University, Ball State University Department of Social Work, Dr. Stacy Kratz, Actualities Limited, UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare, University of Michigan School of Social Work, and the University of South Florida School of Social Work.

Membership Announcements

February is all about love and the International Committee jumped right in!

To celebrate the love of sport social work, Executive Committee Member at Large **Dr Stacy Kratz**, and Executive Committee Member Student Representative **Stephanie**

Rosado, MSW, spearheaded a virtual fundraiser to raise awareness and help collect sports bras for girls who otherwise may not be able to get in the game. More than 30 members donated, totalling 50 bras donated to The Sports Bra Project. The Sports Bra Project (TSBP) knows barriers to participation too often remain unaddressed and proper equipment is a simple -- and yet major -- obstacle. In the words of TSBP founder Sarah Dwyer-Shick's own words, "Without the support and coverage of a sports bra, essential for both comfort and cultural modesty, girls and women are often hesitant to participate. As a result, even the best run and well intentioned sports programs can be inaccessible. The Sports Bra Project aims to change that". The International Committee, co-chaired by Dr Kratz and ASWIS Immediate Past President Dr Matt Moore, identified two sport programs in Cape Town, South Africa that experience major shortfalls in helping provide sports bras for their participants: Her Best Shot, an after school competitive soccer program, and School of Hard Knocks, a school-based rugby program. Both programs help kids excel in academics -- a major goal of global sport for development initiatives.

Thank you to everyone who participated! For more info on the International Committee, feel free to reach out to Dr. Kratz at 813-380-2375, or stacy@kratz.us

Dr. Matt Moore received promotion and tenure to the rank of Associate Professor at Ball State University. Dr. Moore was also promoted to Department Chair effective July 1st. Congratulations!

Lisa Sumii is now listed in the USOPC Mental Health Registry, and has been newly hired as the Oakland Roots Sports Club's first ever Mental Health and Sport Performance Specialist. The Roots are a men's professional soccer team in the USL. They are a purpose driven club with social justice and equity at its center.

Dr. Tarkington J. Newman recently had two manuscripts accepted for publication, including "Coaching life skill development and transfer: A scoping review of facilitative coaching practices in youth sports" in International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology, as well as "Social work in sport: Playmakers in the athletic arena" in Journal of Social Work. He also presented his research at USA Triathlon's coaches meeting and the Eastern Canada Sport & Exercise Psychology Symposium. Additionally, he is a member of research team that received grant funding to study the effectiveness of outdoor behavioral health care among adolescents: <https://www.unh.edu/unhtoday/news/release/2021/02/25/unh-receives-nearly-3-million-research-effectiveness-wilderness-therapy>.

Dr. Tarkington J. Newman also created a new course at the University of New Hampshire, which will be taught this summer, titled "Positive Youth Development through Social Work & Sport". Additionally, he was named as an Advisory Board Member for the America East Academic Consortium Mental Health Research Initiative.

Stephanie Rosado!



Stephanie is a member of the executive committee currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of South Florida (USF). Her research interests include sport social work, athlete wellbeing, technology and health disparities with a special interest in osteoarthritis.

She has recently submitted an IRB application to begin research on exploring the experiences of former athletes during Covid-19 and has also submitted a first-authored manuscript for publication to Advances in Social Work journal. Her manuscript highlights sport social workers as key players within the athletic arena. In March, she volunteered her time to introduce high school football players from the Blessed to Announce Project to sport social work and what her own social work journey has entailed. She is also currently volunteering to raise funds for the Arthritis Foundation in their fight to improve the condition for #ArthritisWarriors. You can visit her fundraising page at:

<https://events.arthritis.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.participant&participantID=229231>

Stephanie is also awaiting publication of a co-authored sport social work chapter in the Social Worker's Desk Reference which was led by Dr. Stacy Kratz. By participating in Q&A panels and discussions, Stephanie is working independently and with her university in the recruitment of potential Ph.D. students in order to encourage the pursuit of social work Ph.D.'s in order to continue the growth of the field. Lastly, Stephanie is also contributing to service within her university by founding a monthly support group for minority graduate students at USF.

Membership Announcements (continued):

Traci Nigg participated in a career chat about social work at Wichita State University and spoke on sports social work. Just something to get the word out!

"Thanks again to all of you for being a part of our Career Chat! Here is the YouTube link, the Shock Talk will premiere on Tuesday, March 30 at 12 pm. <https://youtu.be/fhZNfD6HZc>"

For more information please contact us at

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