



Alliance Wide Call

Our next Alliance Wide call will be July 20th at 4pm EST. Special guest: Dr. Stephany Coakley, Sr. Associate Athletic Director for Mental Health, Wellness, and Performance at Temple University.

Future calls will be on September 28th, and November 23rd. Mark your calendars!

New Members

Thank you to all our new members who joined in the last two months.

New members include: Lauren Apple, Kim Outlaw, Lauren Shute, Courtney Lotto, Noel Nkurnyabahizi, Carolyn Haney, Marlene Morrison, Suzanne Potts, Jennifer Cruze, Del Majore, and Eric Dawson

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A Letter from the President

Dear ASWIS Membership:

I hope everyone is having a terrific start to the summer months. While we will certainly take time to enjoy the outdoors and maybe even a vacation, our Executive Committee will remain hard at work. Currently, we are thick in the planning for our 5th Annual Social Work in Sports Symposium, growing our Sport Social Work Certificate Program, expanding educational opportunities for our membership, advocating for policy changes, and growing our network of dedicated members.

These current efforts just scratch the surface of what defines our Alliance and the future of Sport Social Work. I hold very close to my heart a simple notion that I hope resonates with all of you. Never doubt that a group of thoughtful and committed individuals can change the course of history. This mindset got us to our current place. It is this mindset that will get us over the next hurdles, and allow for our desire, emotion, and knowledge to propel us to an even brighter future for the profession and those we seek to serve.

As we go forth these next couple of months let's all put forth a sincere effort to better the Alliance, be ready to execute when opportunities arise, and have the highest intentions for promoting all that our specialty field can offer. If all 200+ of us do so together we will make the world of sports a better place.

I admire each of you and what you bring to my life and the lives of others. Thank you for allowing me to lead our Alliance and for being partners in innovation.

Much love,



Matt Moore, PhD, MSW

Invitation to Participate in a Research Study on Reintegration Experiences of Former College Athletes

Anyone who played a NCAA sport (Division I, II, III, any sport) is invited to participate. The online survey takes about 10 minutes to complete. The principal investigators are social workers Dr. Laneshia Conner (Spalding University) and Dr. Diana Rowan (UNC Charlotte, ASWIS founding member). Sports social work needs empirical data generated through studies designed by social workers to help build and define our knowledge base. If you are a former NCAA athlete -- or know any -- please [CLICK HERE](#) to complete the survey. Feel free to distribute the link and invitation via social media.

BREAKING NEWS: The Alliance website has now surpassed 100,000 views on the Internet. Congratulations to everyone on this milestone!



Excerpt: A Call to Coaches - Make Mental Health a Program Priority

By: Katie Johnson, LISW

In late April our local news outlet announced the resignations of three leading high school boys basketball coaches in our metro area. This area comprises a total of seven high schools. These coaches made their announcements within two days of one another and cited reasons involving time demands or family priority. These reasons are sound and insightful. I'm convinced, however, that is not the full story.

High school coaches from all over the United States are resigning from their posts. The explanations mentioned in many cases are echoing throughout the nation (and beyond) – year-round insurmountable time commitments, hostile parents, and “politics.” The culture of youth sports has been changing for years, and many high school coaches and school systems don't seem to be enjoying the conditions.

IT'S (SORTA) PERSONAL

Permit me to share a story with you. I am a Coach's Kid (CK). My dad has coached youth sports for various ages since 1974, but much of his time was spent at the high school level (1974 – 2017). Let's just say he wasn't home a lot. To many his full-time career was being an insurance agent. What we witnessed at home was simply Coach Johnson. Countless nights at our kitchen table over a spread of papers, glasses on, chin in hand, frozen in “thinker” pose. Coach would pour over stats, manuals, rules changes, whatever was relevant to the game.

He continually gave of his time, energy, sweat, finances, and love. Every season he bought equipment using his own money. Thanks to the strong leadership and the help of many volunteer parents, the field was always immaculate under his watch. He attended sporting events year-round in support of each of his players, watching them grow and evolve as individuals and as athletes.

This is what drove him and many other coaches – the growth and development of student-athletes through sport. It is the long-time mantra of schools and coaches all over the nation and globe. And to compete, of course.

He would have continued this cycle, however the demands and treatment of a high school girls softball coach changed in ways that did not align with his personal coaching philosophy or well-being. This is a very personal example and here is how it relates to the sport social work field.

COACH BURNOUT

We know the predicament of the high school coach - full-time hours for significantly less than part time pay. The list of tasks is unending: trainings, meetings, camps, scouting, statistics, player development, etc. In addition to coaching responsibilities these individuals maintain full-time jobs while often having families of their own. They know the laborious conditions of being a coach and still they commit. Now we're losing them.

As sport social workers, we see burnout occur when an individual's output greatly outweighs their input resulting in unavoidable physical, emotional, social and psychological distress. Burnout that is evidenced by the ever-increasing number of coach resignations. The World Health Organization just made burnout an official diagnosable condition. It's a thing.

For coaches, that burnout bell has been ringing. Demands plus relational stress between coaches and parents are bringing about a sense of hopelessness and helplessness. There truly is a social-emotional-physiological fatigue resulting in lowered interest in a role they have long enjoyed and a feeling of disconnect from their family members and support network.

I commend the coaches who are choosing their personal health and well-being over a job. I recognize it to be one of the most difficult decisions of their lives to step away. I know it was for my dad, even though he won't admit how much stress the conditions caused him, or how difficult the decision. And while I don't know the story of every coach, I'd be willing to bet many of them won't - and don't - openly talk about their level of stress.

To read this full story [CLICK HERE](#). Other recent blog posts and stories include:

When they see Us: The Central Park 5, Kyle Lowry, Kevin Durant, and the Criminalization and Mistreatment of the Black Male (By: Zach Draves)

A Call to Action: Support Transgender Athletes During Pride Month and Beyond (By: Zach Draves)

Safe at Home: Domestic Violence in MLB and Lessons to be Learned (By: Zach Draves)

Caster Semenya: Misogynoir and the Policing of the Black Female Athlete (By: Zach Draves)

Committee Updates

- *Education Committee* - the committee is currently overseeing three cohorts in the Sport Social Work Certificate Program. This includes eight students participating in their final internship placement. The deadline for submitting an application to the fourth cohort is July 31st. The committee also applied for over 50 CEUs from NASW for those completing the program.

- *Early Scholars Committee* - the committee has continued their commitment of disseminating knowledge related to the intersection of social work and sport. In a collaborative effort, several members were recently invited to submit an article for a special issue on sport and sexual violence prevention in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence. Additionally, several members of the group had their article, “The Role of Social Workers in Sport: Shared Values, Interprofessional Collaborations, and Unique Contributions,” accepted to the Journal of Sport Psychology in Action. Additionally, the committee would like to welcome new member, Simone Walton!

- *Research and Policy Committee* - the committee oversaw the peer review of submissions to the 5th Annual Social Work in Sports Symposium. The committee also added another 40 articles to the research center. You can access the research center [HERE](#).

- *Committee on Pro Sports* - the committee is considering strategies for approaching the National Football League (NFL) in light of the organization's position to hire part-time mental health clinicians for each team. Members are updating materials and the co-chairs are drafting a letter for Dr. Allen K. Sills, Chief Medical Officer. Co-chair Anita Daniels, LCSW, LCAS, CCS, contacted the NC Player Care Foundation liaison, Ms. Valon Alford, MSW, LCSW, to obtain more information. Many thanks to Committee Member Stephanie Falotico, who discovered the NFL has a “TEAM BEHIND THE TEAM” concept, which the Pro Sports Committee will use as our springboard to recommend the creation of a Mental Wealth Team for the Game Day Medical Staff. We also thank Dr. Janice Hilliard, who has agreed to lend her expertise to our efforts to ensure NFL players and teams have the benefit of licensed mental health professionals to support their overall mental wealth.

Have We Come A Long Way Baby? Assaults on the Reproductive Rights and the Impact on Women's Sports

(By: Zach Draves)

Nina Simone's classic Mississippi Goddam began with "Alabama got me so upset" and given the recent anti-abortion law that was passed in that state, upset would be a gross understatement. The law prohibits abortion even in the cases of rape and incest. The only exceptions included were if the mother's life was in serious jeopardy. Furthermore, any doctor that performs an abortion is subjected to a 99 year prison sentence. We need to call it for what it is, a desperate attempt by lawmakers to dismantle the landmark Roe v. Wade ruling from 1973 that declared that a woman has the right to choose whether or not to have an abortion and to establish the basic principle that women are able to control their own bodies. One can certainly anticipate the effect this and laws passed in other states such as Georgia, Ohio, and Missouri will have on the lives of women going forward, but what should also be addressed is how these measures will damage the ability of women and girls to participate in sports. There is not much empirical research available to solidify that claim, but there is a discussion to be had and data to be collected.

The renowned sports sociologist and civil rights activist Dr. Harry Edwards who was the chief organizer behind the Olympic Project for Human Rights in 1967 that culminated in the legendary protest by Tommie Smith and John Carlos at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City has been at the forefront of leading a much needed conversation about the impact of rolling back reproductive rights on women's sports. According to Dr. Edwards, states like Texas and North Carolina has seen a decrease in women's participation in sports at the same time that anti-abortion laws were passed and reproductive health clinics began to close down. That is not a coincidence. When looking at history, we often talk about the clear impact Title IX has had, but we don't talk enough about Roe v. Wade. Essentially, the Supreme Courts' decision gave colleges/universities the confidence that they could give young women athletic scholarships and ensure that she would be available to fully participate throughout their respective athletic seasons without inference. In other words, when women are given access to health care and sports, they become active functioning members of society. [CLICK HERE](#) to read the rest of this story.



The Huddle is a podcast series with the Alliance of Social Workers in Sports and the Student-Athlete Mental Health Initiative (Canada). This series will address the mental wellness of student-athletes by interviewing mental health experts, coaches, current and former student-athletes and those in the sports community. Sample topics for the podcast series include: transitioning from sport, brain injury awareness, self-care in sport, international advocacy in sport, suicide in sport, and athlete success stories. The series will release it's first episodes in July. To access other podcasts featuring ASWIS members [CLICK HERE](#).

ASWIS JOB CENTER

Please keep an active eye on our [JOB CENTER](#). We post new opportunities each week.

Consensus Paper on Mental Health Published by the International Olympic Committee (IOC)

Eleven experts were invited to write a sub specialty paper on topics related to athlete mental health. Our very own Cindy Miller-Aron wrote the paper on Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, along with Dr. Sydney Harvey. You can access the paper [HERE](#).

According to the IOC, the consensus statement and sub specialty papers are the most comprehensive and scholarly mental health documents ever produced for the care of elite athletes. The target audiences for the papers are sports medicine doctors, athletic trainers, and mental health service providers. You can learn more about the full compliment of sub specialty papers [HERE](#).



5th Annual Social Work in Sports Symposium

The Alliance of Social Workers in Sports (ASWIS) will produce a three-day symposium entitled, focusing on Integrated Behavioral Health Care of Athletes. The three-day symposium will run from October 21st through 23rd at the Denver Athletic Club (downtown Denver). This year's symposium will include Ted Talk style presentations, panel discussions, interactive workshops, poster sessions, a social event, and keynote/featured speakers. See the flyer to the right for more information on two of the featured speakers. Additional information will come in the next month. To submit a proposal please [CLICK HERE](#). To register and view all travel information [CLICK HERE](#).

Membership Announcements

- Stephanie Gaumer began a new job as a Clinical Therapist at Counseling Centers of Michigan in Clarkston, MI! Stephanie will work one on one with athletes regarding a variety of mental health concerns.
- Brandon Ousley is implementing Coaching Boys Into Men with two local high schools in Memphis, TN. These efforts are through the nonprofit, Heal 901. You can learn more about the program [HERE](#).
- Marlene Holmes was awarded the "Leadership Fellowship Award," from the School of Social Work at Barry University.
- Lorin Mordecai co-authored an article published in Sport and Society on "College Coaches' Influence on Student-Athlete Engagement in Sexual Violence Prevention: Promoting Readiness to Help and Awareness of Campus Resources." Lorin is also getting married in July!
- Amy May presented at the International Sport and Society Conference in Toronto.
- Carter Bain graduated with his BSW from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). He is starting the MSW Program at VCU in the fall.
- Bill Vanderwill, Warren Clark, Kayla Douglas and Sara Driesenga created a University of Michigan School of Social Work Continuing Education Workshop to introduce Sport Social Work to their field instructors.
- Alex Diaz was interviewed last month by Its The Zone, a basketball training facility regarding mental health awareness month. You can access the interview [HERE](#).
- Dawn Shadron and colleagues gave a presentation at the Boston Children's Hospital Female Athlete Conference. You can learn more about the presentation [HERE](#).
- Matt Moore presented on a panel about athlete mental health at the NCAA Leadership Development and Career in Sports Forum.
- Cindy Miller presented at the Oregon Health Sciences University Department of Psychiatry Grand Rounds and at an International Trauma Conference in Greece.
- OSU LifeSports, led by leaders from the College of Social Work and Athletic Department at Ohio State, opened our first satellite camp at Beatty Recreation Center through a partnership with the City of Columbus Parks & Recreation Department, Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority/Urban Strategies, and the Lindy Infante Foundation. We are now teaching social skills through sport to nearly 100 more youth in Columbus.
- Jerry Reynolds participated in a podcast entitled, *Parents and ACEs: How our Childhood Experiences affect our Child's Sports*. You can access this podcast [HERE](#).
- Anita Daniels was in Australia for two weeks in May. She is reaching out to professional sports leaders in Australia to expand the Alliance's international reach.

Member Spotlight



Suzanne Potts

Suzanne Potts, LMSW, MPH is the National Director for Athletes for Hope (AFH) and manages all of the measurement and evaluation for the organization. She teaches two macro focused courses at the University of Texas, Austin Graduate School of Social Work.

She is also faculty with the George Washington University Business School, Sports Philanthropy Executive Certificate program teaching Program Design. Athletes for Hope is a 501 c-3 non-profit organization founded in 2007 by a legendary and philanthropic group of athletes including Muhammad Ali, Andre Agassi, Mia Hamm, Jeff Gordon, Warrick Dunn, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, and Alonzo Mourning. They created AFH to bring professional and Olympic athletes together and channel their energy for a common goal: to make a difference in the world through sports philanthropy.

She has worked as a medical social worker, funder and capacity building consultant for over 21 years and has experience bringing supports and resources to under-served populations. Suzanne has broad nonprofit and foundation experience, and is cross-trained in multiple focus areas such as domestic violence, child abuse, mental health, foster care, health care, education, and employment.

She most recently served as Executive Director for the Autism Society of Texas and collaborated statewide on autism programs, advocacy, education and navigation support for individuals with autism and their families. Suzanne previously worked as a funder for over a decade at LIVESTRONG as the Community Program Officer for Community Grants, Program Manager at OneStar Foundation and in San Diego at the San Diego Workforce Partnership as the Youth Program Manager providing program design, evaluation and monitoring for Youth Workforce Investment Act funds. She is a lifelong soccer player and played four years of competitive club soccer at San Diego State University from 1990-1994, serving as team Captain and President of the on campus club student advisory committee. She sees sports as a vehicle for change for anyone, regardless of ability, and loves connecting athletes to philanthropic opportunities.



The Detroit Pistons hosted the University of Michigan's Athletes Connected for Pride Night. The event included a Q&A session with a U-M student, G. Ryan, and viewing of a video regarding the experience of a transgender athlete.

For more information please contact us at

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