

LIFE AFTER SPORTS PROJECT



**A PROJECT BY:
THE COMMITTEE ON
COLLEGE SPORTS**

Published June 2021

PREFACE

In Summer 2020, the ASWIS Committee on College Sports launched the Life After Sports Project. The goal of the Life After Sports Project is to provide useful career advice to current student-athletes from former student-athletes. The inspiration for the project came from one of our committee members, Christine Mosher. Mosher was invited to participate in a job talk at her alma mater and brought the idea to the Committee.

The Committee emailed the short questionnaire to the ASWIS listserv. ASWIS members who were former student-athletes were invited to share their experiences as they prepared for life after college sports. Participants were aware their answers would be shared publicly on the ASWIS website. Responses were collected between July 2020 - August 2020.

We hope this document offers valuable job-readiness tips for student-athletes as they think about their future career goals



BRAD HAMBRIC

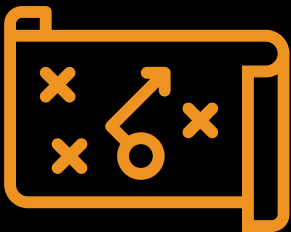


Can you describe your current position?

Currently, I work at the University of Georgia as the Clinical Counselor for the student-athletes. I'm one of two Clinicians that we have on staff here. Collectively we work mostly on an individual basis, doing outpatient therapy, but occasionally we are able to do some group and team work. This is my third year being here and I love what I do!

How did you choose your major in college? Is this in line with what you are doing now?

When I was finishing up high school, I was able to take some college level psychology classes that I enjoyed, but I really intended to be a business major. Unfortunately, the rigors of being a collegiate student athlete prevented me from being able to put as much time and effort into those classes that they required, so I shifted over to sociology. Sociology, which is the study of the development, structure, and functioning of human society, is what I do every day.



How did you handle transitioning out of sport and entering the job market?

I was very blessed in my transition, as I had a mentor hold a position at my high school as a Teacher's assistant and a coaching position. Also, in my final class, one of my classmate's Mother was opening up a mental health agency and I was able to work for her for many years as well. The working part was not difficult, as you're used to being on a schedule and working hard, but being an independent adult was more difficult. Paying bills, working out on your own, things of that nature.

What are the most important things student-athletes can do during their time in college to prepare for life after graduation?

The most important thing is to socialize and build a network. As athletes sometimes we tend to stick with those who are right around us. Connect with others outside of sports, build and develop relationships that may become a resource down the line. Join clubs and different groups, be aware of events going on outside of sports.

What are some of the transferable skills you learned as a student-athlete to help you in your current career?

Time Management is a huge transferable skill. Being aware of the time that you have and the time that you need. Use a planner, daily! Being part of a team and being a teammate is so important. It really only takes one person to destroy the chemistry of a team. Lastly, I would say dedication and hard work. To get through 3-5 years of being a collegiate student-athlete it takes an incredibly high-level determination.

What is one piece of advice you would offer current student-athletes as they start out on their new career paths?

I would say to take chances. A lot of times we're fearful to leave home or step outside of our comfort zone. Do not turn down an opportunity out of fear, as it might be the blessing that you were looking for.



CHRISTINE MOSHER



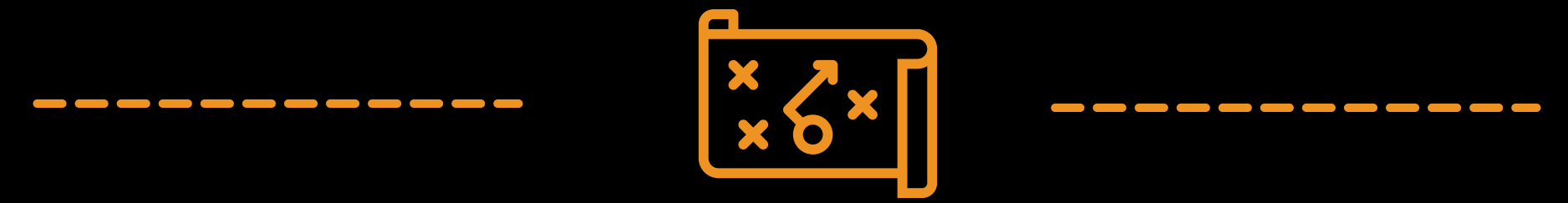
Can you describe your current position?

I currently work as a clinician at Walden Behavioral Care in Hyannis, MA, which is an eating disorder clinic. I work in the PHP (partial hospitalization program). I started in February, 2020 and have been working from home since March, 2020 due to Covid. We are successfully offering programming on Zoom where I monitor meals, run groups, and do 1:1 therapy with clients.

I also have my own private practice which I started in 2019 and do part-time. I see clients on Tues and Thurs evenings and Saturday mornings. I see children, teens and adults, and have been trying to tailor my practice to attract current or former athletes. I have been using Telehealth to see my clients now, but I do have an office in Buzzards Bay, MA.

How did you choose your major in college? Is this in line with what you are doing now?

I started out as a Psychology major at Boston College, which is definitely in line with what I am doing now. However, I switched my major to Human Resources Management my junior year, and my career took a different turn. But I eventually came back to the psychology/social work track, which is where I am now and feeling like it's where I belong.



How did you handle transitioning out of sport and entering the job market?

My first year out of college, I was in a volunteer program similar to the Peace Corps or Jesuit Volunteer Corps. I spent the year in Belize, Central America where I was a high school teacher and coached the boys and girls basketball teams. (Soccer was my main sport, but they didn't play much soccer there at the time!) I played a lot of basketball, which I had played in high school, but not too much soccer. When I returned to the US and joined the working world, my first job was in Boston, and it was definitely a big change from working in an underdeveloped country. I brought soccer back into my life and played in women's leagues in the Boston area for several years. Later, when I moved to Cape Cod, there were no soccer leagues, so I started the region's first ever women's soccer league, which I ran and played in for 10 years. Being able to play the sport that I loved and have the camaraderie with my teammates definitely helped keep the joy in my life while being in the working world.

What are the most important things student-athletes can do during their time in college to prepare for life after graduation?

I would say take full advantage of what your college has to offer, in addition to your participating in your sport. If possible, do a semester abroad, or even just participate on a mission trip. Get involved with another activity or club that's not related to your sport so you have other areas of interest that can transfer to your experience after college. Do an internship your junior year related to your major to prepare for your eventual transition into the working world. Stay in touch with your teammates and maintain those friendships, they are so unique and valuable and you may never find another group of friends like your college teammates/friends. They can also be a resource for you as your career develops.



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What are some of the transferable skills you learned as a student-athlete to help you in your current career?

I learned how to manage my time efficiently. As a student athlete, you're on a tight schedule, so you have to find the times in between classes and practices and weekend road trips to study, eat, sleep, etc... I have definitely taken that skill into my personal life and work life, being able to manage several different activities and tasks and work efficiently to get the job done. Also, teamwork. In the workplace, I try to be supportive of my coworkers as if they were teammates. I ask for help when I need it, and provide support when it is needed. I try to bring a positive attitude to the work place and give my coworkers emotional "high fives", "fist bumps" or shout outs to recognize their successes and achievements. It helps to promote a positive work environment and lets my coworkers know they can count on me as an integral part of the team.



What is one piece of advice you would offer current student-athletes as they start out on their new career paths?

I would say not to worry if your first job isn't your dream job. It's okay to take a job just because it's a job. You are just getting started and your career will go through many twists and turns along the way. You may not end up in the field that you thought you would. You may end up doing something completely different than what you had anticipated in college. That's okay. It's okay to change your mind. It's okay to take a unique job because it's a cool opportunity. You can learn something from each job experience that you have. Be open to different opportunities, even if they take you to places you weren't expecting to go. Sometimes, those end up being the best places!



JAMAL JACKSON

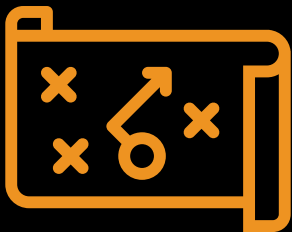
Can you describe your current position?



Currently I am a school social worker at an elementary school in Aurora Colorado. My job entails providing mental health support and assessing special education students, as well as suicide/threat assessments. Also, I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and have a part time private practice (Student Athlete Counseling). In my private practice I provide therapy services to children, youth, families and student athletes, as well as programming in the form of workshops to sports teams.

How did you choose your major in college? Is this in line with what you are doing now?

My undergraduate major is Sports Management. I thought that this particular path would lead me to becoming a sports agent. I decided to go back to school several years after graduating to obtain my Masters of Social Work from MSU Denver. I chose this career path after doing research on careers in the helping profession servicing youth. I felt that being a change agent fell in line with supporting student athlete success.



How did you handle transitioning out of sport and entering the job market?

I struggled because I didn't have clear direction and I was still focused on becoming a professional athlete. I worked different jobs to acquire work experience, which I hadn't had since I dedicated my adolescents through early twenties to being a student athlete. After college I moved to Georgia to live with my uncle, train for arena football and work entry level jobs. Then I moved back to Colorado where I continued to train and work entry level positions.

What are the most important things student-athletes can do during their time in college to prepare for life after graduation?

Be in consistent communication with their academic advisors in order to develop a plan of action. Be in consistent communication with coaches in order to discuss/develop a plan of action. Stay in communication with family/friends instead of isolating when others may not be in 100% agreement with your plan. By the end of freshman year develop a plan of where you would like to be in three to four years.

What are some of the transferable skills you learned as a student-athlete to help you in your current career?

Resiliency would definitely be at the top of the list because things aren't going to go your way every single time. So it's important to see situations through. The next skill that has been important to my transition from student athlete to professional is time management because I value this skill. Being on time allows me to calmly prepare for the work day, which has at times which has created consistency in the work that I do.

What is one piece of advice you would offer current student-athletes as they start out on their new career paths?

I would say that it is important to take a deep breath first and foremost. Also, remember that transitioning to the working world is a process just like being an athlete. So, stay focused and build momentum within your skill set by working hard to grow as a professional each day.



KATIE SPORING

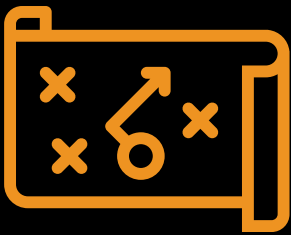


Can you describe your current position?

I am currently a Mental Health Counselor at a private practice setting in Portland, OR. I am also a Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) and worked in the collegiate and secondary school setting for the last 7 years.

How did you choose your major in college? Is this in line with what you are doing now?

I chose athletic training because in high school I was injured all the time and knew I wanted to help those who injured themselves. As an ATC, I spent a ton of time working with athletes and I saw the struggles they were facing, and I realized that I did not have the skills to help them mentally. I decided to go to grad school to obtain a degree in clinical mental health counseling. My end goal is to take my experience as a former athlete, athletic training, and now mental health to help current athletes during their struggles.



How did you handle transitioning out of sport and entering the job market?

I think that because I went into a field that brought me right back onto a field, transitioning to the job market out of sports was easier than I expected. I am about to enter another transition. After 7 years of being an ATC, I am entering my first job as a mental health professional (not in an athletic setting) it is going to be interesting. This will be my first August not on a football field and I am curious to see how I will handle this new transition.

What are the most important things student-athletes can do during their time in college to prepare for life after graduation?

Some of the most important things that you can do during their time in college to prepare for life after graduation is to be open to trying new things, ie: a new position, technique, a new study habit, etc. Coaches, professors, student services, etc. are suggesting these things because they see something in you or have been where you have been, they are not coming from a place of trying to take advantage of you.

What are some of the transferable skills you learned as a student-athlete to help you in your current career?

Some of the biggest skills that I learned while being a student-athlete that help me in my life post-college was my time management skills, my ability to work well with others, how to handle multiple tasks at once and complete them to the best of my ability, and I think the biggest one is being “coachable.” By learning how to be coached on the field by an adult, I have learned how to take what a supervisor is telling me and hone my skills to be more successful in the workplace.

What is one piece of advice you would offer current student-athletes as they start out on their new career paths?

Once you graduate and start on your career path, understand that your athletic career is not over per say. Your field/court/pool/etc. that you have spent most of your life in is now your office and your co-workers are your teammates.



LORRAINE DUGAN

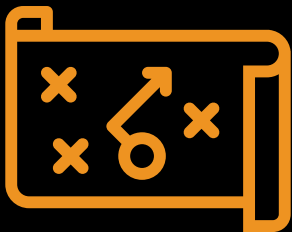


Can you describe your current position?

I work at UNCW in the field education office and as a lecturer in the School of Social Work.

How did you choose your major in college? Is this in line with what you are doing now?

My major in undergrad college was chosen based off what teammates told me would work best for playing my sport in college. I tried a bunch of majors and ended up being a sociology major. I was actually not aware of a social work in undergrad but really like my sociology classes so stuck with them.



How did you handle transitioning out of sport and entering the job market?

That was tough at first for me, my first job out of college was coaching lacrosse at a university. As an assistant lacrosse coach I realized what I loved about my job was helping athletes off the field deal with life and school but still didn't think social work. Then I went to a marketing job with a lacrosse company and that job gave me a chance to build a lacrosse league for inner city Baltimore kids and create a program. That is when I realized what I wanted to do, helping people and sought out my MSW and LCSW.

What are the most important things student-athletes can do during their time in college to prepare for life after graduation?

Utilize the resources on campus that are offered: career center, counseling center, programs offered for students. Branch out from the athletic world, meet and co-exist with non-athletes.

What are some of the transferable skills you learned as a student-athlete to help you in your current career?

Being a team player and my ability to work with anyone and find ways to motivated myself and those around me.

What is one piece of advice you would offer current student-athletes as they start out on their new career paths?

Utilize your team's alumni and your coaching staff's connections for opportunities.



STEPHANIE GAUMER

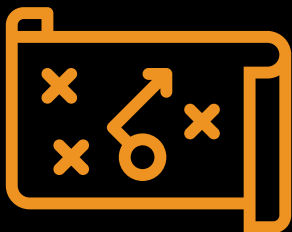


Can you describe your current position?

I currently work as a Clinical Therapist at Counseling Centers of Michigan located in Clarkston, MI. As an individual outpatient therapist, I am trained in EMDR and DBT, and work with clients six years of age and older. I also work with athletes across a variety of sports in areas such as competition anxiety, coping with injury, goal setting and peak performance.

How did you choose your major in college? Is this in line with what you are doing now?

I received by Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from the University of Michigan because I have always been interested in the brain, child development and helping individuals be the best version of themselves. When I realized there were not many career options for an undergraduate degree in Psychology, I decided to get my Master’s in Social Work with a goal of working in a hospital setting. I never planned on doing individual therapy, but that is exactly what I do now and I absolutely love it!



How did you handle transitioning out of sport and entering the job market?

The transition out of sport was a difficult one for me as I had a career-ending injury before my senior year of college so I felt like I lost a huge part of my identity before I was mentally prepared for it. However, with the support of my family, friends, teammates and coaches, I worked to take on a coaching role during my senior year. The new role combined with volunteering at the local hospital on campus helped push me in the direction of my future career. I also took many of the life skills I learned through gymnastics and put them toward furthering my education.

What are the most important things student-athletes can do during their time in college to prepare for life after graduation?

I believe trying new things separate from your sport, volunteering, job shadowing and networking are among the most important things you can do while still in college before graduation. For many student-athletes, sports have been their entire life and it can take some time to figure out what other interests they may have. Find something you are passionate about and go for it!

What are some of the transferable skills you learned as a student-athlete to help you in your current career?

Skills such as commitment, dedication, hard work, goal setting, time management and team work are just a few of the life skills I learned in gymnastics that have helped me in my journey as a professional. Just as in sport, in the professional world, there are always new things to learn and ways to improve!

What is one piece of advice you would offer current student-athletes as they start out on their new career paths?

Be flexible and keep an open mind! Often times your first job out of college is not going to be your long-term position and you may even end up taking on a role you never thought you would. You should also never stop learning and networking. You never know who you will meet and what kind of opportunities it may lead to!



LEARN MORE

The ASWIS Committee on College Sports is responsible for developing a working agenda for how ASWIS can better serve vulnerable college athletes. This agenda should help the Alliance achieve multiple phases of its strategic plan. The committee should engage Alliance members in activities that impact professional development and impact the social work profession within the field of college athletics. The committee should identify organizations within college sports that ASWIS could partner with to promote and advocate for athlete health and wellness. This includes facilitating conversations with these organizations around educational opportunities, consultation services, etc. The committee should respond to stories that highlight the strengths and challenges facing the college athlete population. This can be done through memorandums, social media, contacting media outlets, and other appropriate forms of support and advocacy. The committee should develop an annual webinar or alternate educational experience on sport social work within college athletics. If possible, this educational outreach should offer continuing education units.

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