



Alliance Wide Call

Please keep an eye on email. You will receive a Doodle poll to determine the next best date for the Alliance Wide Call. During this call we will work on finalizing the 2019-2020 strategic plan.

New Members

Dominique Colarossi
Clarence Williams
Gypsy Ray
Jalonta Jackson
Omar Sanchez
Geoff Cushner
Marlene Holmes
Trisha Grady
Madison Maher

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ASWIS Group

A Letter from the President

Dear ASWIS Membership:

Thank you all so much for helping to produce a tremendous 4th Annual Social Work in Sports Symposium. It was a highlight of my year to spend quality time with so many of our members and new faces. The three days illustrated the diverse talents of our members and the multi-faceted approaches social workers can use to influence the lives of athletes, athletic organizations, and communities. The symposium featured 19 Ted Talk style presentations, six interactive workshops, ten poster presentations, four keynote speakers, and a beyond fun pre-conference workshop. We also got to spend additional time together during our membership meeting and the social outing. Throughout each of these events, I continue to be touched by the level of inclusiveness within our membership and the genuine desire to grow sport social work through a collaborative lens. Of course, we can always strive to do better. Take time to share your feedback about the symposium so we can make our 5th (hard to believe that) symposium the event of a lifetime.

We must also use the momentum from the symposium to propel us forward in 2019. There is never an absence of need for social workers within athletics. Just look at the news banner on the homepage of the website. Let's use the Alliance and our membership to further illustrate our collaborative nature and to have an impact at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Let's also make it a new year resolution to share our talents and passion to better serve the Alliance. The return on your investment will be ten fold.

As we approach the new year, we will also embark on a new strategic plan. We are currently in the process of developing this. We've taken into account feedback from our members over the last 12 months. We will have the strategic plan done by the end of the year and ready for feedback from our members. We will then work on formally adopting the plan to guide us in the coming months.

Finally, I want to take this time to thank Dr. Emmett Gill. Dr. Gill served as a fearless leader of our organization for the last two years. He's been pivotal in garnering attention for sport social work. His work over the last decade and more created a space where we can all live out our life passion - being in a profession we love, working with a population we care deeply about. Beyond that, he's been a great friend and valuable colleague. He will do wonders for us in his new role within the Alliance. Dr. Gill will transition into a role as Past President and Chief Executive Officer of the Alliance. I also want to introduce Anita Daniels as our new Vice President. Anita will serve in the role I previously filled.

As we see change in our Executive Team, we would encourage everyone to consider whether a higher leadership position is something you desire. We will have several other Executive Team members rolling off in 2019 as we begin to implement the election protocols established in our organizational bylaws. If you are interested in what these positions entail please reach out.

On behalf of ASWIS, we wish you and your family the very best this holiday season!

Matt Moore, PhD, MSW



Soccer in America: Are We Losing the Joy of Playing the Game?

Soccer in America today is so different than when I was a kid. I started playing soccer when I was in seventh grade. It was the first girls team in my small town of Foxboro, Massachusetts. My first coach was a mother of one of the girls on the team, and she knew nothing about soccer, or much about any sport, for that matter. But she wanted to help her daughter learn to play, so she got a book out of the library and taught herself about the game of soccer.

The only thing I can remember that she taught us, which was drilled into our heads was, "Point your toe where you want the ball to go!" Later, when I actually learned the correct way to kick a soccer ball, I realized that this isn't necessarily true! But it didn't matter then. What mattered was that we had fun playing soccer. We may not have had the most technical or accurate instruction way back then, but we had a coach and a group of girls who were willing to learn and had a great time doing so.

Today, kids start playing soccer as young as 4-years-old. They are given uniforms and equipment, are put on teams and have practices during the week, have games on the weekends and trophies at the end of their season. They are told that it's not important what the score is at the end of the game, but they are cheered on (or yelled at) by their parents on the sidelines, and goals, even on empty nets, are celebrated like one has just won the World Cup! I asked one of my current clients, a 9-year-old boy, what he likes about playing soccer. He said he likes scoring goals, because his parents pay him a dollar for every goal he gets. Really?

As they get older, kids playing soccer get ranked and put on to A-teams or B-teams based on their abilities. I was asked to help a town club team during their tryouts one year. I had a clipboard with the list of 8 and 9 year old players who were trying out.

I had to follow the kids around as they dribbled through cones, sprinted up and down the field, making passes, taking shots...and rank them on their skills. I didn't like it. I didn't like that kids so young had this pressure on them to perform, and I didn't like the fact that some kids were going to feel like crap when they found out that they weren't good enough to make the A-team.

The pressure keeps mounting for kids who continue to play youth soccer, on club teams, and eventually in high school and college. There are summer camps, private coaching, club teams, weekend tournaments, hotel rooms to book, uniforms to pay for, equipment to buy each year as the player grows...It becomes so expensive and stressful to play soccer! The expectations on kids are so high. It just takes the fun out of the game.

Continue reading this article by clicking here.

Written by: Christine Mosher, LICSW

Thank you to Christine for turning her symposium Ted Talk into a great blog post. Our other Ted Talk presenters could certainly do the same!

Check out our other new blog post

"We Stand with our Transgender Sisters and Brothers" (Zachary Draves)

"Fists for Freedom: Tommie Smith and John Carlos 50 Years Later" (Zachary Draves)

"A Call to Action: We Believe Survivors" (Zachary Draves)

Committee Updates

- *Research and Policy Committee* - the committee finalized a policy platform with the help of DC-based Active Policy Solutions. You can see the completed policy platform by clicking here.
- *Committee on College Sports* - the committee would like to welcome its newest members, Alex Diaz, Brandon St. Croix, and Melissa Genisauksi. Some of the committee members had a chance to meet in person at the ASWIS Annual Symposium in Orlando where we worked on defining the different roles of sports social workers within athletic departments. We hope to finalize the list and share with all members in the coming weeks. We will be holding a conference call in early December to plan goals for the new year.
- *Committee on Youth Sports* - the committee is putting the final touches on their best practices documentation. They are also in the process of scheduling a committee call for December.
- *Committee on Professional Sports* - Several new members joined the team including Angelo Fouras and Julia Hartman. Lauren Anderson, Angelo, and Anita Daniels have been finalizing a proposal for the National Basketball Retired Players Association to present to Scott Rochelle, President and CEO of the NBRPA. Mr. Rochelle strongly encouraged ASWIS to submit a proposal.
- *Education Committee* - the committee continues to be impressed with outcomes from the Sport Social Work Certificate Program. The committee is also working once again with the Student-Athlete Mental Health Initiative (Canada) to develop a new webinar series. This series will come out early in 2019.
- *International Member Subgroup* - The international member subgroup is actively discussing strategies for improving the global outreach of ASWIS.
- *Coaching Subgroup* - ASWIS members are in the process of developing a list of current middle school, high school, and collegiate coaches. This group is going to explore opportunities for ASWIS to better network within coaching circles, etc.

Mentoring the Future of Sport Social Work

Foundation year social work policy coursework provided the perfect outlet for Dr. Stacy Kratz of the University of Southern California Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work to mentor students Serita Robinson and Stephanie Rosado in sport policy practice.

Together with Dr. Kratz, MSW student Stephanie Rosado, longtime member of ASWIS and LinkedIn social media assistant with the Alliance, presented *Becoming a Policy Advocate for Student-Athletes: A Virtual Student's Project to Publish an Op-Ed to Impact a Social Work Grand Challenge*. Ms. Rosado completed Dr. Kratz's policy class assignment to perform a policy impacting activity to improve one of the 12 Grand Challenges for Social Work. Students were given a choice between lobbying an elected official or writing and submitting an opinion editorial to a news media outlet of their choice. Ms. Rosado, a former collegiate and professional athlete, chose to write an opinion editorial focusing on the lack of policy regarding the mental health well-being of student-athletes when considering staffing priorities of collegiate athletic programs.

Recognizing athletes as a vulnerable population in need of mental health professionals advocating for them on and off the field or court, the published op-ed pushed for the addition of appropriate policies that mandate mental health professional positions on every athletic department staff.

MSW student Serita Robinson presented her poster, *Creating a Culture of Care in Sports: Professional Athletes Advocating for the Legalization of Medicinal Marijuana*. Researching the effects of athlete opioid misuse in pain management, especially within the context of the current opioid pandemic, Ms. Robinson advocated for professional athletes to utilize their platform to influence voters and policy makers to support passage of California Congresswoman Barbara Lee's new bill: *The Marijuana Justice Act of 2018*. Supporting the Social Work Grand Challenge of *Advancing Long and Productive Lives*, Ms. Robinson presented on Lee's bill and how passage would federally decriminalize marijuana, expunge marijuana convictions, and provide increased Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding in communities disproportionality affected by marijuana laws.



Annual Membership Process (Important)

ASWIS is pleased to announce a new annual membership process for our members. Membership will now run from January to January. To help us achieve this membership cycle, ASWIS granted up to six months of free membership to members. All members who need to update their membership dues will receive an email in early January with instructions. Beginning in 2019, the website will also reflect the January to January cycle. Any new member will be pro-rated based on the date of their membership enrollment. We appreciate your help as we streamline our membership process and make it more efficient and effective for everyone.

Supported Conferences

ASWIS strongly encourages our members to submit proposals to other conferences related to athlete well-being and functioning. Please consider submitting a proposal to the College Sport Research Institute Conference (learn more by clicking here)

You could also look at the International Sport and Society Conference (learn more by clicking here)

Information on the 5th Annual Social Work in Sports Symposium will be made available early in 2019.

[Job Center Update](#)

Be sure to check out our updated job center for current postings related to Sport Social Work. We strongly encourage our members to apply for these positions and further expand our visibility. You can access the job center by clicking here.

[Clinical Service Opportunity](#)

As part of the 4th Annual Symposium of ASWIS, Dr. William D. Parham, Inaugural Mental Health Director of the NBPA, mentioned the need for licensed clinicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers to address the needs of players in the league. The proposal from ASWIS to the NBRPA will include the Sports Social Work certificate program, a list of social workers in the states that have professional teams to offer clinical services, and other ways ASWIS can support players' emotional, physical, and mental health. Several members of the Pro Sports Committee plan to attend the NBRPA event which will be held in Charlotte, NC February 15 -17, 2019. **All licensed ASWIS clinicians interested in serving a professional NBA team in your state, please provide your name, email address, and cell phone number to Anita Daniels no later than December 15, 2018.**

[Sport Social Work was Featured in the NASW Advocates Magazine](#)

[Click Here to Read the Article](#)

[Certificate Program](#)

Applications are currently being accepted for the third cohort of the Sport Social Work Certificate Program. ASWIS is still seeking qualified instructors for several of the courses. If interested please contact Dr. Emmett Gill (socialworkersinsports@gmail.com). The first cohort will graduate from the program at the beginning of 2019! Congratulations to these students and their accomplishment.

Membership Announcements

- Millersville University's School of Social Work is in the process of reviewing applications for our dual degree MSW/ MEd in Sport Management. Our degree will offer students the opportunity to work in both social work focused and sports focused internships in the central PA, Baltimore-Washington-Philadelphia region. Through our collaboration with our Sport Management degree, we have in place a number of internships with local professional, university and regional amateur programs and secondary schools. The first cohort will start in May, 2019.

- Matt Moore's Fulbright Scholarship was approved by the first round of reviewers. Matt is hoping to study and teach on Sport Social Work at the University of Bucharest (Romania).

- Cindy Miller represented Sport Social Workers at the International Olympic Committee Consensus Meeting on Mental Health and Elite Athletes. The meeting took place in Lausanne, Switzerland from November 11th through 14th.

- Traci Nigg led a group of high school athletes to the Turkey Trot Trophy. This run promoted community health and well-being in the Wichita.

- Marlene Holmes will facilitate a workshop on how to effectively transition from college an athlete to life as a young professional. She will present to the Urban League of Broward County.

- Emmett Gill presented on Black Male Student-Athletes and Trauma Informed Care at the N4A Region II and IV conference in Austin.

- Emmett Gill presented Disco demolition night at Cominsky Park: The implications for race, sexual orientation and the future of baseball at the 39th Annual North American Society for the Sociology of Sport Conference.

- Sara Driesenga and Kayla Douglas joined Bill Vanderwill and Warren Clark in teaching the Social Work and Sport class. The team developed an inclusive teaching model that was effective and fun.

- Jevon Moore will earn his MSW degree this December. The Wolverines are hoping to keep Jevon on the professional staff of the Athletic Department.

- For those that missed the presentation please feel free to use the following login yourname@aswis.preview for a free FULL Access version. CWP offered all ASWIS members a FREE branded version preview for their university, along with subscription discounts. If interested please contact Betsy Cutler at betsycutler@collegewellnessprograms.com.

- Jim Helling will be presenting a Ten for Ten on "Adverse Childhood Experiences, Identity & Equity in College Athletics" at the 2019 Big Sky Sport Psychology gathering.

- Jim Helling has applied for a 2019 NCAA Innovations In Research & Practice Grant for a pilot cross-sectional and longitudinal study, "Adverse Childhood Experiences, Identity and Outcomes Among Intercollegiate Athletes."

Student Member Spotlight

Kelsey Morrison



My name is Kelsey Morrison and I am the Athletics Coordinator and Assistant Women's Soccer coach at the University of Valley Forge in Phoenixville, PA. As a former 4-year student-athlete and recent BSW graduate, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to continue to grow in my two passions— sports and social work.

As a student-athlete I had the opportunity to excel throughout my soccer career by being granted wonderful opportunities to develop in my leadership and social work skills on and off the field. As a player I served as a 3-year captain, received first team all-conference honors and broke the University career scoring record.

Off the field, I had the privilege to serve on the Division III National Student Athlete Advisory Committee representing the American Collegiate Athletic Association and the New England Collegiate Conference. This committee gave me the opportunity to speak on issues related to student-athlete mental health, gender equity and social issues that affect students nationally. In addition, I've had the opportunity to work with the Sports Science Institute with their Sleep and Wellness Task Force to address student-athlete health related to sleep. Lastly, I have the privilege of serving on the Division III Diversity and Inclusion working group—most recently the group has created legislation to mandate graduation rate reporting in Division III to help develop evidence based practices around minority student athletes that are graduating at a lower rate. All these opportunities have strengthened my already firmly held beliefs— social work has a place in sports.

Currently I am studying to receive a masters degree in organization leadership in the hopes of combining my passions of coaching, social work, and community engagement in the collegiate or non-profit sector. My dream is to see an area where coaches are clinicians and practices are therapy sessions. I am very thankful for the work this organization does in order to create that space for the next generation of social workers in sports.

Be sure to check out the first ever Sport Social Work Textbook.

Sport Social Work: Promoting the Functioning and Well-being of College and Professional Athletes.

By: Dr. Matt Moore and Dr. Ginger Gummelt

To order a copy click here!

For more information please contact us at

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