



TuckerCenter

for Research on Girls & Women in Sport

SPRING 2014

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE TUCKER CENTER!

There are several ways you can keep up to date with the most recent events and news from the Tucker Center. For starters, the Tucker Center's Web site is our online hub. Everything from current research to news updates to staff contacts can be found at:

www.TuckerCenter.org

The Tucker Center also maintains a presence on Facebook, Twitter, & YouTube:

- **Facebook:** facebook.com/tuckercenter
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First Annual Women Coaches Symposium a Big Winner!

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Tucker Center and to honor National Girls and Women in Sports Day (NGWSD), last February we launched what will be an annual endeavor that complements our line of research on women coaches. In collaboration with U of M Athletics and the Alliance of Women Coaches (AWC), we hosted the Women Coaches Symposium which was attended by 120+ coaches and athletic administrators at all levels of competition, primarily from the Twin Cities and surrounding areas. The symposium was held to provide high quality educational programming as well as an avenue for networking and building community for women in the coaching profession, with an overall goal of increasing and retaining women in the coaching profession. Toward that end, our enthusiastic participants spent the day exploring unique professional development opportunities from expert coaches and sport science scholars.

U of M Associate Athletic Director Beth Goetz welcomed the attendees and set a positive tone and outlook for future employment opportunities. Celia Slator, Executive Director of the AWC, then kicked things off with "big picture" ideas of what it means to be a champion coach—ideas that aren't exclusively related to winning, but focused instead on one's professional and personal relationships. Tucker Center Associate Director, Dr. Nicole M. LaVoi, shared the most recent statistics on the decreasing percentage of women coaches nationwide, and the reasons why it's so important to have women in leadership positions. Chief among them are role modeling and adding diversity to the workplace. Rayla Allison, U of M Sport Management faculty member and J.D., enlightened participants on numerous laws already in place that protect women coaches and their programs from discrimination, including the most well-known civil rights law in this area, Title IX. There was high praise for our sport science panelists—Dr. Cindra Kamphoff (Associate Professor, Sports and Exercise Psychology, Minnesota State University in Mankato), Carrie Peterson (Director, Dietetic Internship graduate program, Department of Food Science and Nutrition, U of M), and Jamia Erickson (Sports Performance Specialist, Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Center, Rochester, MN)—who spoke about how to be mentally strong, and highlighted the benefits of sport nutrition and strength and conditioning. Before lunch, Dr. LaVoi moderated a panel titled, "The Female Athlete as Warrior" with accomplished coaches Laura Bush (Associate Head Volleyball Coach, U of M), Faith Johnson Patterson (Head Girls Basketball Coach, DeLaSalle High School, Minneapolis), ... (see "Symposium ..." cont'd on next page)



(l. to r.) Pam Borton, Stefanie Golan, Sarah Hopkins, Terry Ganley, Laura Halldorson

Letter from the Director

As we emerge from one of the harshest Minnesota winters in memory, I am beginning to see the tiniest signs of spring, at a time of year which can often be a harbinger of change. Our latest newsletter is also about change. For long-time followers of the Tucker Center, you'll note that this newsletter is shorter than previous versions—just one full page to be exact. Beginning in the spring of 2015, we'll be moving to "TC eNews" (our electronic version) in place of the traditional paper copy, and we're starting that move this semester. *To make sure we don't lose your contact information and to make this transition as smooth as possible, we need you to subscribe to our online mailing list. By doing so you will receive the new electronic version and we can keep you informed about all the important work we do on behalf of girls and women, their families, and communities. Please note that every Fall, we will continue to mail a full-size, paper copy of our newsletter to your home or business address. To help us in these efforts, go to our website and click the "Subscribe" link on our home page or in the navigation bar and fill out the form. Even if you believe you are already on our mailing list, please fill out the form and sign up.*



Dr. Mary Jo Kane

Though this newsletter is indeed shorter, it still contains a great deal of information about the latest Tucker Center initiatives and accomplishments along with other changes we are planning beginning next year. Over the last two decades we have hosted a Distinguished Lecture Series where we have invited the "best and the brightest" to come to the U of M and share their latest findings on a variety of important issues related to women's sports. This series—the first lecture in Fall semester, the second lecture in the spring—has been phenomenally successful. But other successes have followed, notably our annual Film Festival—now in its 4th year!—and our newly launched Women Coaches Symposium. Both of these events take place in the spring semester and because we want to give them all the attention they deserve, they will replace the second Distinguished Lecture as a key part of our public outreach efforts every spring.

In addition to all of the changes we are making, we have had a number of important accomplishments this past year, some of which we share in this newsletter and others that are available only in the online version. In the former instance, read about the documentary we produced in partnership with tptMN on media portrayals—or the lack thereof—of female athletes. We also highlight our groundbreaking research report on the occupational employment status of women coaches in the wake of Title IX. When you go online, there are three additional stories: An update on our research efforts, more details on our recent Film Festival, and an introduction to Torrie Hazelwood, our newest research assistant.

Yes, change is in the air ... and you can help make it happen by staying in touch with the Tucker Center. Please subscribe and update your information now at www.tuckercenter.org.

(“Symposium” cont’d from front page) ... Kari Ornes (Coaching Director, Prior Lake Soccer Club, Prior Lake, MN), and Vicki Schull (former Associate AD/Head Softball Coach, Suffolk University, Boston, & ESS Instructor/Head Softball Coach, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse; currently Ph.D. candidate, School of Kinesiology, U of M), who shared divergent and thought provoking ideas about what it looks like to be/act like a “warrior” and how this impacts female athletes. According to our attendees, the highlight of the day was the keynote speaker—Minnesota Lynx Head Coach Cheryl Reeve who shared candid stories and humorous insights about coaching some of the best and most successful female athletes in the world.



Lynx Head Coach Cheryl Reeve

The symposium wrapped up with an all-star “Great Women! Big Ideas!” panel comprised of current and former U of M head coaches Pam Borton, Terry Ganley, Stefanie Golan, Laura Halldorson and Sarah Hopkins. These highly accomplished women shared what they were most proud of, essential attributes of a successful coach, advice for young coaches, and one thing they would do differently if given the opportunity. The big take-away for participants? There are many approaches and styles to being a successful coach!

Our first Women Coaches Symposium was a great success due to overwhelming attendance, fantastic and insightful speakers, and a variety of topics. Based on the participants’ feedback, they enthusiastically agreed with our assessment. As one coach said, “It was great to have other female coaches to network and connect with who had sound advice, different perspectives, and experiences.” Another coach pointed out that she “feels isolated as a woman coach, so being around other female coaches all in one room and hearing similarities in both struggles and successes was inspiring and energizing!” Given such feedback, we plan to make this symposium an annual event so stay tuned for registration and program details.

#HERESPROOF Update

The Tucker Center’s #HERESPROOF Project is a crowdsourced, grassroots picture campaign designed to help shatter the deeply embedded myth that “no one’s interested in women’s sports” by offering visual proof from around the globe that indeed they are. To see for yourself, check out our infographic on our website highlighting the amazing amount of interest in women’s sports, and then join in the fun—and the proof!—by posting your own picture on your favorite social network with the hashtag #HERESPROOF.



Documentary on “Media Coverage and Female Athletes” in High Demand

The Tucker Center’s groundbreaking documentary video, “Media Coverage and Female Athletes: Women Play Sports, Just Not In The Media,” premiered December 1, 2013 on tptMN (our project partner) and has garnered great praise as well as great demand. The documentary examines research-based information—much of it generated by Tucker Center scholars—regarding the amount and type of coverage given to women’s sports. For example, even though 40% of sports participants nationwide are female, they receive less than 4% of sports media coverage. Such research findings are interwoven with the personal and professional experiences of elite female athletes, coaches and sport media journalists.

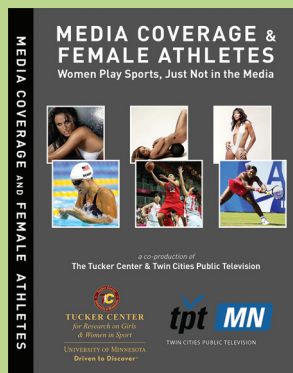
The feedback and media attention we have received on the documentary’s impact has been most gratifying. Several local and national publications have given rave reviews to the video ranging from the *Star Tribune* to the *Seattle Times*. Since the video first aired, we have received a stream of queries via email, Twitter, and Facebook asking for access to the documentary. By mid-March, “Media Coverage and Female Athletes” had been viewed an amazing 2,300 times online, averaging just over 25 times a day. The Tucker Center has also distributed 250 DVDs and some have found the documentary so impactful that they’ve donated to the Tucker Center in order to support and sustain this important research.

Many of our supporters have generated ongoing discussions regarding how to change the current situation of the media’s underreporting and stereotyping of women’s sports. One important pathway for change is to provide decision makers such as sports editors with research-based evidence on what sports fans really want when it comes to how female athletes are portrayed. For example, a 2011 study by the TC’s **Mary Jo Kane** and **Heather Maxwell** found that when it came to increasing interest in women’s sports, both males and females much preferred images of on-court athletic competence to off-court “sexy babes.” In a 2013 followup study, **Kane, Nicole M. LaVoi**, and **Janet Fink** (UMass-Amherst) discovered that elite female athletes also preferred images of athletic prowess over sexualized ones.

Beyond research publications, Kane and LaVoi have promoted the documentary on the nationally syndicated *Edge of Sports* radio show and blog by **Dave Zirin**, and are committed to a number of spring and summer speaking engagements where their media research and the documentary will be featured. An important part of this outreach effort is to make “Media Coverage” available to our academic colleagues who will, in turn, share it with their students. Early reports indicate clear signs of success. As one colleague put it: “I am so impressed! What I loved—and what will definitely be compelling to students—is how straight-forward and research-

based [the documentary] is, but also how nuanced it is with respect to the arguments. It was really current as well, not just in content, but in the vernacular. It felt real, and almost ‘hip,’ and that made the arguments come through in such a strong fashion. Just a great video.”

If you’d like to view “Media Coverage and Female Athletes,” screen it at your institution, or use it in class, go to our website and while you’re there, we invite you to check out our other research initiatives.



TC Launches Groundbreaking Research Report and Report Card on Occupational Employment Status of Women Coaches

In December 2013, we released the Women in College Coaching Research Series and Report Card in collaboration with the **Alliance of Women Coaches** (AWC), an organization dedicated to increasing the number of women in the coaching profession in intercollegiate athletics. We examined data from 2012-13 and 2013-14 on the number of female coaches in women’s sports from all 76 “big time” NCAA-I Football Bowl Series institutions in the six largest conferences. To publicize our findings, an exclusive first-run story was granted to *USA Today* sport columnist **Christine Brennan** who gave this important work nationwide visibility.

An alarming trend and statistic guided this research: Forty years after the passage of Title IX, the percentage of women coaching women at the collegiate level has declined from 90+% to just below 40% currently. To address this alarming decline, we developed a report card for each of the 76 institutions under consideration to see how each of them fared when it came to the number of females who served as head coaches in their respective athletic departments. This approach allowed us to highlight the importance of the issue, generate public awareness, provide a catalyst for national dialogue, and offer a publically available accountability mechanism for academic institutions. A number of key trends emerged from the data. For example, in one year alone, the percentage of women head coaches declined from 40.2% in 2012-13 to 39.6% in 2013-14. In addition, only one school from the entire sample—the University of Cincinnati at 80%—was awarded an A for its percentage of women head coaches.

Based on several stories generated nationwide in publications as diverse as *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Athletic Business*, *espnW*, and the *USOC Coaching Education Newsletter*, as well as the number of individuals and institutions who have contacted us directly, we have clearly established a solid foundation for meeting our project’s goals. To read and download the full reports and see which of the 76 institutions received passing and failing grades, visit the Tucker Center website. And stay tuned for the 2014-15 report and report card in December of 2014!



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