



Tucker Center
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Tucker Center

for Research on Girls & Women in Sport

FALL 2019

SAVE THE DATES!

February 11, 2020: The 9th Annual **Tucker Center Women in Sport Film Festival** honors and celebrates National Girls & Women in Sports Day. For more information or to submit a film, see z.umn.edu/tcfilm.



April 24, 2020: The 7th annual **Women Coaches Symposium** hosted by the Tucker Center, WeCOACH and Gopher Athletics, will be held Friday, April 24, 2020, at TCF Bank Stadium. The WCS is for women sport coaches and those who support them. A program track for female students who aspire to pursue a career in sports will be offered. Registration opens in December 2019. For more information, to register, and for vendor or sponsorship opportunities, visit wcs.umn.edu.



November 21-24, 2019: The **Western Society for Physical Activity of College Women**, a national organization for women in Kinesiology, will hold its 2019 Annual Conference at Asilomar Conference Grounds, Pacific Grove, CA. For more information, visit www.wspecw.org.

LEARNING OUR LEGACY: THE TUCKER CENTER'S FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR



Professor Mary Jo Kane

Professor Mary Jo Kane has filled many roles over the arc of her life and career: advocate, teacher, athlete, sports fan, feminist, theorist, mentor, and researcher. But her professional roles as a pioneering scholar and much-sought-after national voice on all things women's sports, as well as being the founder and first Director of the Tucker Center, are to be especially lauded and celebrated.

One could argue that Kane has a gift of being in the right place, at the right time, with the right idea. After graduating with a degree in sociology and cultural anthropology from Webster University in 1973, she worked in a rape crisis and battered women's center in Champaign, IL. At the time she also worked at the University of Illinois in the Child Development Laboratory, where she heard about a new emphasis area in Kinesiology called "sport sociology." Given her overall love of sports, her background as an athlete—though as "a classic Pre-Title IX tomboy" growing up in Bloomington, IL, in the 1950s and '60s she didn't get to play organized sports—the fact that she was (and remains) an avid sports fan, and a feminist in the middle of the women's liberation movement, sport sociology seemed a perfect way for her to combine her avocations and vocations into an academic career.

Kane started her graduate training in sport sociology in 1980 at the University of Illinois with two of the discipline's founding scholars—Drs. John Loy and Susan Greendorfer.

"Legacy" cont'd page 2

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

As I write what will be my last letter as Director of the Tucker Center, I look back fondly and with gratitude for my tenure at the University of Minnesota. It has been an enormous privilege over the last three decades to be able to do what I love most as an academic: conduct research on important issues related to women's sports; teach and mentor students; and develop community partnerships which serve the public good. I was also able to address a gap in our knowledge base about what it means for girls and women to be engaged in sport and physical activity. As female participation rates skyrocketed in the wake of Title IX, scholars were not keeping pace with understanding what this increase meant. There was a critical need to take seriously their participation as a legitimate scientific enterprise. Out of this need, the Tucker Center was established due to the vision and generosity of our founder, Dr. Dorothy McNeill Tucker.

We have accomplished a great deal since our inception in 1993, from producing invaluable, evidence-based research used around the world to deepen our understanding of women's sports, to providing scholarships and fellowships which attract the "best and brightest" students to come to the U of M and make their own scholarly contributions. We developed the first and only Distinguished Lecture Series dedicated to girls and women in sport in the nation and have partnered with outstanding local and national organizations such as *tptMN*, the Women's Sports Foundation, and the NCAA Office of Inclusion. I am particularly proud of our association with *tptMN*. Together we produced three award-winning documentaries, one of which examined the role of media coverage and won a regional Emmy Award.

As I step down from my role as Director, I know that the Tucker Center is in good hands under the more-than-able leadership of Dr. Nicole M. LaVoi. She joined us in 2005 as the Associate Director and has already taken us to the next level, especially when it comes to her groundbreaking research on the dramatic decline in the number of females in sport leadership and the strategies she has developed to reverse this decline. I am also confident we will continue to receive support from Dr. Beth Lewis, Director of the School of Kinesiology, and CEHD Dean Jean Quam, both of whom recognize the importance of the work we do to make a difference in the lives of girls and women, their families and communities.

Many of you have asked what I will be doing in the next chapter of my life's journey. Traveling, playing lots of golf, and as a dear friend says of her own retirement, saying "Yes" to those things I wasn't able to fully pursue during my 35 years in the academy.

So, Minnesotans, I have one closing message to all who have given me so much encouragement and support over these last three decades. Simply and with great love and gratitude—Hats off to Thee!

—Mary Jo Kane, TC Director Emerita



Under the guidance of Professors Loy and Lynn Barnett, Kane's doctoral dissertation examined how, as a function of gender-role stereotypes, people perceived pictures of female athletes in both individual and team sports in terms of their physical attractiveness. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, in the final stage of her career Kane returned to address another question related to gender-role stereotypes: Does sex really sell women's sports? (Spoiler alert: She and colleagues found it does not!) What Kane admired about her sport sociology colleagues—and there are many, including Susan Birrell at the University of Iowa and Mike Messner at the University of Southern California—was their ability to provide sophisticated, nuanced analyses that took seriously the empirical study of sport as a social, political, and economic institution.

In 1993, Kane had the opportunity to put her stamp on the study of women's sports as a serious and institutionalized endeavor when she pitched the idea of opening an academic research center for girls and women. With an endowed gift from Dr. Dorothy Tucker, the first and only interdisciplinary research center devoted solely to girls and women in sport was established. Over the last 25+ years, the Tucker Center (TC) has fulfilled its mission and set standards of excellence with respect to scholarly inquiry, educational initiatives, community outreach and public service. As the TC developed under Kane's leadership and guidance, she and the TC were best known for research that illuminated how the media portrayed female athletes. Kane traveled the country—first with a slide-show carousel and later with PowerPoint on a laptop—to educate stakeholders about how marginalizing and damaging these sexualized portrayals were for sportswomen who want to be taken seriously as athletes. Kane's work ethic and guiding principles on which she founded, defined and built the TC are highlighted in her two key professional and personal edicts: 1) Demand excellence and do good work, and; 2) To whom much is given, much is expected.

One of Professor Kane's important contributions as a public scholar is her ability to distill critical analysis and large amounts of data into on-the-money, memorable sound bites such as: "Sex sells sex, not women's sports;" or, regarding the unprecedented impact of Title IX: "In two generations, we've gone from young girls hoping there is a team, to young girls hoping they'd **make** the team." Her ability to shape cultural narratives about women's sports grew out of her strength as a critical theorist, as well as her ability to see the "big picture" and assess what cultural narratives were missing and needed to be analyzed to deepen our understanding of the role and importance of girls' and women's engagement in sport and physical activity.

Listening to Kane talk about the arc of her career, it is clear she was meant to be a gender sport scholar. Kane herself stated, "Being a member of the academy is where I belong. Once I went to graduate school, I've always felt it was absolutely the right place for me and I have never looked back. What a privilege it is to work on a college campus, to be surrounded by really smart and interesting people, to be able to work with students, to do collaborative research, and to not ever have to worry about a [financial] bottom line. We [faculty members] actually get paid to teach about, think about, write about, and talk about things we care deeply about and are committed to. The vast majority of people don't ever get to do that. I have much gratitude for what the University of Minnesota has allowed me to do throughout my career."

It is clearly evident that as Professor Kane approaches retirement and passes the TC directorship over to me, she has no regrets and is immensely thankful for the opportunity she was given to make a difference in the lives of girls and women in sport over her 30+ year career in the academy. I am grateful to her, as are countless others, for the *many* ways she has made a real difference in our lives.

—Nicole M. LaVoi, TC Director

Staff Update: 2019 Summer Interns



Tucker Center 2019 Summer Interns (l. to r.): Courtney Boucher, Sarah Silbert, Natalie Schad, Cecelia Kaufmann

This summer's class of interns was our largest to date. Our four interns came to the Tucker Center not only from around the globe, but differed in their stages of professional and personal development from our first-ever high-school intern to a first-year doctoral student. These aspiring young scholars were mentored by Tucker Center faculty and staff, and in addition, our unique peer-mentorship structure provided opportunities for them to learn from each other. Beyond the research experience they all gained, our interns also ran a once-a-week physical activity program for 50 girls who were part of the **Girls Inc/YWCA Eureka** program that creates environments that encourage girls to enter into STEM fields. Keep your eye out for these remarkable young women—they have the potential to make a real difference for girls and women in sport!

Pam Borton Fellow for Girls & Women in Sport Leadership

Courtney Boucher finished her Master's degree in the School of Kinesiology in June 2019, advised by Dr. Nicole M. LaVoi. Boucher's thesis focused on the longitudinal hiring practices of intercollegiate athletics directors, particularly women head coaches. This summer, as the Borton Fellow, she worked with Dr. LaVoi on various aspects of the *Women in College Coaching Report Card* as well as the distribution plan and toolkit for the TC documentary *Game ON: Women Can Coach*. "I'm so grateful to have received the Borton Fellowship and the awesome opportunities that it afforded me," says Boucher. "This prestigious award allowed me to do everything from contributing to the Tucker Center's incredible and important research to engaging in physical activity with girls in the Minneapolis community." Boucher will continue her studies as a doctoral student at the U of M this fall semester under the direction of Dr. LaVoi.

Gender Equity Summer Interns

Cecelia "CeCe" Kaufmann will start her senior year of high school this fall at Minneapolis South. As our first high-school intern, she worked on collecting and coding data on NCAA Women Coaches' Academy graduates and analyzing occupational employment patterns within the coaching profession. Kaufmann also created a

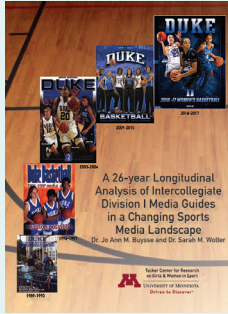
#HERESPROOF infographic. When asked about her research experience at the Tucker Center, she spoke about her "magnificent summer" working with the Tucker Team and also stated, "Being involved was such an incredible undertaking and being a part of a center that makes a difference is so inspiring. The research, critical thinking, and communication skills I gained will be very beneficial in the future and my work this summer has helped me realize that I want to be involved in sports research throughout college and beyond."

Natalie Schad will be a senior this fall at Smith College where she is studying Environmental Science and Policy with a minor in Exercise and Sports Studies. As a summer intern, Schad worked on collecting and coding data on NCAA Women Coaches Academy graduates to evaluate their occupational employment patterns and career trajectories. She also contributed to developing a #HERESPROOF infographic. Schad told us how much she enjoyed being part of the Tucker Team and further stated, "I learned so much this summer, from developing technical research skills and communicating data, to honing my critical thinking skills about the intersections of sport and society. This experience solidified my interest in sports research, and I look forward to pursuing it in my post-graduate career."

Sarah Silbert will pursue an MSC in Comparative Social Change this coming Fall through a program run jointly by University College, Dublin and Trinity College, Dublin. Silbert is interested in the relationship between sport and community development and plans to utilize her degree and experiences at the Tucker Center in her future academic and professional career. She analyzed data and helped write *Head Coaches of Women's Collegiate Teams: A Comprehensive Report on NCAA Division-I Institutions, 2018-19 Report Card*. And she also contributed to the creation of a #HERESPROOF infographic. Silbert had an incredible summer with the Tucker Team and stated, "From research skills to general communication and critical thinking skills, I've learned so much through my experience at the Tucker Center. Being involved in public scholarship that makes a difference in society has been inspiring and I feel more prepared, confident and excited about starting my Master's program in the fall."

Research Updates and Accomplishments

Media guides are university-produced and distributed publications whose role has changed as the college sports media landscape has also changed. This longitudinal study, “**A 26-year Longitudinal Analysis of Intercollegiate Division I Media Guides in a Changing Sports Media Landscape**,” by Drs. **Jo Ann Buysse** (U of M, TC Affiliated Scholar) and **Sarah Wolter** (Gustavus Adolphus College), documents changes in male and female athlete portrayals and representations over time. Read all of their findings, now available on our website.



Over the last eight years the TC has produced numerous **Women in College Coaching Report Cards** (WCCRC) in collaboration with WeCOACH. These groundbreaking reports document the percentage of women in head coaching positions at institutions, conferences, and within specific sports. The data are beginning to show some interesting trends such as these particular 2018-19 NCAA D-I highlights:



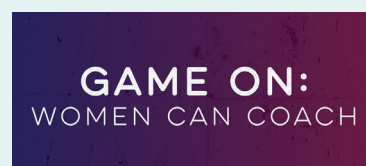
- The percentage of women head coaches in NCAA Division-I conferences went up to 42.1% (from 41.7% in 2017-18)—the data is trending in the right direction! However, the majority of hires are men. Many ADs are missing targets of opportunity to hire women when a head coach position becomes available, and we have documented their hiring patterns over the last eight years.
- The Ivy League is the NCAA D-I conference that boasts the highest percentage of women head coaches (53.1%).
- Lacrosse has a large percentage (92.9%) and swimming a small percentage (16%) of women head coaches. Lacrosse also had the highest percentage of all-women coaching staff (72.6%).
- Nearly a quarter (843 of 3,541; 23.8%) of D-I women's athletics teams do not have any female coaches on staff.
- Despite the fact that men didn't play on the women's team, an equal percentage of men (14.3%) and women (14.5%) coach women's teams at their alma mater. What these data indicate is that men have a dual career pathway to coach both NCAA D-I men *and* women at their alma maters, whereas women alumnae do not.

- One-third (33.5%) of women head coaches explicitly mention children in their online bio, dispelling the myth that women can't coach and have a family. However, the percentage is less than their male colleagues (52.6%). This data suggests more support is needed for female coaches with children. Examining and adjusting family policies to ensure parent-coaches are supported is one way to benefit all coaches, regardless of gender.

In 2019, we launched the **Plus One (+1) Challenge** to enlist institutional buy-in, break the stagnation, and increase the percentage of women head coaches over the next five years from 42.1% in 2019 to 50% by 2024. What does this mean for each institution? The +1 Challenge is achievable and simple: 1) Replace one male head coach with a female head coach over the next five years, and 2) Replace all outgoing female head coaches with another female coach to maintain, rather than reverse, the percentage of women. There are many targets of opportunity to hire a woman head coach: when a new sport is added; or when a male coach retires, leaves for another job, is fired, or when his contract is not renewed.



To read all the WCCRCs, see grades, download the infographics, discover how the report is making a difference, and learn more about the **+1 Challenge**, visit our website: www.TuckerCenter.org.



Watch the **Game ON: Women Can Coach** full-length documentary, the updated condensed version (with new footage of two-time NCAA Championship Notre Dame Women's Basketball coach **Muffet McGraw**), or view coach profiles, including USWNT two-time FIFA World Cup Championship coach **Jill Ellis** and four-time WNBA Championship coach **Cheryl Reeve**. Game ON explores evidence-based research, dispels false narratives, and celebrates female coaching pioneers at all levels of sport. New this fall is a **Game ON Toolkit** which includes important resources to help stakeholders and advocates create a sport climate that values and supports all women coaches. Visit www.tuckercenter.org for all these materials.

Kudos & Announcements

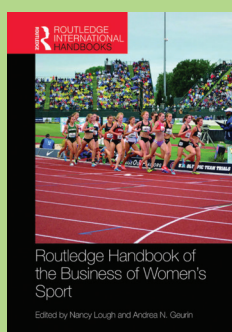
Nicole M. LaVoi, Tucker Center Director, and Tucker Center Affiliated Scholar **Laura Burton** (UConn), co-authored an article using colleague **Pat Griffin's** term “The war on women coaches,” which appeared in *The Conversation* (June 4, 2019) and highlighted the double standard that holds female coaches to different standards of coaching behavior than male coaches.

Tucker Center Affiliated Scholars, Professors **Lisa A. Kihl** (U of M) and **Nancy Lough** (UNLV), co-authored an article, “Why Empowering Women in Sports Is a Winning Game Plan,” in *Mediaplanet's* Women in Sports campaign.

Austin Stair Calhoun, TC Affiliated Scholar, was recognized and honored as a “Rising Alumni” at the annual College of Education and Human Development Spring Assembly last April. Calhoun currently serves as the chief-of-staff for the U of M Office of Medical Education.

Beth Lewis, Professor and Director of the School of Kinesiology and TC Affiliated Scholar, was featured in a June Mom Enough podcast, “Exercise and Mental Health.”

LaVoi, Calhoun, and Anna Baeth (former TC Research Assistant) published a chapter titled, “Sociological perspectives of women in sport” in the *Handbook of the Business of Women's Sport* (Routledge) co-edited by **Lough**.



To disseminate our research, Tucker Center scholars often speak to stakeholder groups in order to educate and help catalyze change. To keep apprised of all we do, please visit www.TuckerCenter.org and follow us on social media: @TuckerCenter, Facebook, and Instagram.



Tucker Center Scholars Weigh in on 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup

The **Women's World Cup** (WWC) sparked world-wide conversation around pay equity, athlete behavior, women coaches, winning, gender stereotypes, and media coverage, just to name a few. The Tucker Center has been a rich resource for data and the media on these important topics.

LaVoi and a team of gender and sport research colleagues—Drs. **Leanne Norman** (Leeds Beckett, UK), **Donna De Haan** (Utrecht University), and **Annalies Knoppers** (Utrecht University)—presented their research at the Equal Playing Field: The Equality Summit 2019 conference held in Lyon, France prior to the final of the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup. Their research brief is titled, “Researchers release telling and groundbreaking results of elite women football coaches' experiences.”

Professor **Mary Jo Kane** was interviewed by numerous media outlets this summer including the *New York Times*, *MPR News* host Kerri Miller, and *TPT—Twin Cities PBS Almanac*, where she discussed the significance of women's sport and the WWC.

Professor **Kane's** research will be featured on a panel, “The Victorious U.S. Women's Soccer Team & the Fading Gender Divide,” hosted by the Center for the Study of Politics and Governance at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota on Tuesday, September 24, from 12 p.m. –1 p.m. Also on the panel is Dr. Jamie Feldman, assistant professor in the U of M's Program in Human Sexuality.

LaVoi and Tucker Center Affiliated Scholar **Cheryl Cooky** (Purdue) were interviewed in July on *Business Radio*, powered by the *Wharton School*, discussing women's sport, the WWC and why female role models matter. LaVoi also appeared in interviews by *NBC KARE 11*, *PBS NewsHour*, *The Ringer*, *StarTribune*, and *ESPN*.

FALL 2019 DISTINGUISHED LECTURE

CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF A GROUNDBREAKING SCHOLAR: PROFESSOR MARY JO KANE

Tuesday, October 15, 2019 • 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Cowles Auditorium, Hubert H. Humphrey Center

University of Minnesota West Bank Campus

Free and open to the public

About the Lecture

In 1993, the Tucker Center at the University of Minnesota was established as a result of the vision of its first Director, Professor Mary Jo Kane. Over the past 26 years, Dr. Kane's scholarship, leadership, teaching, mentoring and community outreach has shaped and changed the landscape for sportswomen. Her contributions throughout her 30-year career have influenced countless stakeholders who care deeply about and advocate for gender equity. Our annual

Distinguished Lecture will examine and honor the arc of Dr. Kane's academic history as she is interviewed by the University of Minnesota Foundation's Trustee, Shari Ballard. We invite you to join us for what will be an historic moment and celebration of the Tucker Center's Founder, who has lived the mission of making a difference in the lives of girls and women in sport.

About the Panelists

Mary Jo Kane is a Professor in the School of Kinesiology and Founder and Director Emerita of the Tucker Center. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Illinois with an emphasis in Sport Sociology. Professor Kane is an internationally recognized scholar who has published extensively on media representations of women's sports. She is the recipient of the first Endowed Chair in the nation related to women in sport: The Dorothy McNeill Tucker Chair for Women in Sport & Exercise Science. Professor Kane is a Fellow in the National Academy of Kinesiology, the highest academic honor in her field, and is a past recipient of the Scholar of the Year Award from the Women's Sports Foundation. In 2018, she was named one of the 100 Most Influential Sports Educators by the Institute for International Sport. She has appeared on the Today Show and National Public Radio and her research has been cited extensively by the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, and the *Washington Post*.



Shari Ballard is the former Senior Executive Vice President and President of Multichannel Retail at Best Buy. She currently serves as Vice Chair of the University of Minnesota Foundation Board of Trustees and is a member of the Board of Directors at Ecolab Inc. After graduating in 1989 with a bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Michigan-Flint, Ballard was hired to work in a Flint Best Buy store. Beginning as an assistant store manager, she rose through the ranks to lead at the highest levels of the company. Ballard was named several times on *Fortune* magazine's annual list of the "Most Powerful Women in Business." According to *Fortune*, Ballard's leadership at Best Buy played an essential role in creating "one of the most impressive turnarounds in retail over the last decade."



KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE TUCKER CENTER!

There are several ways you can keep up-to-date with our most recent events and news. For starters, the TC's website is our online hub. Everything from current research, to news, to videos can be found at:

www.TuckerCenter.org

The Tucker Center maintains a presence on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube:

- **Twitter:** @tuckercenter
- **Facebook:** facebook.com/tuckercenter
- **Instagram:** tuckercenter
- **YouTube:** youtube.com/tuckercenter

We hope you'll take advantage of all the ways we are sharing information!



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YES! I WANT TO SUPPORT THE TUCKER CENTER'S RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH EFFORTS.

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- Media Coverage of Female Athletes Fund
- Women and Sport Leadership Fund
- Tucker Center Internship Fund for Gender Equity in Sport
- Borghild Strand Endowment
- Dorothy McNeill Tucker Fellowship Fund
- Edith Mueller Endowed Fund for Graduate Education
- Edith Mueller Park Memorial Award
- Eloise M. Jaeger Scholarship at the Tucker Center
- Graduate Fellowship for Gender Equity in Sport
- Research Fund for Gender Equity in Sport
- Pam Borton Endowment for the Promotion of Women and Girls in Sport Leadership
- Tucker Center Graduate Assistantship Fund

Visit www.TuckerCenter.org, click the **Support Us** link, and get more information on each fund, on monthly or planned giving, and on matching gifts.

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Thank you for your continued support !