How Adaptive and Inclusive Sports on College Campuses Can Help Socialize and Inform the Next Generation of Leaders in Challenging Ableism
Overview

1. A panel discussion on models for student-involved programs and how they influence students with and without disabilities with a specific reference to confronting ableism.

2. A brainstorming session that builds on or goes beyond the models described by the panelists.

3. Breaking into affinity groups who either have or envision similar models of student-involved program in order to share ideas and best practices.

4. Allowance for individualized planning for actions that will help form or strengthen a specific student-involved program at a specific college or university and a sharing out of these plans.
Learning Objectives

• Expand understanding and knowledge of what a college-based adaptive sports program can look like including both action–oriented and reflective learning components that focus on inclusion and ableism.

• Explore how community-based organizations can effectively collaborate with students, faculty, staff, and administrators to initiate and sustain a student-involved adaptive and inclusive sports program on and off campus.

• Create strategies to influence collegiate and community leaders who have the authority and purview to change campus culture to become more inclusive of students who have a disability.
Introductions
Where are we?
Participation of Student – Athletes with Disabilities in U.S. - Based Collegiate Sport: A Macro - Perspective

Traditional National Governing Bodies of Intercollegiate Sports, Club sports, and Select Adaptive Sports at the Collegiate level.

- **National Collegiate Athletic Association** – **NCAA** (Oversees Intercollegiate Varsity Sports at Division I, II, and III levels)
- **National Intramural & Recreation Association** – **NIRSA** (Oversees Standards, Policies, and Practices of Campus Recreation Programs)
- **National Wheelchair Basketball Association** – **NWBA** (Oversees collegiate wheelchair basketball including Collegiate Wheelchair Basketball Championships)
- **US Tennis Association** – **USTA** (Oversees collegiate wheelchair tennis including Collegiate Wheelchair Championships)
Relevant Federal Laws

Federal Laws Related to Governance, Policies, and Practices regarding institutional responsibilities regarding the inclusion and accommodation of college students engaged in varsity or club sports, intramural sports, and campus fitness programs.

- **Section 504 of Rehab Act of 1973** as amended by the *Dear Colleague Letter of January 25, 2013*.

NCAA Statement on Inclusion for Student – Athletes with disabilities

Student-Athletes with Disabilities

• As one of its core values, the NCAA believes in and is committed to an inclusive culture that fosters equitable participation for student-athletes and career opportunities for coaches and administrators from diverse backgrounds. In further recognizing and acting upon this value, the NCAA is increasing efforts to provide opportunities to student-athletes with education-impacting and physical disabilities.

Education Impacting Disabilities

• For academic eligibility purposes, the NCAA defines a disability as a current impairment that has a substantial educational impact on a student’s academic performance and requires accommodation. Learn more.
NCAA Statement on Inclusion for Student – Athletes with disabilities

Accommodations for Student-Athletes with Disabilities

• The NCAA encourages participation by student-athletes with disabilities (physical or mental) in intercollegiate athletics and physical activities to the full extent of their interests and abilities. An NCAA member institution will have the right to seek, on behalf of any student-athlete with a disability participating on the member's team, a reasonable modification or accommodation of a playing rule, provided that the modification or accommodation would not:

  • Compromise the safety of, or increase the risk of injury to, any other student-athlete;
  • Change an essential element that would fundamentally alter the nature of the game; or
  • Provide the student-athlete an unfair advantage over the other competitors.

Adaptive Sports Model

• The NCAA continues to support the opportunity for student-athletes with disabilities to participate in intercollegiate athletics. In January 2014, the board of directors of the Eastern College Athletic Conference approved the implementation of championship sport opportunities for student-athletes with disabilities.
Inclusion Principle #1: Inclusion of athletes with a Paralympic-eligible disability onto existing teams, competitions and Championships without any sport-specific accommodations required.

Inclusion Principle #2: Inclusion of athletes with a Paralympic-eligible disability onto existing teams, competitions and Championships with reasonable sport-specific accommodations provided.
Inclusion Principle #3: Inclusion of athletes with a Paralympic-eligible disability through the addition of specific adaptive (Para) events into existing competitions and Championships in an array individual Olympic/Paralympic sports (e.g., track & field, swimming, tennis, rowing, alpine & cross-country skiing, golf and fencing).

Inclusion Principle #4: Inclusion of athletes with and without disabilities through the creation of specific adaptive (Paralympic) team sports in new leagues, competitions, and Championships (e.g., wheelchair basketball, sled hockey, goalball, sitting volleyball and wheelchair rugby).
Gateway to Gold Strategy
Creating Opportunities…

Mission & Vision:
• Independent missions
• Shared vision: Create explosive growth in Paralympic sport opportunities and participation across the U.S.

ECAC Inclusive Sport Strategy
Creating MORE Opportunities…

Common Goal: Build athlete development pathways from Grassroots to Elite levels

Awareness & Communication
Grassroots Programs
Athlete ID
High Performance
NCAA
NIRSA Statement on Inclusion for Students and Staff involved in Campus Recreation Programs

The higher education environment is being changed by the shifting dynamics of its students and its workforce. “Students and employees are becoming more diverse on a broad range of dimensions including gender, sex, sexual orientation, language, age, ability status, national origin, religion, socio-economic status, as well as race, ethnicity, and heritage. Those who manage programs and services, as well as those who help to develop the talents of students and the workforce, need to be prepared to address the environmental factors that influence performance and affect overall wellbeing.”
Policy to Practice: Where Does *Disability* fit into the National On–campus Discussions over Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion?

- What does the overall institutional Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) statement focus on as presented from a campus President’s or Chancellor’s Office?
- What does an institution’s (DEI) statement focus on as presented from a campus Athletic Department? Does it explicitly include references to student – athletes and staff with disabilities?
- What does an institution’s (DEI) statement focus on as presented from a campus Recreational Sports Department? Does it explicitly include references to students and staff with disabilities?
Challenges & Unique Barriers to Inclusion of Student – Athletes with Disabilities in a Campus Environment

EXAMINING IMPLICIT and EXPLICIT ABLEISM CONTEXTS
Examples at our Institutions
Collegiate Goalball

• Unique as the only goalball league in which sighted players are permitted to participate
• Collegiate teams seem to have started from a trickle down of the USA Paralympic teams.

A growing league!
• Portland State,
• UC Berkeley,
• Towson,
• Slippery Rock,
• Brockport,
• Cortland
Goalball Team

Why?
• Developed out of necessity – a blind student wanted to participate in sport at the college level, “just like other kids”
• A tool to educate students (i.e., future teachers) about disability

Who?
• Began with Adapted Physical Education students; ended up involving students from various departments across campus
Goalball Team

How?
• Collaborated with blind student to learn about the game
• Requested help from the department chair for funding to purchase equipment (i.e., goal ball, goggles); borrowed pads from teams
• Created an independent study course to ensure consistency

When?
• Regular practices (2 per week, 90 minutes each)
• Weekend tournaments, when possible
• Informal and formal team meetings
Goalball Team

Barriers

• Recruitment and retention of players
• Educating and coaching of new players
• Maintenance of the team (e.g., space, funding, discrimination, unable to gain club status)
• Storing equipment
Goalball Team

Challenging Ableism

• A successful example of reverse Integration
• Research study suggested positive outcomes
  • Building of team cohesion
  • Focus on ability, rather than disability
  • Disability was perceived as an advantage
• Gained positive attention on campus and in the community
Other Examples

• Cortland Adapted Swim Team (CAST)

• Recreational opportunities for wheelchair basketball and sled hockey

• Adapted Physical Education Programs (K-12)
**PROGRAM ORIGIN**

- **Early 2019**: Started in Department of Family Medicine
- **Early 2020**: Student Life supported adaptive sports within the capacity of the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities - but came with no funding
- **2020-21 Academic Year**
  - Primary support was through Michigan Medicine, but being in SSD gave access to new donors
  - Focused on partnerships and grant writing
  - Use of the ADA fund
  - Priority access to varsity facilities
- **Fiscal Year 22**: Received a budget from Student Life for FY22; Staffing and Programming Support
WHERE WE ARE NOW
WHERE WE ARE NOW

Director, Student Accessibility and Accommodation Services

Assistant Director, Adaptive Sports and Fitness (ASF)

Administrative Coordinator

S&C Coach

Track & Field Coach

Tennis Coach

Basketball Coaches (2)

Physical Therapist

Funded by SL

Funded by ADA

Funded by Gift Funds

Funded by UHS
WHERE WE ARE NOW ... AND WHERE WE ARE GOING
WHERE WE ARE NOW ... AND WHERE WE ARE GOING

● Integration & Ownership
  ○ Build pathways from K to 12 to college to sport for life
  ○ RACI (Responsibility, Accountability, Consult, Inform) and the USTA model
  ○ Varsity, Rec Sports, Admissions, Development

● Ongoing Challenges / Opportunities
  ○ Institutional Responsibility, Accountability, and Support
    ■ Ableism > Awareness > Policy > Action
  ○ Information Sharing
  ○ Recruitment
  ○ Talent Development (Staff)
  ○ Governing Structure

● Adaptive Student Athlete Program
Historically Black College and University (HBCU)
Downtown Durham, NC (3.6 miles from Duke University)
Student population -8,078
● First project proposal Wheelchair Basketball Program - 2010
  ○ Department Chair approved proposal
  ○ Chancellor approved the proposal
    ■ Planned to provide funding for the proposal
  ○ Housed in Campus Recreation and Department of Physical Education
  ○ Unfortunately, she passed and the proposal dropped
Areas of Concern

● Funding
  ○ Athletics attempted to provide funding
  ○ Budget cuts caused the removal of two sports

● COVID

● Student Support Services agreed to assist and provide minimal support
  ○ DEI supported Student Support Services with approval

● Need student population, housing, equipment storage, gym space for practices and games
2021-2022

- University Tennis coach contacted regarding beginning a WC tennis program at NCCU.

- Initial Barriers
  - Wheelchairs will ruin the courts
  - Lack of parking
  - Payment for facility usage
  - Lack knowledge of wheelchair tennis and lack of motivation to include

- Lack of concern for increasing enrollment and assisting the community of individuals with disabilities
Programming 2022, Wheelchair Tennis, Wheelchair Basketball, Fitness/Powerlifting

- **Integration**
  - Dept of Kinesiology and Recreation Administration
  - BS Strength and Conditioning, Fitness and Wellness, Sports Medicine
  - MS in Adapted Sports Science, Rec Therapy, Athletic Administration
  - Local Parks and Recreation

- Weekly clinics on and off campus (build community participation, recruit students, merge student populations from UNC, Duke, NC State, surrounding universities)

- **Barriers & Challenges**
  - Storage space for equipment
  - Change in Athletic Director and Campus Recreation Director
  - Changing perspectives of Administrators and creating a culture of inclusion through disability
  - Include disability in DE&I statements
  - Funding for equipment
Discussion

1. Admissions
2. Facilities
3. Programming
4. How do we bridge the gap between universities and communities?