

## **SAMPLE ABSTRACTS**

The Conference Planning Committee has chosen the abstracts below to share as examples of well-written submissions. Reasons these abstracts were chosen include:

- Following the abstract guidelines specific to each presentation type
- Integrating theory supported by research
- Including specific content that will be presented, not generalities to be decided and expanded upon closer to the conference

### **Sport Psychology Consulting with United States Paralympic Athletes**

Panel (60 minutes) | Elite/Pro Sport

Paralympic athletes are elite level athletes who have physical disabilities (and some sports include athletes with intellectual disabilities). While Paralympic athletes share many similarities with their able-bodied Olympic counterparts, there are unique aspects of working with this population that should be taken into consideration for consulting (Haberl, 2006). Researchers have found few differences between athletes with disabilities and able-bodied athletes on psychosocial variables, such as motivation, self-esteem, confidence, stress, anxiety, and mood (Dieffenbach & Statler, 2012; Martin & Wheeler, 2011). Sport psychology practitioners have also pointed out that mental training can be implemented similarly with Paralympic and Olympic athletes, and consultants should use creativity in sessions to incorporate the various disabilities (Hanrahan, 2015). Differences to consider between Olympians and Paralympians in a sport psychology setting include: the wide variety of classifications of disabilities in the Paralympic system, athletes' abilities to participate in interactive team building or mental training activities, sociocultural context (i.e., accessible facilities, societal attitudes towards this population, funding and resources [or lack of] provided to these athletes), and prevalence of clinical issues.

In this panel, five sport psychology/mental training consultants who work with United States Paralympic athletes will share aspects of their consulting. The panelists will include a neophyte consultant (doctoral student) and four professionals who have consulted with Paralympic athletes in various capacities. One professional is a full-time sport psychologist with Paralympic athletes, while the others are either contracted through the U.S. Olympic Committee or through a specific National Governing Body (NGB). One of the professionals will also serve as the moderator of the panel. Panelists will share how they gained entry with athletes, the nature of their consulting, highlights, challenges, and lessons learned from working with this population. Recommendations will be made for consultants who would like to (or already) work with Paralympic (or adaptive) athletes.

## **Going Pro: A Discussion about Private Practice and Deciding if It's For You**

Panel (60 minutes) | Private Practice

Many students and young professionals dream of working in a private practice yet have doubts about whether they can make a living on their own (Taylor, 2008). In fact, 27% of graduate students in sport psychology reported not knowing someone who worked in the career that they desired (Fitzpatrick, Monda, Wooding, 2015). Considering the value of mentorship (Watson et al, 2009), this panel brings together four professional sport psychology consultants with unique perspectives on the reality of private practice. We will engage in a facilitated discussion and answer questions such as: 1) What have you learned the hard way about private practice? 2) What is the easiest thing about private practice and what is the most challenging? 3) If you could change one thing about getting to the point you are now, what would it be? 4) What advice would you give your younger self? 5) What are the financial and practical considerations of starting a private practice?

Key learning points for attendees include: a) private practice is stressful, you must work hard and take a leap of faith in yourself and the profession; b) private practice is not for individuals who are risk-averse or who need life to be predictable; c) to succeed you need to establish relationships, be business-minded, and seek out applied and educational experiences while in graduate school; d) budget wisely, there are hidden costs and affordable office space can be difficult to find.

Audience members will have the opportunity to interact with the panel. Attendees will leave with an understanding of what it takes to succeed in private practice and receive honest responses about the nuts and bolts of doing applied work on your own or within a group practice.

## **Minority, Student, and Athlete: Multiracial Division I College Athletes' Stereotype Threat Experiences**

Lecture | Diversity & Culture

The purpose of this qualitative transcendental phenomenological study was to understand the meanings ascribed by multiracial male and female NCAA Division I student athletes in the Southeast region of the United States to the lived experiences of stereotype threat. Stereotype threat is a phenomenon that is boundless and can influence any individual who adopts an individual or group-based social identity (Steele, 2011). Stereotype threat, as a theoretical framework was developed as part of Steele and Aronson's (1995) research on the phenomenon of underperformance, which extends social identity theory. Specifically, underperformance is defined as a performance behavior that is uncharacteristic of someone who otherwise has demonstrated competency and mastery over the achievement domain for which the person performs (Steele, 2011; Steele & Aronson, 1995).

By exploring the stereotype threat experiences of multiracial collegiate-athletes, this study extended the research of Comeaux (2012), Harrison (2012), and Steele (2011) who proved the existence of stereotype threat experiences among monoracial populations. For this study, analysis of respondents' verbalizations revealed 21 invariant constituents which were clustered into five themes. The modified Van Kaam method was used to create textual structural descriptions of the stereotype threat phenomenon. The interpreted results include six essences of stereotype threat. In addition to participant narratives, tables and figures help foster the reader's contextual understanding of the participants and their stereotype threat experiences. Contemporary scholars have opportunities to extend the research and to suggest ways to apply findings to the practical situations of multiracial student athlete populations.

## **Utilizing Brief Interventions from an Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)**

### **Approach**

Workshop (60 minutes) | Consulting & Interventions

Traditional models of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) as applied specifically to performers tend to follow a structured process over a specified number of sessions (Gardner & Moore, 2012; Moore, 2009), with the ideal scenario being that the performer-client will gradually and sufficiently acquire, build on, and crystalize ACT-based mental skills. However, the underlying theoretical foundation, the supporting research, and the practical utility of empirically supported ACT-based skills can be applied in the form of brief interventions (Hayes, 2005; Mahoney & Hanrahan, 2011). Additionally, there is evidence to suggest that the effectiveness of ACT-based mental skills training is largely influenced by a process of collaboration and creativity between the therapist and the performer-client, which may not always occur in a structured consulting format (Moran, 2011). The learning objectives of this workshop are threefold: to review ACT-based theory and empirically supported interventions specific to performance populations; utilizing this knowledge, to work collaboratively with workshop attendees to generate brief interventions based on ACT theory and research; and to create scenarios (e.g., role plays) to practice the presentation of brief interventions. Sensitivity to issues of diversity and cultural awareness are vital for successful outcomes using an ACT approach (Masuda, 2014; Woidneck et al., 2012), and therefore the workshop is designed to actively address the importance of developing cultural competency as a consultant. Attendees will learn best practices from each other; to collaborate on the development of novel, brief interventions designed for use with performers; and attendees will receive active coaching and instruction from the moderators, all of whom have had formal training and professional experience using ACT with a population of high performers.

## **Sport-Based Life Skills Interventions: A Program Analysis for At-Risk Youth**

Poster | Youth Sport

At-risk youth are children and adolescents who due to environment, family context, mental/physical health, and/or academic performance are at risk for poor life outcomes (Moore, 2006). The current study analyzed the effectiveness of a life skills program that used sport in a population of at-risk youth. The Sports United to Promote Education and Recreation program (SUPER; Danish, 2002) uses sport and physical activity as a mechanism to teach a series of life skills in such a way that the participants recognize the relationship between the skills they are using in each module and their applicability to other settings such as home or school. Five male students aged 11 to 14 years old participated in the single subject ABA design where basketball was used to teach life skills using the SUPER program. The life skills included managing emotions, goal setting, relaxation, confidence, mental preparation, focus, and seeking help from others. To evaluate the effectiveness of the program, three subscales were used from the Life Skills Transfer Survey (LSTS; Weiss, Bolter, & Kipp, 2014) as well as four subscales from the Ottawa Mental Skills Assessment Tool (Durand-Bush, Salmela, & Green-Demers, 2001). Results indicated that the intervention was effective at enhancing the ability for four of the five participants to use life skills they learned in the intervention. This study supports the use of sport-based interventions with at risk youth as well as the use of individualized interventions to enhance the results.