

TO: AASP Diversity Committee

FROM: 2018 AASP-HBCU Conference Planning Committee (Rickey Carter, Kelsey Jones, Jordan Whitehead, Quincy Davis, Roselore Desir, Jerry Holt, Chris Stanley)

RE: 2018 AASP-HBCU Conference Final Report

The 2018 AASP-HBCU Conference marked the third annual event in this conference series. The conference was hosted at Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU) on March 2-3, 2018 in the Pharmacy Building auditorium. Consistent with the previous AASP-HBCU conferences, this event was primarily a student-led conference targeted to traditionally underrepresented populations, and individuals who are interested in careers in applied Sport and Exercise Psychology (SEP). Moreover, the conference is designed to promote diversity and inclusion in applied SEP settings and to foster the personal and professional growth of students interested in entering the SEP fields. The conference is also designed to stimulate dialogue around diversity issues in applied SEP settings. Overall we believe the conference achieved these aims. Below, we offer brief descriptions and impressions of the two-day conference.

In the days and weeks leading up to the conference, there was a tremendous amount of support from the FAMU community. This support included advertising and supplying of conference bags from the Dean of the College of Education, Dr. Patricia Green-Powell. The chairs of the Departments of Psychology department (Dr. Gwendolyn Singleton) and Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (Dr. Sarah Price) also helped advertise the event to the student body. The Department of Continuing Education at FAMU was extremely helpful in securing the conference site, as well as facilitating registration and budgetary matters.

The conference began on Friday afternoon with welcome remarks from Dr. Patricia Green-Powell. Thereafter, Dr. Brian Sims (Psychology faculty at FAMU) presented a talk titled *Status Ain't Hood: Nationally Colonized Afrikan Athletics*. The talk centered on the NCAA and its history of exploitive practices of athletes, particularly athletes from underrepresented groups. Many of Dr. Sim's students were in attendance and the talk was followed by a stimulating question and answer session.

Following this talk, Dr. Latisha Forster-Scott of Rutgers University presented on *Using the Saliency of Race in Sport Questionnaire as a Bridge to Discuss Issues of Race and Ethnicity in Sport*. Her talk we well received and stimulated much interest, as evidenced by the engaging question and answer session following. After Dr. Scott's talk, and before the scheduled keynote, a portion of the FAMU Marching 100 made a 15 minute performance, consisting of a few selections. This presentation by the band ensemble was well received, as is characteristic of the superb nature of FAMU's world-renowned Marching Band. The final selection was "Lift Every Voice and Sing," in which the audience was invited to participate as the words were projected on the front screen, and which was led by Mr. Michael Huggins, of the College of Education.

The final speaking event on Friday evening was the keynote lecture given by Charlie Ward, Heisman Trophy winner and former player for the New York Knicks, and titled *Embracing the*

*Process: Game Plan for Living Life to Achieve your Success.* Conference attendance was highest at this event, with approximately 60 individuals in the audience. The keynote covered developmental and psychosocial aspects of Mr. Ward's athletic career, and he highlighted protective factors and figures, including his family, faith, and perseverance. Mr. Ward concluded with a question and answer session, and much interest was generated from the audience during this time and even after its conclusion.

On Friday evening, there was a reception at the *Meek-Eaton Black Archives Research Center and Museum*. There was a selection of hors d'oeuvres at the reception, and attendees were otherwise allowed to tour all three floors of the museum. Most of those at the reception (including students) indicated that it was their first time at the Black Archives Museum, and expressed much appreciation and enjoyment in the event. The first day of the conference concluded around 8:00 PM on Friday evening, when the reception ended.

The conference resumed on Saturday morning at 8:00 AM. There was a breakfast sponsored by the University of Western States in the Pharmacy Building lounge area. The first talk of Saturday morning was by two students (Rickey Carter and Quincy Davis) titled *Reflections from the Mat: The First HBCU Wrestling National Champion*. This presentation employed an interview format in which Mr. Davis interviewed Mr. Carter about his experience as being the first National Champion wrestler from an HBCU (FAMU). After several questions from Mr. Davis, there were questions from the audience. It was a very engaging 30 minute presentation, touching on many unique challenges and issues Mr. Carter faced, but also emphasizing mental toughness and perseverance.

Subsequently, Andrew Mac Intosh of Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality (RISE) led a workshop titled *Improving Race Relations: Using Sport as a Context for Difficult Conversations*. First, he offered an overview of RISE. He then led the audience through a very engaging "concentric circle" exercise in which key points related to diversity, self-expression, and inclusivity were conveyed. Dr. Mac Intosh concluded with a question and answer session, in which audience members examined how they could integrate concepts and techniques into their own applied work.

The final speaking event of Saturday morning was titled the *Transformation of Lives Through Special Olympics*, given by Melba Jacobs and Dr. Anika Fields. The presenters offered an overview of Special Olympics history, both nationally and locally. They covered the core psychosocial aims of the program and benefits for the athletes. The presenters also indicated that they are seeking to expand their program to include FAMU, and this presentation sparked some connections for them which may yield positive results. Moreover, a couple of students were moved to explore volunteer opportunities with the Special Olympics.

Overall, there were a number of positive elements from the conference, as well as some areas which were not anticipated. Positively, the quality of presentations was exceptional. A number of scholars from various universities presented their research, providing a high-level academic atmosphere for these segments. Additionally, there was also an emphasis on applied SEP, represented in terms of presentations by students and community program leaders. Special

elements such as the stirring performance by an ensemble of the Marching 100 is a feature that has not occurred in past AASP-HBCU conferences. These were all well received by the audience and consistent with the conference mission. A somewhat unanticipated element was the failure to generate greater attendance, although publicity efforts were robust. The planning committee considered that having speakers of the caliber of the professors who presented, and especially having a Heisman Trophy winner as keynote speaker, would have produced greater registration and attendance. However, attendees and students expressed great appreciation for the event, and the AASP-HBCU Conference at FAMU was a successful entry for this series. With the knowledge shared, connections made, and interest in the SEP stimulated for students, long-term success from this conference will be realized.



*Dean Green-Powell Welcome Remarks*



*Graduate Student Jordan Whitehead*



*Dr. Brian Sims*



*Keynote Speaker Charlie Ward*



*Reception at Black Archives Museum*



*Breakfast sponsored by UWS*



*Registration Table, Lanyards, and Conference Bags*



*Rickey Carter and Quincy Davis*



*Dr. Anika Fields and Melba Jacobs*