

Dream Big. Take Action.

WELCOME TO THE 2021 VIRTUAL

Play Like a Champion

Sports Leadership Conference

June 22-24, 2021

#PLC2021

Virtual Conference Program



Conference Overview

Annual Leadership Conference

Every June, the *Play Like a Champion Today Educational Series* welcomes coaches and administrators from sports organizations across North America to Notre Dame for their National Sports Leadership Conference. Though we are once again meeting virtually in 2021, this year's Conference promises to deliver with a dynamic lineup of speakers and breakout sessions designed to bring us together in kinship and to *connect, educate* and *inspire* participants. As young athletes return to play across the country after a difficult year, the conference theme ***Dream Big. Take Action.*** calls us to address the issues we face in youth sports with renewed vision, challenging us to dream of a better future and to take action toward creating *A Team for Every Child* in our own communities.

The pages that follow will provide an overview of this year's virtual conference. From accessing the conference via Zoom to our schedule, speaker profiles and an FAQ, this program should provide everything you need to join this year's conference sessions. You can also contact us with questions at information@playlikeachampion.org or (574) 250-6424.



Connect, Educate & Inspire.



Conference Overview

Accessing the 2021 Virtual Conference

Play Like a Champion's 2021 Sports Leadership Conference will be held using the Zoom platform. A link to join the Pre-Conference Retreat on Tuesday, June 22nd can be found on Page 5 of this program, along with a link to join the Daily Workouts that will take place on Wednesday and Thursday before the conference. Links to Conference sessions on Wednesday, June 23rd and Thursday, June 24th can be found on the top of those respective pages in the schedule.

Downloading Zoom

If you do not already have Zoom on your desktop, [click here](#) to visit the Zoom website and download the Zoom Client. You can also download Zoom for your mobile device by visiting [Apple's App Store](#) or the [Google Play Store](#) for Android devices. Once you have the software on the device you will use to access the Conference, you will be able to join by clicking the links next to each session.

Having trouble with Zoom or struggling to enter a Conference session? Zoom has a great support section with video tutorials and answers to many questions. Visit them at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us> and enter your question in the search box.



Still having problems? We're here to help. Read the FAQ on the following page or contact Play Like a Champion via email at peter.piscitello@playlikeachampion.org or by phone at (913) 396-2277.

Conference FAQ

What link do I use to access the Conference?

The schedule included in this program has links you will need to access each session. Click that link to access the corresponding session. There is one link for each day of the conference that will work for all sessions that day, as well as separate links for the Pre-Conference Retreat and Daily Workouts. *Play Like a Champion* staff will also provide instruction during the conference to help you get to the next session. Simply keep this schedule handy throughout the conference!

May I share the Conference link with my coaches or staff?

Play Like a Champion's Virtual Sports Leadership Conference is open to everyone who wishes to attend. However, we ask that each person register individually in order to assure they receive access to all sessions and to help *Play Like a Champion* plan the best experience for all attendees.

Registration is quick and free; anyone interested can register here:

<https://playlikeachampion.wufoo.com/forms/m1lmsr4h09ni3dk/>.

Can I join late? What if I have to leave mid-session?

We understand you may have other obligations that keep you from attending the full conference. You are welcome to join any conference session in-progress or leave at any time if you need to. For speakers, you will simply enter "live" and can begin viewing the session (don't worry, you won't interrupt anyone by logging in). For breakout sessions, you may be asked to wait just a few minutes to enter the conversation, depending on the progress of the session.

Will Conference sessions be recorded if I miss something?

Most speakers and panels will be recorded and made available following the conference to those who have previously registered. However, breakout sessions and discussions will not be recorded.

I need a password to enter a session. Where do I find that?

Clicking the links provided in this program should automatically let you in to each session. If you are asked for a password, simply enter **CHAMPION21**. This password is also displayed on the schedule.

My audio/video is not working properly. What should I do?

Unfortunately, issues with lagging audio or video are usually the result of a poor internet connection in the participant's location. We suggest moving closer to the wireless router at your location or plugging in to a wall connection if that is possible. If you are at home, you may also want to limit others use of the internet while attempting to view the Conference, as multiple users can slow internet speeds and make watching video difficult.



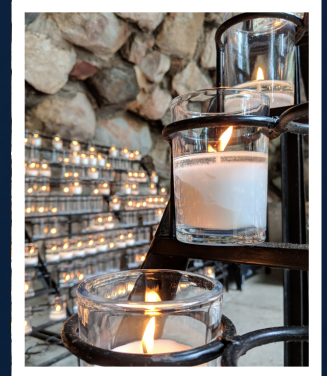
Conference Schedule

Tuesday June 22nd

Dream Big. Take Action.

Noon EDT: Pre-Conference Spiritual Retreat

The 2021 Pre-Conference Retreat theme is rooted in the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola, who founded the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). Jesuit spirituality teaches that we encounter God in all things. This retreat will offer the opportunity to reflect upon the losses and graces of this past year and how to discover God's grace in and through specific athletic moments, while strengthening our resolve to become authentic sport ministers serving athletes.



Wednesday June 23rd & Thursday June 24th

11:30 am EDT: Daily Workout

Join Play Like a Champion for a daily workout prior to the main sessions of the 2021 *Play Like a Champion Conference*. The workout on Wednesday, June 23rd will feature a high-energy HIIT workout with Coach Orlandus Thomas, who will conclude with a mindfulness cooldown. On Thursday, June 24th Joanna Cote Thurman will lead a trauma-informed yoga workout, which will increase our flexibility in mind, body and spirit. All are welcome to attend these sessions and modifications will be offered to accommodate all levels of physical ability.

Conference Schedule

Wednesday, June 23rd

"Teamwork"

Noon EDT: Conference Welcome & Opening Charge

Dr. Lisa Merritt, *Whole Health for Children*

The 2021 Virtual Conference begins with a welcome from *Play Like a Champion's* Executive Director Dr. Clark Power, who will put the past year in perspective while dreaming about a brighter future for our children. Then, join Dr. Lisa Merritt as she shares her passion to serve the whole health of our country's children with a particular focus on keeping youth safe from COVID-19 especially during sports. She will also discuss the impact her athletic experience had upon her career.



1:15 pm EDT: Post-Pandemic Youth Sports: Renewing Our Mission

Panel 1: How We are Re-Creating Youth Sports for the Future

Play Like a Champion Athletic Directors from elementary and high school programs from around the country discuss how last year's pandemic and struggle for social justice is changing youth sports for the better. Panelists: Scott Bailey (Director of CYO Athletics, Seattle), Dan Fitzgerald (Director of St. Louis CYC), Anthony Thomas (Athletic Director, Francis Parker School in San Diego, CA) and Allison Fondale (Athletic Director, St. Mary's High School in Annapolis, MD).

Panel 2: Developing Youth Sports Programs that Transform Urban Communities

Champion community leaders serving youth in four urban neighborhoods present the bold programs that they have initiated with support from Play Like a Champion's *A Team for Every Child* Initiative.

Panelists: Claude Robinson (EVP Community Affairs and Diversity at UCAN) and the Executive Director of the North Lawndale Athletic & Recreation Association (NLARA) in Chicago; Matthew and James Lawrence, co-founders of Lawrence International, headquartered in Baltimore; Andre Wright Co-Founder of Give and Go Athletics in North Philadelphia and Michael Poole, Executive Director of Positive Outlook in South Bend founding member of the Michiana Athletic and Recreation Association (MARA).

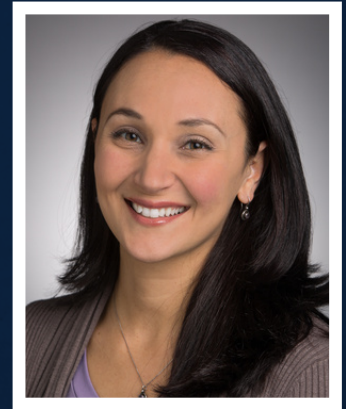
Conference Schedule

3:00 pm EDT: Networking & Stretch Break

3:15 PM EDT: Dr. Amanda Zelechoski

Parenting through a Pandemic: Using the Psychological Science to Help Us (and our kids) Cope

Navigating our roles and responsibilities at work and at home throughout the COVID-19 pandemic pushed most of us far beyond our limits. In this presentation, Dr. Zelechoski, psychologist and co-founder of [Pandemic Parenting](#), will discuss various psychology concepts and tools to help us understand the uncertainty, stress, and long-term effects of this unprecedented time on parents and children.



4:00 pm EDT: Summarizing Key Themes

Closing Charge & Community Meeting

Day 1 concludes with group discussion and comments led by *Play Like a Champion* staff. Dr. Clark Power, Jim Power and Kristin Sheehan will break-down some of the day's important lessons in light of the conference theme *Dream Big. Take Action* and the day-long theme of *Teamwork*. Join to share your thoughts as we consider how the day's speakers and discussion can help us to move forward and create a brighter future for our children through sports.



Conference Schedule

Thursday, June 24th

"Inclusion"

Noon EDT: Book Club!

A Most Beautiful Thing with Arshay Cooper

We are thrilled to be joined by Arshay Cooper, author of this moving true story of a group of young men from Chicago's West Side who formed the nation's first all African American high school rowing team. Arshay will provide insight into how the group impacted a sport and transformed lives; the session will also include a Q&A with Arshay and further discussion on important themes. *A Most Beautiful Thing* was made into an award-winning film in 2020 featuring Arshay and members of the Manley High School rowing team. Attendees do not need to have read the book or seen the film to benefit from this impactful discussion.

If you're interested in reading the book or watching the film before or after the conference, you can purchase the book through your local bookseller or by [clicking here](#). More information on the film is [available here](#), which can be purchased online or streamed through Peacock and Prime Video.

1:00 pm EDT: Opening Charge

Mike Singletary - *Seed to Harvest*

Play Like a Champion's own Kory Minor will kick-off this session with an inspirational message to coaches and athletic leaders who are called to be their "best self" in leading our youth. Then, NFL Hall of Famer Mike Singletary will take the stage to inspire leaders with his message of *Seed to Harvest*. We know that, especially in our urban areas, people are hurting and that we risk losing our children. As coaches, we can and *must* provide a glimmer of hope.

Drawing on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Mike will share his belief that sport is a means to fulfill the final four needs for safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualization. Learn how sport and coaching impacted Mike's life and how sport can be a game-changer in every young person's life.



2:00 pm EDT: Networking & Stretch Break



Conference Schedule

2:15 PM EDT: Bob Atkins and Dan Hart

Get a GRIP on Your Youth Group to Build Healthier Communities and Revitalize Democracy

Effective youth organizations increase the life chances of young people, contribute to healthier and more equitable communities and improve American democracy. In this session Bob Atkins, Associate Professor at Rutgers University-Camden and Dan Hart, Professor and Vice Chancellor at Rutgers University-Camden will discuss how you can get A GRIP on your group to make it more effective. A breakout session involving all attendees on the topics of Seed to Harvest, team community and moral climate will take place following these presentations.

3:30 pm EDT: Summarizing Key Themes

Closing Ceremony & Community Meeting

The conference concludes with group discussion and comments led by *Play Like a Champion* staff. Dr. Clark Power, Jim Power and Kristin Sheehan will break-down some of the day's important lessons in light of the conference theme *Dream Big. Take Action* and the day-long theme of *Inclusion*. How can we work together to strengthen our programs, enrich our communities and provide opportunities for every child? Join to share your thoughts and wrap-up the 2021 Virtual Conference in this final session.



Conference Speakers



Dr. Lisa Merritt

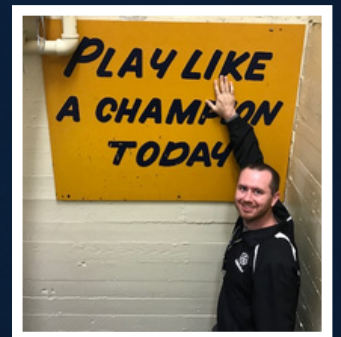
Executive Director, Multicultural Health Institute

Dr. Lisa Merritt, a board-certified physiatrist, is a leader in her field and longstanding member of numerous professional organizations, including the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (AAPMR), the National Medical Association (NMA), the American Medical Association (AMA) and more. Since moving to Sarasota in 2006, Dr. Merritt has had an impact through several highly successful initiatives. The Multicultural Health Institute (MHI) has touched thousands of lives, working with schools, local community and faith-based organizations to promote science, technology, engineering, creative arts math and health (STEAMH) careers. Dr. Merritt has authored numerous articles on multicultural health issues, physical medicine, rehabilitation and integrative medicine topics, and has also lectured both nationally and internationally on such issues and been featured in Fortune Magazine. Currently adjunct professor at New College of Florida, she completed her undergraduate studies at Georgetown University and received her M.D. Degree from Howard University.

Scott Bailey

Director of CYO Athletics, Archdiocese of Seattle

Scott Bailey is responsible for coordinating sports each year for 9,000 kids ages 5-18 in 78 schools & parishes across the Emerald City. Over 13 years with the CYO, Bailey has trained 5,800 coaches in the Play Like a Champion philosophy. With sports cancelled most of this past year due to COVID-19, he creatively committed to take positive advantage of this time by pouring his heart into training and support for his sport parents.



Dan Fitzgerald

Director, Archdiocese of St. Louis CYC

Dan Fitzgerald retired from a career in the Brentwood Police Department after 34 years and took over as Director of the Archdiocese of St. Louis CYC, which serves over 40,000 children each year rallying around three pillars: Faith, Sportsmanship and Service through sport. In 2020, Dan led the formation of "ONE TEAM," a committee whose mission is to understand racial discrimination that manifests in the CYC and works to eradicate all racism in youth sports.

Conference Speakers



Anthony Thomas

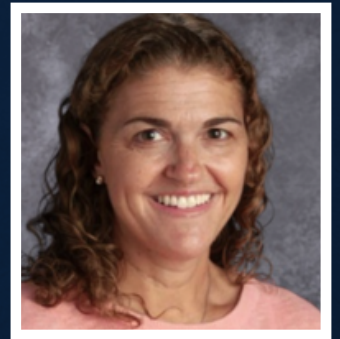
Athletic Director, Francis Parker High School and Co-Founder, National Organization of Minority Athletic Directors (NOMAD)

Anthony Thomas firmly believes we can combat racism through sport, leading at Francis Parker and through the creation of NOMAD. He is a key thought leader in *Play Like a Champion's* pursuit to inform our community on this critical topic. His goal is to build understanding, allyship and kinship within his local sport community as well as make a national impact to defeat racism.

Allison Fondale

Athletic Director, St. Mary's High School

Allison Fondale leads 80 coaches & 36 teams at St. Mary's and was honored in 2020 as the Maryland State AD of the Year. A former college lacrosse standout and coach at Duke, Maryland & the Naval Academy, she demonstrates a constant motivation to improve the experience for student-athletes, through programs like the CHAMPS leadership and service program and SAIL.



Claude Robinson

EVP Community Affairs & Diversity at UCAN, Executive Director of the North Lawndale Athletic & Recreation Association (NLARA)

Claude Robinson (EVP Community Affairs and Diversity at UCAN) and the Founding Member and Executive Director of the North Lawndale Athletic & Recreation Association (NLARA) in Chicago. Claude serves on the Boards for the Homan Square Foundation, Advocate Bethany Fund and Attorney

Registration Discipline Commission. Claude is a 2004 Leadership Greater Chicago Fellow, 2018 Latino Policy Forum and 2021 Don Stewart Fellow of the Chicago Community Trust.

Conference Speakers



Matthew and James Lawrence

Co-Founders, Lawrence International

Matt Lawrence is the Co-Founder of Lawrence International. A former Baltimore Raven, Matt Lawrence is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. After graduation, Matt went on to play 4 seasons in the National Football League (NFL), playing with the Seattle Seahawks, the Chicago Bears and the Baltimore Ravens before retiring in 2012. While playing Matt was involved with the Presidential Council for Fitness and Nutrition and has built

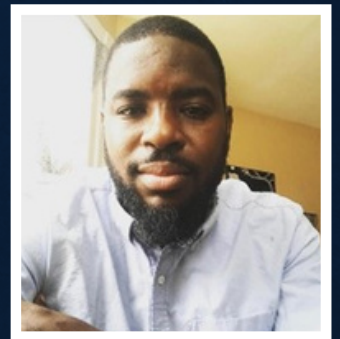
upon that experience to develop his vision for Lawrence International, to revitalizing communities through holistic community programming.

James Lawrence is co-founder and Executive Director of Lawrence International, whose mission is to develop, educate, and inspire underserved communities using holistic youth sports programming. Born and raised in Hartford, James earned a Master's in Coaching and Athletic Administration from Concordia University in Irvine California and went on to become the Community Center District Manager with Baltimore City Recreation and Parks. James and Matt are currently bringing flag football programming and the NFL Ambassador program to communities in Baltimore, Connecticut and are in discussions with expanding in Chicago with the NLARA.

Andre Wright

Co-Founder Give and GO Athletics

Andre K. Wright, the Executive Director of Give and Go Athletics in North Philadelphia, has worked with children for over 15 years as a counselor, mentor, and athletic coach and was an inspirational college level player at Neumann College. Andre co-founded Give and Go Athletics in 2009, to provide youth with afterschool sports and arts programming to promote their "health, human development, and informal learning." In May of 2021, Give and Go Athletics was awarded one of five Violence Prevention Grant by Philadelphia District Attorney's Office for their work serving the youth of North Philadelphia.



Conference Speakers



Michael Poole

*Executive Director, Positive Outlook and Board Member,
Michiana Athletic and Recreation Association (MARA)*

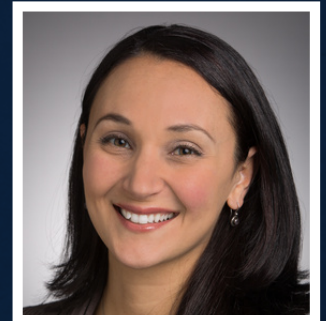
Michael Poole founded Positive Outlook over 20 years ago to create safe, inclusive and caring youth sports programming for the youth in South Bend. Positive Outlook programs include mentorship, developing life skills and encouraging healthy choices. Programming includes the South Bend Breakers (basketball), summer and winter camps and in school programs

(South Bend Community School Programs) for youth (boys and girls) age 8-18. Mike is a founding member of the Michiana Athletic and Recreation Association (MARA).

Amanda Zelechowski, J.D., Ph.D.

Professor, Psychologist & Attorney

Dr. Amanda Zelechowski is a licensed clinical and forensic psychologist and attorney, specializing in trauma. She is board certified in Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology and has worked clinically with adults, children, and families. As an Associate Professor of Psychology at Valparaiso University, she directs the Psychology, Law, & Trauma Lab, where she conducts research on the impact of childhood trauma. In addition, Dr. Zelechowski provides training and consultation to numerous mental health, legal, educational, and child welfare agencies. In 2020, research on the COVID-19 pandemic's affect on families led her to co-found *Pandemic Parenting* with Dr. Lindsay Malloy. Through a podcast, webinars, blog & social media the duo have provided tools for families to navigate the pandemic. Most importantly, Dr. Zelechowski is a wife and mom of three young children, "mostly just trying to make sure her kids have clothes on when they bust into her virtual meetings."



Arshay Cooper

Author, "A Most Beautiful Thing"

Arshay is a Rower, Benjamin Franklin award-winning author, the protagonist of the critical acclaim film "A Most Beautiful Thing," A Golden Oar recipient for his contributions to the sport of rowing, motivational speaker, and activist, particularly around and issues of accessibility for low-income families. Arshay works with the George Pocock Foundation and A Most Beautiful Thing Inclusion Fund to bring rowing to under-resourced communities. Learn more about Arshay [here](#).

Conference Speakers



Mike Singletary

Coach, Member of the NFL Hall of Fame

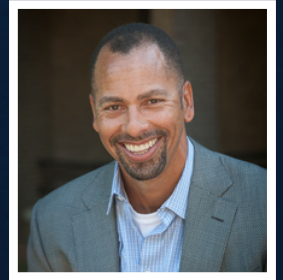
After playing college football for the Baylor Bears and earning All American honors his junior and senior year, Mike was drafted in the 1981 NFL Draft by the Chicago Bears becoming known as “The Heart of the Defense” for the Bears “Monsters of the Midway” in the mid-1980’s. The Bears won Super Bowl XX with Singletary being named NFL Defensive Player of the Year in 1985 and again in 1988. He was inducted into both the Texas Sports Hall of

Fame and the College Football Hall of Fame in 1995 and into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1998. Mike later pursued a career as a coach, first as a linebackers coach for the Baltimore Ravens, then as the linebackers coach and Head Coach for the San Francisco 49ers and two seasons as a high school football coach. Mike is married to his wife Kim for 37 years and they have 7 children. He is currently working on a “Seed to Harvest” Intervention in the city of Chicago addressing the tri-fold values of education, food insecurity and health care for youth who are most at risk.

Bob Atkins

Professor & Director of New Jersey Health Initiatives

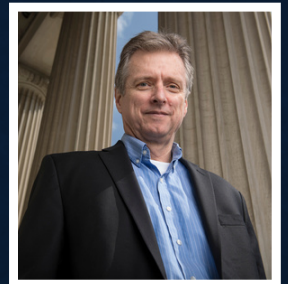
Bob Atkins is a former school nurse in the city of Camden and directs New Jersey Health Initiatives, a statewide grantmaking program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. He is an associate professor at Rutgers University-Camden with a joint appointment in nursing and childhood studies.



Dan Hart

Vice Chancellor and Professor

Dan Hart is a distinguished professor of psychology at Rutgers University-Camden and vice chancellor for the campus. He is the author of *Renewing Democracy in Young America* and is co-authoring a book on youth groups and democracy with Bob.



Play Like a Champion Staff



Dr. Clark Power

Clark is one of the nation's leading minds in moral education and developmental psychology. He is *Play Like a Champion's* founder, Executive Director and primary researcher, and provides key thought leadership for the program. He has served on the Board of the National Council for Accreditation of Coaching Education, the Notre Dame Faculty Board on Athletics, and the Association for Moral Education. A graduate of Villanova University and Washington Theological Union, and Harvard University, Clark has taught at Notre Dame since 1982.

Kristin Sheehan

Kristin has served as the Program Director of *Play Like a Champion* since the program's inception. She leads all partner relations, coordinates educational programs, and spearheads the development of new curricula. Kristin has co-authored numerous articles and publications and presented *Play Like a Champion* workshops across the country. She earned undergraduate and master's degrees in theology and psychology from Notre Dame, where she was a varsity athlete on the cheerleading team.



Jim Power

Jim has served as *Play Like a Champion's* Director of Operations since 2016 following a 23-year career in finance with GE Capital. His educational background includes both an MBA and a Master of Social Work at the University of Pennsylvania. Over the past 4 years, Jim has taken a lead in managing *Play Like a Champion's A Team for Every Child* initiative, partnering with leaders in underserved communities to create collaborative sports associations which provide programming for *all* children. *Play Like a Champion* has established associations in Chicago and South Bend with plans for continued expansion.

Play Like a Champion Staff



Peter Piscitello

Peter joined the *Play Like a Champion* team in 2017 after spending more than a decade in youth and college sports administration. He graduated from Benedictine College, where he studied business and theology before earning a master's degree in education from the University of Washington. After working in development and business operations in college athletics, Peter spent several years as the Executive Director for the CYO in Kansas City (KS).

Grace Curtin

Grace joined the Play Like a Champion team in 2018 as the Project Manager for the Team for Every Child Initiative in Chicago. Grace establishes community relationships, conducts needs assessments, coordinates data collection and reporting and implements coach workshops for the North Lawndale Athletic and Recreation Association. Grace is a Notre Dame graduate with a BA in the Program of Liberal Studies/Pre-Health Studies.



Dr. Carrie Hastings

A Play Like a Champion Trainer & Research Specialist, Carrie is a licensed clinical and sport psychologist, presenting nationally on the topic of Trauma-Sensitive and Responsive Coaching, Depression & Suicide, and Bullying & Hazing. A Certified Mental Performance Consultant with the Association for Applied Sport Psychology, she is currently the team psychologist for the Los Angeles Rams and is listed in the United States Olympic Committee Sport Psychology and Mental Training Registry. Carrie is also a *Play Like a Champion Trainer* and Research Specialist. She will provide conference attendees with an understanding of what it means to be a "Trauma Sensitive" coach and offer valuable insight into better reaching student-athletes.

Play Like a Champion Staff

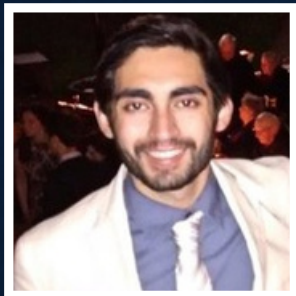


Kory Minor

Kory Minor serves as a Los Angeles area Trainer for the Play Like a Champion Today Educational Series. Kory is a University of Notre Dame graduate, where he was a 4-year star defensive player and team captain for Lou Holtz's Fighting Irish Football Team. Kory graduated with a Business degree in marketing and was drafted by the San Francisco 49ers in the 1999 draft. He played four seasons as a linebacker and special teams standout for the Carolina Panthers. Kory is the Founder & CEO of Kory Minor Industries (KMI), a training and development company for individuals and organizations.

Mariah Smith

Mariah joined the Play Like a Champion team this year and serves as the Operations Specialist for the Michiana Athletic and Recreation Association (MARA) in South Bend, IN, establishing the operating procedures for the association. She was born and raised in South Bend, and is a graduate of Purdue University in West Lafayette.

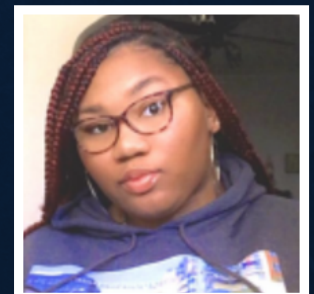


Martin Duchossois

Martin Duchossois is a member of the South Bend community and active in the development of the Michiana Athletic and Recreation Association (MARA) since its inception in 2019. He has also been a part of our Play Like a Champion conferences over the past 5 years.

Charee Tousant

Charee is a new member of the NLARA community outreach and research team. A North Lawndale native, she is a full-time student in Chicago studying psychology. In her free time, she volunteers for Endless Energy and the HOJO Family Assistance program.





Play Like a Champion Today Educational Series

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