

An Insight into MCPS Athletics

Winter 2020–21 ♦ Issue 10



“Leading from the heart builds relationships and relationships are the core of leadership!”

~Deb Hult

The R.A.I.S.E. Report

Director’s Message

continue to be amazed by the resiliency of our student-athletes and the commitment and dedication of all those who support them. The fall and winter virtual seasons have provided meaningful and engaging opportunities for student-athletes – from conversations around race, equity and social justice, to the Women in Sports Series, to the Careers in Sports Series, each session has allowed for student-athletes to expand their experiences in sports and beyond. As we head towards second semester, please know the COVID-19 Task Force for MCPS Athletics continues to plan for the safe return of in-person activities, which will commence when health metrics allow and in alignment with the return of students to schools. We will provide ongoing updates on our website and social media platforms. In the meantime, we look forward to a successful spring virtual season that will run through January 22, 2021. I wish you and yours a safe and joyous holiday season and all the best as we head into 2021!

Together #WeRAISE MCPS Athletics! – Jeff

MCPS Sports Nation – Despite the challenges and obstacles created by COVID-19, student-athletes, coaches, athletics specialists, athletic coordinators and stakeholders across MCPS Athletics continue to thrive. I

COACHES’ CORNER

We Can, We Will, We RAISE

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of the [R.A.I.S.E. Reimagined](#) framework, middle and high school coaches in the MCPS Athletics program continue to embrace a positive mindset founded on the following charges:

We CAN – MCPS coaches continue to focus on what **CAN** be done throughout the pandemic, to elevate student-athletes.

We WILL – MCPS coaches continue to be innovative and create the GREATEST possible experience for our student-athletes throughout the school year.

We RAISE – MCPS coaches continue to demonstrate an unwavering commitment to our R.A.I.S.E. core values of MCPS Athletics.

Professional Development for Coaches

All coaches, athletics specialists, athletic coordinators, and athletic department personnel must complete the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) free online course entitled [COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators](#) prior to the start of in-person activities and/or the season.



The [Fall and Winter Rules Clinics](#) for MPSSAA sports are available through [NFHSlearn](#).

ATHLETIC SPECIALISTS’ SPOTLIGHT

Maryland State Athletic Directors Association (MSADA) Award Winners

The Maryland State Athletic Directors Association announced two MCPS award winners: **Ms. Anne Rossiter**, currently Compliance Specialist for Systemwide Athletics, was named the **Maryland State Co-Athletic Director of the Year** and **Ms. Georgia Cornell**, long-time Senior Field Trip Coordinator in the MCPS Department of Transportation, was awarded the **Distinguished Service Award** for her unwavering support of the MCPS Athletics program. We look forward to celebrating them at the 2021 MSADA Conference in April!

Ms. Rossiter was recently named the Compliance Specialist for the MCPS athletics program. Ms. Rossiter previously served as the athletic director at Northwest High School. During her tenure as athletic director, Ms. Rossiter led the Jaguars’ athletics program to success in all aspects of program operations.



Ms. Cornell has served MCPS for the past 47 years, all of which have been in the department of transportation. During that time, she has spent 30 years as the senior field trip coordinator for the school system. In this position, Ms. Cornell supervises all aspects of field trip operations for MCPS, the 14th largest school district in the United States.



Georgia Cornell’s commitment to service and excellence is second to none. With the sheer number of buses running on a daily basis, the transportation operations for field trips run smoothly and efficiently. In the rare instance of an issue, Ms. Cornell is quick to troubleshoot and find a solution, keeping buses rolling so the games may go on. In doing so, one can see her smile over the phone, as her positive energy can be felt by all who are fortunate to interact with her.

All in the MCPS Athletics Nation unanimously agree that Ms. Cornell exhibits an unwavering dedication to MCPS athletics and takes prides in ensuring that each and every bus arrives on time to safely transport student-athletes to their destination. Ms. Cornell exemplifies the vision, mission, and R.A.I.S.E. core values of the MCPS athletics program.

Students Who R.A.I.S.E.

R.A.I.S.E. Outs!

MCPS Athletics Launches Speaker Series

During the fall virtual athletic season, representatives from the Student-Athlete Leadership Council (SALC) served as moderators for the MCPS Athletics speaker series. Miss Maryam Higazi, Sherwood High School SALC representative, made history moderating the first webinar in the speaker series, "Reconditioning the Fall Athlete" with Ms. Katie Brodka, Manager of Athletic Training



Services, Medstar Health Medicine, and Mr. Darin Moore, Athletic Training Program Supervisor, Adventist Health Care. #WeCAN, WeWill, WeRAISE

In addition, the following SALC representatives moderated webinars during the fall virtual athletic season:

SALC Representative	High School	Speaker Session
Mr. Arvinder Singh	Paint Branch	RAISE Your Game Mr. Alan Stein, Jr.
Miss Elise Kinyanjui	Montgomery Blair	Finding Your Cool Ms. Joanna Lohman
Miss Senys Ramirez-Cisneros	Northwood	What is Your Why? Mr. Omari Pearson
Mr. Tyler Chapman	Walt Whitman	Defining Leadership Ms. Deb Hult
Miss Chiamaka Nwankwo	Watkins Mill	COVID-19 & Athletics Mr. Alan Stein, Jr.

B.R.I.D.G.E.S. for Coaches & Student-Athletes

B.R.I.D.G.E.S. for Student-Athletes: A Conversation About Privilege, Race & Equity

Presented by the MCPS Athletics Equity and Social Justice Committee with student guest moderators from The Minority Scholars Program (MSP)

The MCPS Athletics Equity and Social Justice Committee collaborated with the MCPS Minority Scholars Program (MSP) to facilitate the inaugural "A Conversation about Privilege, Race, and Equity" session for hundreds of student-athletes and coaches. The conversations focused on fostering positive athletic experiences and removing barriers

to ensure equitable and inclusive programming that unifies MCPS schools and supports social justice in the global community. Thank you to all the coaches and student-athletes who shared their voice in these conversations.

Women in Sports Speaker Series

Under the leadership of Ms. Amanda Twele, Athletics Specialist, John F. Kennedy HS, along with fellow colleagues, Ms. Rita Boule, Montgomery Blair HS, Ms. Gina Grubb, Poolesville HS, Ms. Lisa Magness, Watkins Mill HS and Ms. Heather Podosek, Paint Branch HS, MCPS Athletics unveiled the *Women in Sports* speaker series in late October. The first of a two-part series, featured MCPS alumni and their experiences with athletics after graduating high school. The "Next Level Athlete" series was moderated by Miss Bami Odubayo, John F. Kennedy HS, and featured the following MCPS alumni:

- Ms. Amy Defnet – Poolesville HS, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Field Hockey
- Ms. Hope Gouterman – Sherwood HS, University of Maryland Soccer
- Ms. Dominique Wright – John F. Kennedy HS, US Naval Academy Lacrosse, Track & Field
- Ms. Thea LaFond – John F. Kennedy HS, University of Maryland Track & Field, 2016 Summer Olympian

Miss Caroline Orza, Bethesda-Chevy Chase SALC representative and Mr. Vaibhav Jah, Magruder SALC representative, participated with Dr. Sullivan, Mr. Jason Campbell, Athletics Specialist, Northwest High School, and Mr. Haroot Hakopian, Girls' Soccer Coach, Winston Churchill High School in creating a promotional video for the [Virtual Athletic Seasons](#). Check it Out!

Shout Out to the following SALC representatives for being featured in the NFHS [Spread the Change](#) nationwide challenge on promoting social justice:

- Miss Bami Odubayo, John F. Kennedy HS
- Mr. Arvinder Singh, Paint Branch HS

Congratulations to the following Athletics Specialists for earning the [Certified Master of Athletic Administrator](#) designation from the [National Interscholastic Athletic Administrator Association \(NIAAA\)](#):

- Mr. Dan Feher, Springbrook HS
- Ms. Heather Podosek, Paint Branch HS
- Mr. Andy Wetzel, Walt Whitman HS

Congratulations to the following MCPS coaches for being selected as the [2019–20 NFHS Maryland State High School Coaches of the Year](#).

The recipients of this year's awards are:

[Girls' Cross Country](#)

Mr. Herb Tolbert, Gaithersburg HS

[Girls' Lacrosse](#)

Ms. Jennifer Holiday Mohr, Quince Orchard HS

[Girls' Soccer](#)

Mr. Haroot Hakopian, Winston Churchill HS

[Softball](#)

Mr. Louis Hoelman, Montgomery Blair HS

[Girls' Swimming](#)

Mr. Jon Leong, Poolesville HS

[Boys' Basketball](#)

Mr. Darnell Myers, Springbrook HS

[Boys' Golf](#)

Mr. Randy Berger, Gaithersburg HS

[Boys' Soccer](#)

Mr. Eric Cava, Gaithersburg HS

[Boys' Swimming & Diving](#)

Mr. Chris Tappis, Winston Churchill HS

[Boys' Tennis](#)

Mr. Jasen Gohn, Walt Whitman HS

Did You Know...

The National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) provides four levels of certification for both high and middle school athletic administrators, including the Registered Athletic Administrator (RAA), Registered Middle School Athletic Administrator (RMSAA), Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA), and the Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA). Currently, MCPS is employing eight CMAA's, twelve CAA's, one RMSAA, and seven RAA's. #WeRAISE

