

Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport

Tucker Center News

Fall 1997

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR:

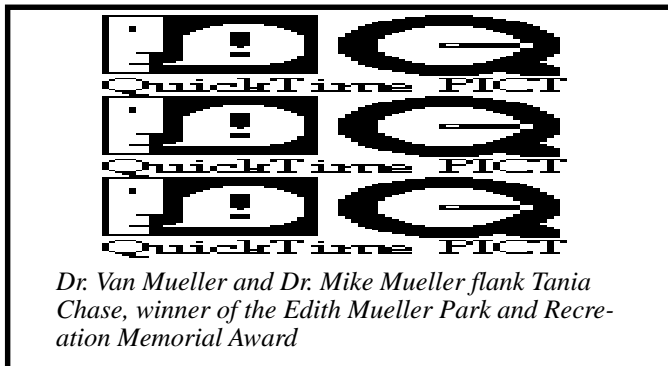
In order to fulfill its mission, the Tucker Center remains busy conducting research projects, writing grants to fund more research and provide assistantships for graduate education, and participating in community outreach activities. Here are just a few of the initiatives we are working on this year.

First, we have been actively involved in several research projects, including one funded by the Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies (CTS), as well as a study supported by the Graduate School at the University of Minnesota. The purpose of the CTS study is to determine if involvement in competitive athletics (i.e., women's intercollegiate sports)—a demanding, spatio-temporal activity—is related to gender differences in driver accident patterns. A second research project, "Examination of Stress, Injury, and Quality of Life for University Athletes: What's Gender Got to Do With It?," looks at the interplay of stress and injury on the quality of life of University of Minnesota athletes. Data collection for this project has just been completed and two Ph.D. students in Kinesiology, Shaine Henert and Sue Schwenz, are beginning to statistically analyze the results from the study. Dr. Diane Wiese-Bjornstal, Principal Investigator and Affiliated Scholar of the Tucker Center, will publish the findings in the Spring of 1998.

The Tucker Center has also submitted grant proposals to the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) (\$52,000), McKnight Foundation (\$165,000), and the American Association of University Women (AAUW) (\$4,545). The NATA grant examines physical and psychosocial risk factors associated with sport injury and physical illness in intercollegiate athletes. The McKnight Foundation grant, submitted in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club of Minneapolis, asks for \$165,000 to implement a mentorship program. The program, targeted at young girls at risk, would promote the physical and psychosocial benefits of sport and exercise. Finally, the Tucker Center submitted a grant to the AAUW to educate and empower high-school girls. This program consists of three main components. The first component is a slide presentation that highlights research findings on the harmful effects of stereotyping female athletes in mainstream media. An example of this stereotyping would be to emphasize a sportswoman's femininity and physical attractiveness rather than her athletic accomplishments. The second component of the AAUW project helps high-school girls create empowering images of female athleticism. The final component provides girls a public forum for sharing what they have learned from the project. The girls will go to local or branch AAUW meetings and show the audience the alternative images they have created (e.g., banners, media guides, web sites that reflect positive images of girls in sport). The ultimate goal of the program is to increase public awareness of the dangers of stereotypic media portrayals, and to develop strategies for creating more positive images in cooperation with school officials, parents, policymakers and the girls themselves.

As part of the Tucker Center's mission to engage in community outreach and public service, we were part of a nationwide collaboration with the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports and NIKE, Inc. As you may recall from our last newsletter in the Spring of 1997, the Tucker Center and the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports released a groundbreaking research document entitled "*Physical Activity and Sport in the Lives of Girls: Physical and Mental Health Dimensions from an Interdisciplinary Approach*." The Report, the first of its kind in the country, identifies the benefits and barriers of participation in sport and physical activity for adolescent females and develops a set of policy recommendations to eliminate the barriers. The Report has received a great deal of national and international recognition. In fact, it was so well-received that NIKE asked the Tucker Center if they could use parts of the Report to produce an educational booklet. The resulting booklet, "If You Let Me Play," highlights some of the Report's significant findings and recommendations. You may be interested to know that the booklet is a follow-up to NIKE's award-winning advertising campaign encouraging young girls of all racial and socio-economic backgrounds to get into and stay involved with sports. If you would like a free copy of the NIKE booklet, call 1-800-929-PLAY.

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Dr. Van Mueller and Dr. Mike Mueller flank Tania Chase, winner of the Edith Mueller Park and Recreation Memorial Award

The Tucker Center hosted its sixth Distinguished Lecture on October 20, with guest speaker Dr. Donna Lopiano, the Executive Director of the Women's Sports Foundation. Dr. Lopiano addressed the impact of Title IX (federal legislation designed to prohibit sex discrimination in educational settings) and gender equity for women and girls in sport. Her lecture is featured on page three. At the lecture, Dr. Leo McAvoy, Director of the Division of Recreation, Park, & Leisure Studies, presented Tania Chase as the first recipient of the Edith Mueller Park and Recreation Memorial Award. (See the above picture of Ms. Chase and the Muellers.) This award seeks to recognize and encourage participation and enthusiasm of undergraduate students in the Division of Recreation, Park, and Leisure Studies, and to further students' involvement and commitment to this area of study and public service. Ms. Chase wrote an impressive essay on the role of public recreation in bringing diverse groups of people together in creative ways. She graduated with distinction from the Division of Recreation, Park, & Leisure Studies in the Fall of 1997. The Tucker Center congratulates Tania Chase on her achievements!

In partnership with the Coca-Cola Community Building Initiative at the University of Minnesota, the Tucker Center sponsored a mentorship program that paired University undergraduate students with high-school students to explore ways to adopt healthier lifestyles. The participants said they had a great time and "learned a lot." More about the program can be found on the following page.

Finally, as I mentioned above, part of the mission of the Tucker Center is to enhance graduate education. Toward that end, we are very pleased to announce the first ever scholarship dedicated to studying girls and women in sport. The scholarship is being given to the Tucker Center by Eloise Jaeger, an alumna of the University of Minnesota and a pioneer in women's sports. Eloise Jaeger is featured in the next article.

— Dr. Mary Jo Kane, Director

ELOISE JAEGER: A PIONEER IN PROMOTING WOMEN IN SPORT

Professor Eloise Jaeger has played and continues to play a pioneering role in promoting women in sport at the University of Minnesota.

Eloise Jaeger began her involvement at the University of Minnesota as an undergraduate taking classes in physical education in preparation for a career in teaching. She received her M.Ed. in 1944 from the University of Minnesota and her Ph.D. in 1952 from the University of Iowa. Professor Jaeger taught women's physical education at Minnesota for many years and, in 1962, became the Director of the Department of Physical Education for Women.



Dr. Eloise Jaeger

In the years to follow, Professor Jaeger saw through many changes at the University including the formation of the School of Physical Education, Recreation, & School Health Education. This Department contained all the physical education programs, the recreational leadership programs, and a program in school health education. She said there was a "cooperative spirit" within the Department and a university-wide environment where men and women were treated equally.

In 1971 Eloise Jaeger was named the Director of the School of Physical Education and became the first woman at an American college or university to have jurisdiction over both men's and women's physical education programs. Professor Jaeger, a true pioneer who doesn't consider herself as such, says "I've never thought of myself as a pioneer. I did the job to do it and did the best I could do." Soon thereafter, in 1975, she was promoted to Assistant Dean of the College of Education.

Professor Jaeger was a force behind the establishment of women's intercollegiate athletics as we know it today. She spoke of her experiences participating in *Play Days* and *Interschool Intercollegiate Athletics* during a time when the typical woman's role in athletics was as a cheerleader; women participating in sports were often laughed at and not appreciated for their talents. Thanks to Professor Jaeger's commitment to women's athletics, things have changed since *Play Days*. Professor Jaeger is very proud of how far women's athletics have progressed both in terms of publicity and appreciation for women's performances.

Eloise Jaeger was impressed with the Tucker Center's mission and decided to donate funds to set up a scholarship. Professor Jaeger believes that because of the increase in girls' and women's participation, it is essential that scholars and students explore important issues pertaining

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to all aspects of sport and physical activity, including their physiological, psychological and sociological dimensions. Through her generosity, this first ever Tucker Center scholarship will be made available to permanently insure that the best female and male students in the nation can participate in cutting-edge research initiatives.

Professor Jaeger feels that this endowment will provide an opportunity for young people to meet their educational and career goals, especially for those who might not have the financial means. The cost of education continues to rise and, as Jaeger stated, "We don't want to see the day when only those with money advance." She adds, "I don't know of a better investment than in the young; they are our future." Professor Jaeger is also hopeful that this endowment will create a spirit for and an interest in wanting to "give back" to the school, community and future recipients.

Professor Jaeger's commitment goes far beyond her gift to the scholarship fund housed in her name. She wants to do everything she can to promote the scholarship and "be of assistance wherever it is appropriate, giving help and support that the University needs." The Tucker Center would like to acknowledge Professor Jaeger's history of commitment to women and girls in sport, and her dedication in establishing the Eloise M. Jaeger Scholarship. Needless to say, we are all in her debt. If you would like to find out more about the scholarship and ways you can contribute to it, please contact 625-5511.

— Diane Gardetto, Ph.D. student, Division of Kinesiology

COCA-COLA MENTORING PROGRAM: SUCCESS FOR FIRST TIME PROGRAM

It's not very often that Kinesiology students get the chance to apply their knowledge to a "real world" setting until they start their practicum or internship. In "Teaming Up To Promote A Healthy Lifestyle," undergraduates had the opportunity to be involved in a mentorship program with Edison High School (in Minneapolis) students. Participation in the program gave Kinesiology students practical, hands-on experience guiding and educating others about the benefits of establishing and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. As part of the program, mentors were asked to research health and fitness questions posed by the high-school students and to provide written explanations with handouts regarding the questions. In addition, mentors analyzed diet and exercise logs to provide feedback and recommendations to the high-school students on how to improve, or continue to work towards, a more healthy lifestyle. The program started the first week of the University of Minnesota's 1997 Spring quarter and culminated with an all-day workshop at the University Recreation Center on May 23rd. The program was made possible through a grant awarded to the Tucker Center from the Community Building Initiatives of the University of Minnesota in partnership with Coca-Cola. Additional support from the Division of Kinesiology and the Recreational Sports Department made this program possible.

— Karri Smith, Project Director, Ph.D. student
Division of Recreation, Park, & Leisure Studies

DONNA LOPIANO: SIXTH DISTINGUISHED LECTURER

On October 20 Donna Lopiano reminded a near capacity audience that the notion of girls in sport is not a passing fad and that women as professional athletes are here to stay.

Lopiano, Executive Director of the Women's Sport Foundation in New York, delivered the sixth lecture in the Borghild Strand Distinguished Lecture Series in Cowles Auditorium in the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota. The Women's Sport Foundation is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to promoting and enhancing the sports and fitness experience for all girls and women.

Lopiano began her lecture, entitled "Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Title IX: Lessons from the Playing Field," with a recollection of a defining moment in her life. She recalled her dream of one day pitching for the New York Yankees. Toward this goal, the 11 year old Lopiano threw 500 pitches every day

to ensure making her local Little League team. Her efforts apparently paid off as she made the team and awaited the coveted uniform. However, her dream of making the team suddenly vanished as someone showed her the Little League rulebook, where the four most important words in her young life were printed, "No girls are allowed." Through Lopiano's story, the audience immediately identified the origin of her life's passion as a tireless advocate for girls and women in sport.

An expert on many diverse issues related to the Post Title IX world of girls' and women's sport, Lopiano was impressive as she outlined how and why girls' and women's sport participation has changed in the last 25 years. Lopiano described the "active female," 18 to 34 years of age, who is of the first generation to experience her "body as a powerful tool to effect change" rather than an object for other people. Lopiano applauded the people and institutions, such as the moms, dads and grandparents, who now bring sport into their family values for their sons and daughters. The media and corporate America have also become better allies with women's sports advocates as they continue to investigate discriminatory practices, portray female athletes as strong and powerful individuals and invest big money in six women's professional sports leagues.

While Lopiano focused primarily on the positive advances of women's and girls' sports participation, she emphasized that much work remains. Lopiano made the case that we are still 10 to 15 years away from women leading the grassroots, intercollegiate and professional sport organizations that represent the interest of all athletes. But in the meantime, it takes "One person ... One act ... One at a time ..." to make a difference in young girls' lives.

When asked what to do when a women's and girls' sport advocate experiences resistance to efforts that improve current conditions, Lopiano seemed to look everyone in the eye and say, "If you want to change the system, you've got to be in the system." We might not need 15 years to close the gendered organizational gap in sports with Lopiano leading the charge.

— Kim Pearce, Ph.D. student
Division of Recreation, Park, & Leisure Studies



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