

Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport

Tucker Center News

University of Minnesota

Spring 2001

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings! The spring semester is well underway and the Tucker Center has been busy initiating, maintaining and completing several important projects. One reason for all the activity has been the addition of Tara McShane to our staff. Tara has directed our "Image is Everything" mentoring project with high school student-athletes and is currently spearheading efforts to expand the program. For more information on both Tara and the "Image is Everything" workshop program, see page 3.

We are also in the midst of organizing the Tucker Center's 13th event in the Borghild Strand Distinguished Lecture Series. I am pleased to announce that this installment of the lecture series is generously co-sponsored by the Department of Women's Athletics under the direction of Chris Voelz. This spring's event features a screening of the landmark film, *A Hero for Daisy*, an inspirational documentary about two-time Olympian and Title IX pioneer, Chris Ernst, who, in 1976, galvanized her rowing team to protest substandard conditions for female athletes at Yale University. Following the screening, a discussion will be led by the film's director, Mary Mazzio, who was a member of the 1992 Olympic rowing team. A recipient of a Henry Luce Foundation fellowship, Mazzio made the film for her daughter, Daisy, to showcase an ordinary woman with extraordinary courage and to bring to light issues of equity for women in sport. The event takes place on Tuesday, April 17 from 7:00-9:00 pm in the Hubert H. Humphrey Center on the West Bank Campus. It is free and open to the public. For more information, call the Tucker Center at 612-625-7327 or visit our website at www.tuckercenter.org.

As part of our commitment to support graduate education, the Tucker Center has established the Eloise M. Jaeger Scholarship. This scholarship honors the contributions and legacy of Professor Eloise Jaeger, a 1943 graduate of the University of Minnesota. Professor Jaeger was the first woman in the United States to serve as director of a major university's school of physical education program for both women and men. The purpose of the scholarship is to ensure that the best female and male students are able to participate in important education and research initiatives designed to enrich the lives of girls and women. The first scholarship winners will be acknowledged at a luncheon honoring Professor Jaeger in late April. The winners, all School of Kinesiology & Leisure Studies doctoral students, are: Nicole Black (Sport Psychology), Kim Pearce (Leisure Services Management) and Kath Pinch (Outdoor Education/Recreation).

Last fall we started a Donor Profile column to acknowledge Friends of the Tucker Center, individuals who make financial contributions to assist our efforts in improving the lives of girls and women through sport and physical activity. In this newsletter, we highlight Van and Mike Mueller, two people who have generously supported the Tucker Center, as well as students in the Division of Recreation & Sport Studies, through a scholarship memorializing their daughter, Edith Mueller. Turn to page 4 to learn more about the Muellers and their commitment to the Tucker Center.

We also continue the "Learning our Legacy" column with a profile of Belmar Gunderson, a former faculty member at the University who, in the early 1970s, helped start the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women. Dr. Gunderson eventually became the program's first athletic director. Though she is now retired, her passion for sports lives on: She is currently one of the top-ranked senior tennis players in the country. Turn to page 2 to get a glimpse of how Professor Gunderson helped set the pace for women's athletics at the U.

Every day we receive phone calls, email and letters from numerous individuals around the country asking for information about the importance of sport and physical activity in the lives of girls and women, their families and their communities. Through your generous support, we are able to respond to such inquiries by mailing out literature, sending a speaker to community events honoring girls and women in sport, or directing people to other resources such as the Women's Sports Foundation in New York. Thank you for all the ways you help us make a difference through research, education, and community service.



Mary Jo Kane

LEARNING OUR LEGACY: A PROFILE OF BELMAR GUNDERSON

Legacy: *Something transmitted by or received from a predecessor or from the past* <“The legacy of dedicated early advocates of women’s intercollegiate athletics”>—*Encyclopedia Britannica*.

Belmar Gunderson, our “Learning our Legacy” subject, fits the definition perfectly. Linda Lander, a former student and University alumnus, has called Dr. Gunderson the “mother of women’s intercollegiate athletics” at the University of Minnesota. After reading this column, I’m sure you’ll see why.

Professor Gunderson’s career in sport began when she 12 and she credits her parents for her competitive success: “My parents encouraged me. We played hockey, basketball, softball, golf and football. My mother was a champion swimmer.” A few years later, her physical education teacher in Falls Church, Virginia, recommended the Woman’s College of the University of North Carolina (now the University of North Carolina-Greensboro) as her undergraduate destination based on the strength of the school’s physical education program. During her four years (1952-56) at Woman’s College, few opportunities were available for women to participate in collegiate athletics. Nevertheless, her abilities in tennis led to some extraordinary accomplishments as an amateur athlete. Dr. Gunderson’s early athletic achievements include competing in several Wimbledon and U.S. Lawn Tennis National Championships in the 1950s and 1960s. She continues to be among the nation’s best players in her age group: Since 1993, she has won more than 20 USTA and ITF doubles events and was ranked #1 in the 2000 USTA/Florida Women’s 65 Doubles rankings. Dr. Gunderson was also inducted into the charter class of UNC-Greensboro’s Athletics Hall of Fame.

Professor Gunderson earned her bachelor’s degree in physical education from Woman’s College in 1956 and master’s degree from Penn State in 1962. Along with teaching P.E. major’s classes at Minnesota, Gunderson took coursework at universities across the country, eventually earning her doctorate from Texas Woman’s University in 1971.

As was the case when she was enrolled at Woman’s College, Gunderson found limited opportunities for women to play competitive sports when she first arrived on the Minneapolis campus. For example, students who excelled in tennis, golf, field hockey and basketball in the late 1960s and early 1970s—students like Darlene Anderson and Betty Swanson—received little support or recognition for their athletic abilities. Women athletes had access to sport facilities only after the men were done, leaving them with perhaps two hours on Sunday afternoons, often in cold and cramped facilities. During this pre-Title IX era, gender-inequity ruled the day. Dr. Gunderson recalled that an annual women’s tennis tournament, where 20 teams participated, wasn’t allowed to move indoors when it rained. The reason? The men on campus might want to shoot baskets. But with the advocacy of individuals like Dr. Gunderson, the women’s teams moved indoors and took over the gym.

Thanks to Dr. Gunderson and other supportive administrators, women’s athletics at the U began their ongoing journey toward equitable opportunities, facilities and coaching. On July 1, 1975, the University officially formed the Women’s Intercollegiate Athletics Department. Those early days were marked by volunteer coaches and part-time graduate students who helped administer the department and run the sports programs. Though things were never easy, the passion and commitment of individuals like Dr. Gunderson paved the way for future successes: “When I arrived at Minnesota the women had almost nothing. The men didn’t want to share anything. Not their lists for funding, their money, or their facilities. I think the budget for women’s sports was \$5.72. We made a few enemies, but made a lot of progress and by the time I left in 1977 the women’s budget was around \$330,000.”

One of the most important legacies of Dr. Gunderson was her commitment to the continued existence of separate athletic departments for women and men. Dr. Gunderson was one of the first athletic administrators to foresee an unintended consequence of Title IX—the merging of men’s and women’s athletic departments which often meant that women who coached or administered athletics lost their jobs to men. Indeed, this is precisely what happened at the majority of institutions around the country. Dr. Gunderson proudly proclaimed: “It’s important for women to be role models for younger women, that’s one of the reasons we kept the departments separate, we all believed in that.”

Another important part of Dr. Gunderson’s legacy was her role in establishing the Berg Scholarship Fund, named after legendary golfer Patty Berg. This scholarship fund was initiated in 1976 to supplement money provided by the State Legislature and to further aid the development of women’s athletics at the U. The Berg Fund provides scholarships to female student-athletes for tuition and fees, textbooks, and room and board. To learn more about or to contribute to the Berg Fund, please go to www.gophersports.com/berg/index.asp or call 612-624-4319.

Dr. Gunderson celebrates the accomplishments of today’s women athletes as well as the increasing status of women’s athletics across the country. At the same time, she wants to make sure that the early struggles are never forgotten: “Lots of women worked overloaded schedules and coached for no pay because they were committed to helping women get equal opportunities. That work is important to remember.” Those of us at the Tucker Center couldn’t agree more: The “Learning our Legacy” column ensures that visionaries like Belmar Gunderson, and the legacies they established, will never be forgotten.

— Kim Pearce, Ph.D. student, Recreation & Sport Studies



COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND RESEARCH UPDATES

This year's **Tennis Plus** program is being held at the *Jerry Gamble Boys and Girls Club* in Minneapolis. The purpose of the program is to use the sport of tennis as a way to teach life skills such as goal-setting, teamwork, responsibility and respect, to adolescent girls. This year's program has been expanded to foster a rich and supportive learning environment. Tucker Center staff, along with five undergraduate student volunteers from the U, are working with 10 teenage girls once a week for six weeks. The group meets weekly on Wednesday afternoons.

The Tucker Center's workshop, "**Image is Everything: Achieving Equitable Media Treatment for Females,**" funded by the Otto Bremer Foundation, has completed its second year. Each workshop uses the topic of sport—specifically the media's stereotypic treatment of female athletes—as a vehicle to teach girls specific strategies for breaking down attitudinal and societal barriers toward female sports participation. Through the program's hands-on activities, girls gain valuable experience in problem-solving, team-building, public speaking, and, most importantly, challenging the cultural messages that prevent their full participation in sports. Tara McShane coordinates this program and has facilitated the workshops with key assistance from Tracy Tyler, a Master's degree student in Kinesiology at the U. This year, Johnson (St. Paul), Simley (Inver Grove Heights), Blaine, and Columbia Heights high schools

have hosted the workshops. The feedback we received has been overwhelmingly positive. McShane reports that workshop participants have shown impressive enthusiasm, curiosity and maturity in dealing with sophisticated social issues. Students and teachers alike have indicated they had a wonderful and unique learning experience. If you are interested in sponsoring an *Image is Everything* workshop, please contact Tara McShane at 612-625-7327.

Last year we collaborated with the Department of Epidemiology to submit a grant proposal to the National Institute of Health. The proposal—**Trial of Activity for Adolescent Girls (TAAG)**—was recently funded at \$4.1 million. TAAG is a collaborative multicenter national study focused on the physical activity patterns of adolescent girls. The purpose of this initiative is to test the effectiveness of a coordinated school and community-based multicomponent intervention to prevent the decline in physical activity levels and cardiopulmonary fitness of girls in middle school. Mary Jo Kane is a co-principal investigator and the Tucker Center's specific role in this project is to conduct a review of current intervention materials, as well as intervention materials produced by the study itself. These materials will then be targeted to school and community-based populations and organizations as they work to increase physical activity among middle-school age girls throughout the state of Minnesota.

STAFF UPDATES

Tara McShane joined the Tucker Team in September 2000. Her primary role this year has been Project Coordinator for the "Image is Everything" workshops. Prior to coming to Minnesota and the Tucker Center, Tara worked in human resources for a small credit union in Connecticut. She has a B.A. in psychology from the University of Minnesota and is currently a graduate student in the Department of Communication Disorders. When asked why she was interested in working at the Tucker Center, Tara replied: "I've participated in sports and physical activity since the age of five. I'm an avid volleyball player and a novice runner. In fact, I hope to compete in my first triathlon this summer. I have experienced first hand the benefits of athletics and want to help promote female participation in sports and physical activity."

Beth Elliott is the new coordinator for this spring's "Tennis Plus" program. Beth graduated from Ripon College in Ripon, WI in 1999 with a major in Economics, and played tennis for the college for four years. Currently, she is a first year graduate student at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute where she's pursuing a Masters in Public Policy (MPP), concentrating in Education and Athletic Policy. Beth is interested in gender issues in both of these policy areas, and has been involved with tennis for much of her life. Asked to comment on her involvement with the Tucker Center, Beth said: "It feels great to be a part of the Tucker Team. It's given me an excellent opportunity to work with girls on not only their athletic skills, but success skills that they can take with them for the rest of their lives."

DONOR PROFILE: VAN AND MIKE MUELLER

As lifelong educators and parents of three daughters, as well as devoted grandparents, Van and Mike Mueller are committed to supporting organizations such as the Tucker Center that advocate for and educate on issues related to girls and women in sport. The Muellers have been supporters of the Tucker since its inception in 1994. In addition to supporting the Tucker Center, they have also endowed two scholarships. The first is available to Native American students at Augsburg College, where Mike Mueller taught. The second scholarship fund is housed in the University of Minnesota's Division of Recreation & Sport Studies and is in honor of their daughter, Edith Irene Mueller. Edith was a student in the department from 1979 until her untimely death in 1982.

Van Mueller earned his Ed.D. from Michigan State University and worked for the public schools and the Michigan Department of Education before transferring to the University of Minnesota in 1963. As a professor and researcher at the University, Dr. Mueller's work focused on school finance and community involvement in the schools. As Professor Emeritus in the Department of Education Policy and Administration, he continues to advise graduate students. Along with his work at the University, Professor Mueller also held a full-time position with the Minnesota State Planning Agency, served as vice-president and treasurer of the National PTA, and is past president of the Minnesota PTA. He has also been involved in school finance equity lawsuits in several different states including Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Dakota, and Wyoming.

Professor Mike (Kerridge) Mueller earned her Ph.D. in Education Administration from the University of



Van and Mike Mueller

Minnesota in 1973. She has worked for the Minneapolis Public Schools, served on the Minneapolis task force on racism, and taught Education Administration classes at Augsburg College. Professor Mueller continues to play an active role in community and school development as part of the President's American Indian Council.

Along with their vigorous commitment to and participation in academics, Van and Mike Mueller are strong supporters of sport and physical activity in the lives of girls. They have passed on their love of sport to their three daughters, all of whom have benefited from Title IX. In fact, their daughter Edith swam on the boys' swim team in high school. In turn, the Mueller's children have carried on the tradition of sport with their own children.

The Muellers believe that Title IX was a major breakthrough that finally provided access to resources and money badly needed for women and girls to participate in sport. When asked why they contribute to the Tucker Center, they responded: "It is important that we continue to work towards parity. In order to do so, we must continue to be vigilant [in our support of Title IX and women's athletics] so that we do not find ourselves going backwards in time." It is with the strong financial and emotional support of individuals like the Muellers that organizations such as the Tucker Center are able to continue to promote and advocate for women's involvement in sport and physical activity.

If you would like to join Van and Mike Mueller in supporting our efforts, please call us at 612-625-7327 or fill out the card on the back cover of this newsletter and mail it to the Tucker Center.

—Tara McShane, Administrative Assistant

ELOISE M. JAEGER SCHOLARSHIP

The Tucker Center is proud to honor the legacy of Eloise M. Jaeger at a luncheon on April 30, 2001 at the Radisson Metrodome Hotel. Graduate students Kim Pearce, Nicole Black, and Katherine Pinch will be awarded the inaugural scholarships from the Eloise M. Jaeger Scholarship fund during the luncheon. The scholarship money will be used to help support research projects designed and carried out by each scholarship winner.

- *Kim Pearce's* project, "Toward Emancipation: Leisure, Memory Work, and the Potential of Critical Theory," will focus on uncovering the ways in which people contribute to their own racial and gender oppression and privilege within leisure contexts where sport and physical activity are emphasized.
- *Nicole Black* will be exploring relationality, psychological development and mental health among female intercollegiate athletes. Black will examine the various ways in which interactions between coaches and athletes foster healthy psychological development.
- *Kath Pinch's* study, "Gender Grouping, Group Process and Adolescent Female Voice in Outdoor Adventure Activities," explores how gender roles and identities are contested, reenacted and reinforced within groups of different gender compositions who participate in adventurous outdoor activities.

KUDOS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Last Fall, the Minnesota branch of the American Association of University Women nominated Mary Jo Kane for the Eleanor Roosevelt Award. This national award is designed to honor someone for their “outstanding contributions and accomplishments for gender equity and education for girls and women.”
- The North Central Schoolgirls’ Lacrosse Association invites you to join in the excitement of girls’ lacrosse in Minnesota. Lacrosse is a non-contact team sport emphasizing speed and finesse. Check out the action on their web site www.ns-lax.com. CATCH THE SPIRIT OF LACROSSE!
- Tara McShane, Jonathan Sweet and Mary Jo Kane were on hand to help celebrate National Girls and Women in Sports Day at the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul on February 1.
- Maura Rosenthal and Nicole Black discussed the past, present and future of women’s sport at Luther College’s (Decorah, IA) National Girls & Women in Sport Day on Feb 7.
- Nicole Black presented her paper—“Utility of the Relational Model in Sport Contexts”— at the Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology Midwest Student Conference at Purdue University, February 16-17.
- Mary Jo Kane and Tara McShane presented an invited workshop on Title IX to senior high students at the Minnesota Women’s Consortium’s “Women and Girls Come to the Capitol” in St. Paul on February 19.
- Kim Pearce delivered an interactive slide presentation titled “Media Representations of Women in Sport and the Impact of Title IX” to the Michigan Technological University and Houghton, MI community on February 20. The event was sponsored by the MTU President’s Advisory Council for Women’s Athletics.
- Nicole Black gave a talk—“Encouraging Girls’ and Women’s Health through Sport and Physical Activity”—at Regions Hospital in St. Paul, MN on March 6 to *Moms in Recovery*, an outpatient drug rehabilitation program.
- Mary Jo Kane and Tara McShane screened and discussed “Throw Like a Girl: A Revolution in Women’s Sport,” the film produced by the Tucker Center, at the University of Minnesota’s St. Paul Student Center on March 7.
- Kim Pearce will deliver a presentation titled “Breaking Barriers: Media Strategies to Contain and Celebrate Emergent Athletic Women” at the 17th annual All-University Conference on the Advancement of Women in Higher Education at Texas Tech University (Lubbock, TX) on April 20. This year’s conference theme is *Breaking Boundaries: What Culture, Contexts and Sports Tell Us*.
- Mary Jo Kane will deliver a presentation related to her research—“Media Representations of Female Athletes: The Good, the Bad and the Dangerous”—at the international conference, *Sport, Character and Culture: Promoting Social and Moral Development through Sport*, University of Notre Dame (South Bend, IN), May 10-12.

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