

THE TUCKER  
CENTER

for Research on Girls & Women in Sport



# IMPACT REPORT

## Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport

# 2023

School of Kinesiology

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
+ HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Driven to Discover®



# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

In 2023, the Tucker Center celebrated its 30th anniversary as the first research center of its kind in the world to take seriously the academic study of girls and women in sport.

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Unarguably interest in, investment, growth, viewership, attendance and sponsorship in women's sport has increased exponentially and the Tucker Center has been at the forefront of this accelerated change. Our work is sought after and used around the world by those who support and care about girls' and women's experiences in sport including school districts, policy makers, university athletic departments, national governing bodies, industry leaders, communities, sport federations, coaches and coaching associations, and families. You will read more about our work in this report.



I am proud to report that 2023 was a **very** impactful year for the Tucker Team.

-Nicole M. LaVoi, PhD  
Tucker Center, Director



# OUR MISSION



The Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport at the University of Minnesota is an interdisciplinary research center leading a global effort to accelerate change for girls and women in sport and physical activity and their families and communities. We accomplish this through our three-fold mission.

01

## RESEARCH

Conduct solution-based research and translate knowledge

02

## EDUCATION

Offer undergraduate and graduate education, internships and fellowships

03

## OUTREACH

Engage in outreach in local, regional, national and global communities



## SAME MISSION, NEW LOOK

Early in 2023 we refreshed our look with a new logo with the help of Allie Reinke Designs. Check out this [one minute video](#) which summarizes the **evolution of the Tucker Center brand**.

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## INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

We let the data tell the story and our data are highly anticipated and sought after. Among the three scholars who make up the staffed core of the Tucker Team—**Dr. Courtney Boucher** (Assistant Director of Research & Programming), **Anna Goorevich**, MS (Doctoral Research Assistant), and **Dr. Nicole M. LaVoi** (Director)—we published or co-authored 15 peer-reviewed articles across multiple disciplines. Our esteemed network of Affiliated Scholars were also very productive!

Our annual **Women in College Coaching Report Card** (WCCRC), a 12-year collaboration with WeCOACH, continues to raise awareness pertaining to employment patterns of women in the coaching profession. For the ninth year in a row, the percentage of women head coaches in women's sports in seven select NCAA D-I conferences went up, and 2023 marked the first time more institutions earned an A grade than an F grade! To read about The NEW ERA, and all the firsts and impacts of the WCCRC see the Appendices.

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## EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

In April, we returned post-pandemic to host the **Women Coaches Symposium** (WCS) which has impacted over 2,100 attendees from around the US since 2012. The 2024 WCS, with the theme Confident Coaches, Confident Coaching, will be held [Friday, April 19th at Huntington Bank Stadium](#).

Alongside U of M Press, we hosted a capacity **book launch** event for Sheri Brenden's book *Break Point: Two Minnesota Athletes and the Road to Title IX*

RESEARCH



**We collaborated to design and launch two industry-first, pilot tested, evidence-based curricula, with the goal to positively impact 11-17 year old girls in sport and movement contexts.**



**Coaching HER®**, developed together by NIKE and the Tucker Center, launched in March 2023. Coaching HER is an online tool that tackles the most central, yet unaddressed, issue in youth sport which negatively impacts girls' performance, self-perceptions, sport choices, dropout, and experiences: coaches' unconscious gender biases and stereotypes.

[CoachingHER.com](https://CoachingHER.com)

**Body Confident Sport** launched in October 2023. Body Confident Sport is a set of coaching tools to build body confidence, body image and self-esteem in girls. It was co-developed by Dove and Nike, in partnership with world-renowned researchers and experts – the Centre for Appearance Research and the Tucker Center – and includes input from girls and coaches from six countries, including France, India, Japan, Mexico, the U.K. and U.S.

[BodyConfidentSport.com](https://BodyConfidentSport.com)





We also collaborated with the United States Tennis Association (USTA) on a research study to improve the recruitment, retention and occupational landscape for women in the tennis industry.



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## GLOBAL MEDIA INFLUENCE

We had 13,000 visitors to the Tucker Center website in 2023 from around the world. According to media tracking software Agility, articles which referenced the Tucker Center reached over **356 million readers**.

We were interviewed and quoted by media outlets including *CNN, PBS, MSN, Yahoo, PopSugar, AdWeek, The Globe and Mail, SELF Magazine, SiriusXM Business Radio, The Advocate, Stanford Social Innovation Review, CNBC, & KARE 11*.

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## OUTREACH

As a global thought-leader and scholar in gender and sport leadership, Dr. LaVoi participated in many panels, symposia, podcasts, and gave keynotes related to women in sport leadership, gender equity, inclusion, and building a culture that supports and values women. **Dr. LaVoi** gave invited keynotes in Spain and Japan, in addition to working with the US State Department Sport Visitor Program with coaches from Singapore and Lebanon. Other groups she delivered educational outreach to included, The Mayo Clinic, International Council for Coaching Excellence, North American Coach Development Summit, Aspen Institute Project Play, Nike Championing HER event, AAUW, USTA Northern, WeCOACH, and the Old Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC). **Dr. Boucher** spoke with a variety of stakeholders including coaches, USTA Coach Developers, and high school and collegiate students in Minnesota about Title IX. **Anna Goorevich** presented research at the North American Society for Sport Sociology (NASSS), the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research, Women in Soccer, the Sanneh Foundation, Smith College, and St. Paul Academy.

OUTREACH



## INTERNSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS

We celebrated [15 years](#) of our **Gender Equity Summer Internship** Program and year nine of the **Pam Borton Fellowship for the Promotion of Girls and Women in Sport Leadership**. A large majority of interns have completed, or are in the process of earning, one or more graduate degrees. All five of our high school interns have matriculated into prestigious institutions including Duke, Cornell, Macalester, Northwestern, and Stanford.

The success of our interns was illustrated when **Dr. Anna Posbergh**, a former TC Gender Equity Intern, returned to the Tucker Center and the School of Kinesiology to become our first **President's Postdoctoral Fellow**. Currently, she is an Assistant Professor of Sport Management at Florida State University.

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## AWARDS

In recognition of her 35+ years of commitment, leadership, research, service, passion for tennis, and dedication to equality for women in sport, Dr. LaVoi was named a "Champion of Equality" by the USTA. LaVoi was selected as the honoree from the USTA Northern Section.

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## STAY IN TOUCH

Follow

Stay apprised of all things Tucker Center through our website at [TuckerCenter.org](http://TuckerCenter.org), subscribe to our newsletter, and follow us on social media **@TuckerCenter** via X, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook.



# INVEST IN THE TUCKER CENTER

Over the last three decades, committed donors have made investments in our internship program, graduate education fellowships, scholarship funds, operations, and programmatic endeavors. We have built up small reserves based on stewardship, careful planning, external sales revenue, industry collaborations, and grants. To remain positioned as a global thought leader, we need additional investments to help ensure sustainability and long-term growth.

**Investing in Tucker Center is a value-based strategy, with low risk and a high level of proven impact.** The Tucker Center team has a proven track record of excellence, thought leadership, producing a high volume of impactful work with a small team, transforming lives through evidence-informed educational programming, accelerating systems change with data, and education. We are inviting new investments in the Tucker Center so we can pursue new, high-impact opportunities while sustaining our current initiatives. To support our research, education, and outreach, [click here](#).



A BIG thank you to all our existing Friends of the Tucker Center that help us make a difference. We appreciate and value your support.





# APPENDICES





# A Decade of Impact: The Women in College Coaching Report Card

## THE IMPACT: MULTIDIMENSIONAL AND FAR REACHING

Over the last 11 years, the *Women in College Coaching Report Card* has been used by institutions, athletics administrators, conference commissioners, NGBs, federations, non-profits, sport clubs, and sport coaching associations around the world to improve the occupational landscape for women sport coaches. *We let data tell the story.*

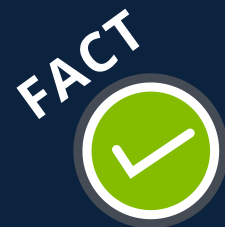
## HOW IT IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- **Started** and created discussions to educate & increase awareness of the barriers & bias women coaches face, and why it is important to develop a workplace where women coaches feel safe valued and supported
- **Motivated** decision makers to think differently about how they recruit, hire, and retain women coaches
- **Spurred** a new era of slow & steady increase in the percentage of women coaches of women's teams
- **Used** & leveraged data to advocate for women coaches
- **Tracked** progress or decline in the percentage of women coaches of women's college teams
- **Helped** evaluate effectiveness of strategies aimed at increasing the percentage of women coaches
- **Held** institutions and decision makers accountable in creating a gender-balanced workforce
- **Shifted** the focus away from dominant 'blame the women' narratives (e.g., women don't apply) to data-informed narratives (e.g., getting an NCAA D-I job is about who you know, not who applies)
- **Accelerated** systems change by conducting and inspiring research for and about women sport coaches
- **Informed** conference-wide diversity and inclusion initiatives
- **Guided** women coaches in evaluating career opportunities and informed job-change decision making
- **Inspired** similar report cards & mechanisms of accountability around the world
- **Identified** that 26-33 is the age range of the 'critical zone of attrition' when women leave coaching
- **Illuminated** opportunities for program development to benefit & support women coaches
- **Challenged** men in positions of power to embrace allyship & interrogate gender biases
- **Invited** head coaches, Athletics Directors & coaching directors to provide women opportunities
- **Encouraged** the inclusion of LGBTQ+ family narratives in online coaching biographies
- **Buoyed** development of the *Game ON: Women Can Coach* documentary & toolkit
- **Empowered** women coaches to see and speak up about gender bias the workplace
- **Provided** hope that change is possible

...and counting!



It is *impossible* that as each new generation of women become increasingly involved in and shaped by sport, they simultaneously become less interested, less passionate, and less qualified to enter the coaching profession. #SHECANCOACH



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# THE DATA STORY

## A summary

The goal of the ***Women in College Coaching Report Card™*** is to document the percentage of women collegiate head coaches of women's teams over time. Data matters! Based on the numbers this year, we are cautiously optimistic the era of stagnation is over. A **new era** for intercollegiate Division-I women sport coaches at the most visible, powerful institutions begins—**Slow and Steady Incline!**



### Data in the 11th year of the WCCRC points to some 'firsts' and some good news!

- The percentage of women head coaches of NCAA D-I women's teams in seven select conferences is **up again for the ninth year in a row.**
- The percentage of women head coaches increased by the **largest margin** (2.3%) in the history of the Report Card, and 2022 marked the second greatest increase (1.2%)
- For the **first time** more institutions earned an A grade than a F grade! In fact, there were **3x more As than Fs!** For the last ten years, the number of F grades far outnumbered the As.
- This year recorded the **greatest number** (n = 10) of institutional A grades, 2021-22 recorded seven As.
- University of Cincinnati has earned an A grade *every year* of the report.
- For the **second time in ten years and for two years in a row**, a majority of positional vacancies (58.1%) were **filled by women.**
- For the **first time**, a majority (65%, 15 of 23) of BIPOC coaches hired were women of color.
- The percentage of women coaches of color **increased** from 5.7% in 2022 to 6.2% this year.
- This year marks the **first time** all select seven conferences increased in the percentage of women head coaches.
- Basketball the most lucrative, visible and popular women's intercollegiate sport moved up to an A grade for the **first time.**

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**CHANGE IS HAPPENING!**