



THE DRAKE GROUP

Advancing Positive Legislative
Change In College Athletics



2024-25 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Allen L. Sack
Director Emeritus

ALLEN SACK, Ph.D., Co-founder of The Drake Group, was made a permanent voting member of the Board of Directors by unanimous vote of the Board in 2021, in acknowledgement of his 21 consecutive years of service as a leader of The Drake Group. Dr. Sack earned his Ph.D. in sociology from Pennsylvania State University and a B.A. from the University of Notre Dame where he played on the 1966 NCAA National Championship football team. Dr. Sack is a Professor Emeritus in the college of business at the University of New Haven where he taught for forty-one years. He also served as the Director of the federally funded Center for Athletes Rights and Education (CARE) in the early 1980s. CARE was co-sponsored by the National Football Players Association and the National Conference of Black Lawyers. Dr. Sack is the author of *Counterfeit Amateurs: An Athlete's Journey Through the Sixties to the Age of Academic Capitalism* and co-author of *College Athletes for Hire: The Evolution and Legacy of the NCAA's Amateur Myth*.



Kassandra Ramsey
President
Executive Committee

KASSANDRA RAMSEY, Esq., is the founder of The Law Office of Kassandra Ramsey, P.L.L.C., assisting entrepreneurs, athletes, entertainers, and social media influencers with creating, operating, and protecting their businesses. Ramsey is the Sports Law Chair for the District of Columbia Bar's Arts, Media, Entertainment, and Sports Law Community and an advocate for college athletes' rights. She has written extensively on the name, image, and likeness (NIL) issue in college sports and has authored two e-books to assist current and prospective college athletes to advance their emerging NIL opportunities. She is passionate about educating athletes and their families on the ways college athletes may use these new opportunities to advance themselves for life after sports. Formerly, Ramsey served as the Compliance Assistant for the University of Maryland, College Park Athletics Department. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Virginia State University and her J.D. from Howard University School of Law.



Keith Adams
President-Elect

KEITH ADAMS Ed.D., President and Founder of the CKA SAVE Project, dedicated to empowering student-athletes. With over 30 years of experience, he is a renowned advocate for their academic and personal development. Dr. Adams holds a Doctorate in Educational Leadership, an M.A. in Teaching from Grand Canyon University, and a B.S. in History from Bowie State University. His dissertation examined the relationship between academic and athletic motivation among NCAA Division I student-athletes. He authored "Finding the Balance: My Personal Journey to Academic and Athletic Success." Dr. Adams began his career as a high school teacher and coach, advancing to leadership roles such as department chair and Athletic Director. His current focus is on supporting students and stakeholders in school programs. Additionally, Dr. Adams is a prolific speaker and writer on sports ethics, governance, and the educational impact of athletics.



Wendy Pierpont
Secretary
Executive Committee

WENDY PIERPONT, Ed.D., is a Learning Specialist at University of Oregon's Services for Student Athletes. Her professional focus is on academically underprepared students across all sports, working most intensely with freshmen who take courses in composition, education, and social sciences. Development of study skills and academic engagement is a priority for all UO athletes. Pierpont also serves as the Access Specialist in the unit and supports athletes who need accommodations and testing to get connected with accessible education on campus. She has served on University-wide and athletic department committees on diversity and inclusion and is part of the Behavioral Management Health Team, an athletic department group that works to support the mental health and psycho-social development of athletes. Pierpont received an MA in Education (Intersection of Sport and Education) and teaching credential from U.C. Berkeley, has taught middle school Special Education and Language Arts, and coached cross country for three years before returning to Berkeley for her doctorate. Her areas of interests are academic engagement, students at risk of failure, experiential and alternative education, and student-athlete identity. Pierpont attended Boston University on a swimming scholarship and graduated with a BA in History. She also serves on the Board of Directors of The Drake Group Education Fund.



Connee Zotos
Treasurer
Executive Committee

CONNIE ZOTOS, Ph.D., is a Senior Associate at the consulting firm Sports Management Resources. Most recently she served as the Associate Dean of Academic and Faculty Affairs and Clinical Associate Professor of Sports Management in the School of Professional Studies at New York Univ. Zotos is the former Director of Athletics at Drew University where she was responsible for the administration of 18 varsity sports programs during her 14-year tenure. Prior to serving at Drew, Dr. Zotos was the Women's Athletics Director William Smith College and Philadelphia Univ. and a faculty member at the Univ. of Texas at Austin. She was a head college coach for 12 seasons and a three-time Conference Coach of the Year. She is a prolific writer and speaker in the areas of coaches' employment and compensation systems, creating tiered athletic program models, coach evaluation, and Title IX. She is a recipient of a NACWAA regional and national Athletic Administrator of the Year award and a WLCS Nike Lifetime Achievement Award. Dr. Zotos is a member of the Drew Univ. Athletic Hall of Fame. She holds a Bachelor's degree from Glassboro State College, a Master's from the University of Colorado and a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the Univ. of Texas at Austin.



Aaron Miller
Member-at-Large
Executive Committee

AARON MILLER, Ph.D., is an educator, author, podcaster, leadership coach, and cultural consultant. He is also a Lecturer in the Department of Kinesiology at California State University, East Bay, an Associate Adjunct Faculty, Department of Kinesiology, St. Mary's College of California, and creator/host of the podcast, *The Power of Sports*. Miller has authored *Discourses of Discipline: An Anthropology of Corporal Punishment in Japan's Schools and Sports* and *Buying In: Big-time Women's College Basketball and the Future of College Sports*. He is the author of numerous op-eds, essays, and journal articles and book chapters about education, sports, culture, power, violence, and social justice. He has been a Visiting Scholar at Stanford University and a Visiting Professor at Waseda University. Miller received his B.A. from the University of California Los Angeles and M.Sc. and Ph.D. from Oxford University.



Rick Eckstein
Member-at-Large

RICK ECKSTEIN Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, Villanova University. Dr. Eckstein's teaching, research, and advocacy interests focus on the commercialization, commodification, and corporatization of youth and college sport – with an emphasis on girls' and women's sports. Author of *How College Athletics are Hurting Girls' Sports: the Pay to Play Pipeline*, *Public Dollars, Private Stadiums: the Battle over Building Sports Stadiums* (w/Kevin Delaney), and numerous journal and general audience articles. Eckstein is a noted public speaker on such topics as college admissions advantages for recruited athletes and how such policies perpetuate social inequalities and was a featured speaker on *HBO Real Sports*. He is currently co-producing a research-based documentary series titled, *Beyond Stigma: Mental Health in Women's College Sports* that explores the systemic elements of college sport that increase emotional distress among college athletes. He received his B.A. from Marietta College and Ph.D. from SUNY, Stonybrook.



David Hughes
Member-at-Large

DAVID C. HUGHES, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Sport and Leadership at Gordon College and is the President of the Drake Group. In 2023 his book chapter Black Men, STEM, and Erasing the Digital Divide: The Need for Black Male Targeted eSports Initiatives was published in the book *Diversity and Inclusion in the eSports Industry*. In 2022, David was named a leader in the Metaverse by U.S. Black Engineer Magazine for the work he does with his Give Black App. He has been a faculty member at Georgetown University and while a faculty member at Hampton University, David secured a \$340,000 technology grant to start the first eSports initiative at an HBCU. David has been a pre-doctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn), a Scientia Foundation Fellow at Rice University, and a Social Justice Memorial Foundation Fellow. David is a proud Morehouse College, and Prairie View A&M University alumnus and a member of 100 Black Men and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.



Jaquinda Jackson
Member-at-Large

JAQUINDA JACKSON, Ed.D., Founder, Jackson Consulting. Jackson is a National Certified Counselor (NCC) and Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the state of South Carolina where she helps professionals and athletes increase their positive emotional health through mental performance skills. Her therapeutic background is in trauma-focused care, social emotional programming, as well group therapy. Along with being a therapist, she assists schools and other organizations to build out mental health programs to ensure access for all. Jackson also assists individuals and groups in community advocacy and is interested in increasing the reach of these efforts into the college sports legislation and policy space to ensure that athletes flourish in fair and supportive environments. Her experience includes working in both the non-profit sector and social services sector specializing in mental health and wellness. She is a graduate of the College of Charleston where she majored in Sociology with a minor in Women's and Gender Studies and earned her Doctorate in Counseling Psychology at Argosy University.



Christopher D. Johnson
Member-at-Large

CHRISTOPHER D. JOHNSON, Assistant Dean of Inclusive Excellence, University of Cincinnati College of Cooperative Education and Professional Studies (CCPS). Dr. Johnson is a Gallaudet alumnus, a Sports Management graduate of the University of West Georgia, and a trailblazer who has worked with various deaf organizations and institutions to elevate the voices and presence of young black and brown deaf trailblazers. Dr. Johnson directs the building and leading of relationships between the University and the campus community, student organizations, stakeholders, and the global Deaf communities. He is interested in increasing opportunities for athletes and professionals with disabilities through college sport legislative and policy advocacy. He formerly served as a president of the District of Columbia Area Black Deaf Advocates (DCABDA), chapter number one under the National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA), and is a former member of the advisory board of Gallaudet University's Center for Black Deaf Studies. His most recent awards include 2024 Equity and Social Justice: Scholar Award, 2022 Hamilton Relay Deaf Community Leader Award for the District of Columbia, and the 2022 University of West Georgia Lillian Williams Champion of Diversity Alumni Award.



Brian Levey
Member-at-Large

BRIAN LEVEY, J.D., LL.M., is a teaching professor at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business, where he has taught the introductory undergraduate Business Law course, as well as several ethics classes in the undergraduate, graduate and executive programs, including Ethics in Sports. An award-winning teacher, Levey's research interests lie at the intersection of business, law, ethics and sports, with publications ranging from "Visa and FIFA: Everywhere You Want to Be?" to "Oh Say Can You Sit? Colin Kaepernick, Freedom of Speech and the Workplace." Prior to joining the college of business, Levey served as Fannie Mae's vice president for ethics, director of compliance and business ethics with Smiths Group plc, and deputy ethics officer and associate counsel with MCI (formerly WorldCom and now Verizon Business). He has also been in private practice and served as an adjunct professor at George Mason University and The George Washington University. He holds degrees from the University of Notre Dame (B.B.A.), The Catholic University of America (J.D.) and The George Washington University (LL.M.).



Dianne Murphy
Member-at-Large

M. DIANNE MURPHY, Ph.D., presided over one of the most successful periods in Columbia University athletics history during her 11-year tenure as Director of Athletics. Murphy is an expert in strategic planning, fundraising and leadership development who is a highly sought-out Executive Coach, mentoring numerous athletics administrators and coaches. She served on the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Committee and chaired the NCAA Women's Basketball Issues Committee. She was honored by Women Leaders in College Sports with its Lifetime Achievement Award, inducted to the NACDA Hall of Fame, and is a recipient of the WBCA's Jostens-Berenson Lifetime Achievement Award. Murphy serves on the *Kay Yow Cancer Fund* Board of Directors and is the Chair of the Tennessee Tech Foundation Board of Directors. She is the former Athletics Director at the University of Denver, a former head women's basketball coach and is currently an adjunct faculty member at Tennessee Tech. She received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Tennessee Tech and the Ph.D. from Florida State University.



B. David Ridpath
Member-at-Large

B. DAVID RIDPATH, Ed.D., is a Professor of Sports Business at Ohio University in the College of Business. Dr. Ridpath has several years of practical experience in the sports industry and teaches classes in several relevant areas with a focus on Governance, Ethics, Leadership and Intercollegiate Athletics. His primary research areas include intercollegiate athletics administration, governance, and rules compliance with an emphasis on college athlete academic achievement and graduation rates. This includes the ethics and components of the NCAA legislative, enforcement, and governance process and the intersection of educationally-based sport development and delivery in the US with other developmental programs throughout the world. Dr. Ridpath is the author of *Tainted Glory: Marshal University, the NCAA, and One Man's Fight for Justice* and *Alternative Models of Sport Development in America: Solutions to a Crisis in Education and Public Health*. An accomplished scholar, he has over 70 national and international refereed presentations and 30 peer reviewed and edited academic articles in print. Ridpath received the B.A. in Speech Communication from Colorado State University, M.S.A in Sports Administration and Facility Management from Ohio University, and Ed.D. from West Virginia University.



John Rosen
Member-at-Large

JOHN ROSEN, MBA, is a member of the New Haven Economic Performance Laboratory Advisory Board at the University of New Haven, a co-founder of MCAworks, LLC, and a co-founder of NewTechHaven, LLC where he is responsible for client engagements involving new business creation, branding, new product development, and channel management. Rosen has over twenty-five years of sales and marketing management, as well as strategic consulting experience. He has helped firms deliver real unit growth both domestically and globally across a wide range of industries such as consumer packaged goods, financial services, telecom, small business software solutions, apparel, retailing, electronics, beverages, consumer durables, and automotive and industrial products. Rosen is the co- author of *Stopwatch Marketing: Take Charge of the Time When Your Customer Decides to Buy*, and an Adjunct Professor of Economics at the University of New Haven. He received his MBA from Northwestern University and BS from Washington & Lee University. He also serves as the Treasurer and Board member for The Drake Group Education Fund.



Bruce Smith
Member-at-Large

BRUCE SMITH, Ph.D., is Director of Empowerment Strategies and CEO of the ACES Group. He has worked in K-12, higher education and intercollegiate athletics for more than two decades as a teacher, professor, administrator, and coach. As a higher education administrator, his work focused on student life, athletics, and equity and justice at both small private liberal arts colleges and flagship state institutions in California, Arizona, Colorado, and Oregon. Smith specializes in managing comprehensive student support, mentoring and supervising staff, creating connections between curriculum and co-curriculum, and developing equity and justice institutional strategies. As a professor, his work focuses on African American life and culture; the sociology of education, sport studies, and American studies with an emphasis on developing engaging, student-centered, identity-conscious pedagogy. He earned his BA in American Civilization from Brown University, M.S. in Education from the University of Southern, and Ph.D. in Education from the University of California, Berkeley. Smith also serves as Secretary and Board member for The Drake Group Education fund.



Sandy Thatcher
Member-at-Large

SANDY THATCHER, B.A., a 1965 graduate of Princeton University summa cum laude in philosophy, is a past director of Penn State University Press (1989 to 2009). Earlier he was employed for twenty-two years by Princeton University Press where he started as a copyeditor and ended as editor-in-chief. In retirement, he acquires books in political science for Lynne Rienner Publishers and in political theory for the University of Rochester Press. He has been an Associate of the Tower Center for Political Studies at Southern Methodist University since 2010 and a Friend of the Library there. A self-taught expert in copyright law, he served on the copyright committee of the Association of American University Presses (AAUP) from 1972 to 2015, chairing it for twenty-four of those years. He served twice for three-year terms each time on the AAUP board of directors and was president in 2007-08. He received the AAUP's highest award in 1999. A swimmer in college for four years, Thatcher has been an active participant in US Masters Swimming since 1972, both as a competitor and member of its History and Archives Committee.



Tammi Gaw, Chair
The Drake Group
Education Fund
Ex-Officio Member

TAMMI GAW, Founder and Executive Director of Advantage Rule, a consulting group focused on athlete health and safety, with an emphasis on amateur athletes' rights. As one of only a handful of professionals licensed as both an attorney and an athletic trainer, her career has included in-house counsel positions, non-profit management and board participation, and C-suite level work with integrated planning for large and medium scale sporting events. Ms. Gaw's expertise extends to the business of college sports, including name, image, and likeness (NIL) reform, Title IX, and medical welfare for athletes of all levels. Through Advantage Rule, she combines her extensive experience in sports medicine, business, and law with her passion for advocacy. She is an international speaker on issues around sports business, law, medicine, and social justice and has been featured in a variety of news outlets, podcasts, panels, and publications. She is a published author and continues to write in both fiction and non-fiction genres. Additionally, she was privileged to address the UK Parliament in 2009.