

Pictured:
Qophela Dlamini from South Africa
and 2019 GSMP delegate.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

CENTER FOR SPORT, PEACE,
AND SOCIETY



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

CENTER FOR SPORT, PEACE, & SOCIETY



LETTER FROM
THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

In the words of Coach Pat Summitt, “Left foot, right foot, breathe.” Throughout this year, I can’t tell you the number of times I’ve leaned on Pat’s countless life lessons and words of wisdom. Her leadership, courage, and faith continue to fuel our commitment to honoring her legacy through the work of the Center for Sport, Peace, & Society (CSPS).

It’s been an incredibly challenging year, in our country and around the globe, and I’m convinced now more than ever of our mission to leverage the power of sport and education to create a more inclusive, equitable, and peaceful world. Like many of you, our “best-laid plans” for 2020 were disrupted by COVID-19. All in-person programming was canceled, Zoom became our new classroom, and we had a choice to make. We could bemoan our circumstances or we could “turn obstacles into opportunities” – another one of Coach Summitt’s maxims.

We chose the latter.

And every day, we choose it again and again. That’s the power and responsibility of choice. It’s also a testament to our team’s core values: intentionality, honesty, flexibility, and selfless service to others. To say I’m proud of our team would be an understatement. We’re closer than ever and we’re doing better work and more of it than ever, with fewer teamies.

As you read through the pages of our Annual Report, you’ll bear witness

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to the leadership, vision, and work ethic of Dr. C – our Chief of Evaluation, Research, and Accountability. Over the past year, Dr. C has stepped into a huge leadership role and has done so with humility, grace, and a growth mindset – all qualities I respect and appreciate. I’m honored to lead alongside her every day and can’t wait for you to read about the Global Disability Rights Advocacy & Mapping Project she led this year, in partnership with a handful of amazing UT students and summer interns – you can learn about this project on page 7.

And our grant team, the magic behind the madness.

Mo-Town-Linda-Trish (aka Morgan), thank you for stepping up and into the big shoes that Dr. Hatch left for you to fill! You are managing the chaos with class and you are growing with grace and a willingness to roll with the punches. I appreciate your consistency, but more importantly the genuine ways you care for our sisters and brothers around the world. Managing 18 WhatsApp Groups, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, 3 websites, and oh, that little project you brought to life called the DIY Adapted Sports Video Series! I can’t wait for people to read about it on page 8.

Rain-Dog RAJ (aka Rainey), thank you for...well, putting up with me/us. We all know you have a “real job” but it never keeps you from giving us your evenings and weekends to manage all the behind the scenes tasks that keep us in good standing with the State Department,

UT, Mentors, Partners, and anyone else that wants to make sure we’re doing the right thing, the right way. Your attention to detail and quiet, selfless acts do not go unnoticed or unappreciated, nor do the 4 minutes of burpees we did during Fitness Fridays – one of the new virtual programs you helped bring to life this year (found on page 9).

Jay-Ron (aka Jaron), thank you for the gift that keeps on giving. Your photos continue to bless all of us each and every day.

And lastly, we have three new teamies contributing as creative contractors bringing project-based dreams to life:

Carly “Stunt Double” Stucky, thank you for your sticky fingers on the keyboard and your help with all things related to alumni engagement, database management, “rabbit-trail” research, and umpteen storytelling projects! Thank you also for bringing the 90s into our 2020 – helping to make it “rock-steady” every day!

Feyi (pronounced “Heyyy-Gurl-Hey”), thanks for jumping into an avalanche of all things social media and helping us devise new ways to share the stories of our amazing students, partners, and alumni! We’re excited to call you teamie.

Lacey “Hots” Toves, thank you for making sure there aren’t too many cooks in the kitchen, namely that you successfully keep me out of there. The

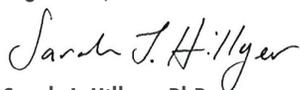
way you “manage the kitchen” ensures that everything happens in sync, on-time, and with absolute quality. Adding you to the “mix” has been like finding a secret recipe!

Perhaps Dr. C is correct and my “letter from the director” sounds more like an acceptance speech. I can’t help myself. It’s another principle of Coach Summitt’s I hold close to my heart:

“Surround yourself with people who are better than you are. Seek out quality people, acknowledge their talents, and let them do their jobs. You win with people.”

I feel blessed to be surrounded by a team better than me, made up of talented professionals and quality humans who make me better every day. Throughout the pages of this Annual Report, you’ll see evidence of their passion for people and the reasons I believe I’m the luckiest “director” in the world. I hope you enjoy celebrating another year with us! Thank you for your contributions to help make all of this possible.

High-Fives,



Sarah J. Hillyer, PhD
Founder and Director
Center for Sport, Peace, and Society
University of Tennessee

P.S. Never forget, “Left-foot, right-foot, breathe.”

AY 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

50,000+ PEOPLE IMPACTED

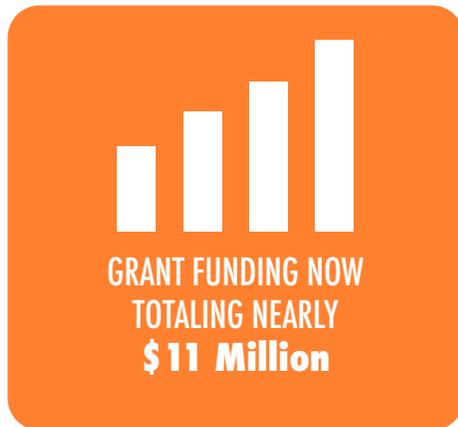
The CSPS impacted 50,000 people in AY 2020, and since our founding, have impacted more than 400,000 women and girls, persons with disabilities, refugees, and people from marginalized populations worldwide.

▼
In celebration of the 30th anniversary of the ADA, the CSPS launched our Global Disability Rights Advocacy Project, a collection of resources that showcase laws that **protect the rights of people with disabilities worldwide** and an advocacy toolkit to help people become champions of inclusion.



▼
With in-person programming postponed in 2020, the CSPS developed and facilitated online learning labs and workshops aimed at providing **ongoing professional development** opportunities to program alumni.

▼
With confirmation of funding from the U.S. Department of State through 2021, the CSPS has now been awarded nearly \$11 million to **leverage sport, education, and entrepreneurship** as tools to empower underserved populations worldwide.



▼
The CSPS distributed \$381,500 to 63 alumni in 23 countries through funding from the U.S. Department of State Global Sports Mentoring Program. In 2020, these seed grants helped alumni **implement initiatives aimed to address gender equality, inclusion, and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Creating more stable, equal, and inclusive communities in

83 COUNTRIES

You are working on behalf of humanity.
FIGHT FOR HUMANITY.

JEAN BAPTISTE MUREMA
Human Rights Lawyer, Rwanda,
GSMP 2019

PEER MENTORING PROGRAM

Mercedes Gomez, Founder of Discapacidad Cero, served as the first-ever GSMP: Sport 4 Community Peer Mentoring Program Coordinator. Under Mercedes' leadership, GSMP alumni offered support and encouragement to the 2020 Sport for Community delegates as they responded to the news of the program's postponement and many other challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. These connections are especially important given that, according to the UN, 40% of people have felt depressed, lonely, or hopeless due to social isolation as a result of the coronavirus. (Mercedes Gomez, GSMP 2017, Venezuela).



CENTER FOR SPORT, PEACE, & SOCIETY

ABOUT US



VISION

To become the premier, multidisciplinary institute for discovering and implementing sport-based solutions to complex social challenges



PURPOSE

To create a more peaceful, equitable, and inclusive world through sport and education



CORE VALUES

A people-first approach that values the dignity of every human being through intentionality, flexibility, humility, honesty, and selfless service to others.

CSPS INITIATIVES

1 LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS



Since 2012, we've implemented the U.S. Department of State Global Sports Mentoring Program where we, alongside U.S.-based executive mentors, transform international delegates into active agents of change who return home to launch new organizations, affect public policy, and impact communities.

As part of our work to promote global solidarity, the CSPS offers on-site support, guidance, expertise, and practical implementation strategies to local changemakers through international exchanges and trainings that include sport-based workshops and life-skills sessions.

2 INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH



3 STORYTELLING PROJECTS



The CSPS believes in the power of storytelling. Since 2012, we have produced a documentary film about Coach Pat Summitt's support to help launch a girls basketball academy in Iraq, written and published dozens of human interest stories, and in 2022 will be releasing a global multi-media project in celebration of the 50th anniversary of Title IX.

The CSPS contributes to the Sport for Development & Peace, Disability Sport, and Sports Diplomacy literature and presents action-based research findings at academic and industry conferences. Our research is multi-disciplinary in nature and includes undergraduate, graduate, and affiliate faculty partners at UT and other universities.

4 SCHOLARLY RESEARCH



WHO WE ARE

Uniquely-situated at a Research I institution, the Center for Sport, Peace, and Society is a social enterprise committed to creating a more peaceful, equitable, and inclusive world through sport-based social innovation.

WHAT WE DO

We offer global leaders the tools needed to make a positive difference in their communities—from grassroots levels to governance—and help spark social progress, locally and abroad, through leadership programs, international outreach, storytelling projects, and scholarly research, all in pursuit of global solidarity.

HOW WE DO IT

Through our unique, intersectional pedagogy and multidisciplinary approach, we leverage the lessons inherent in sport, education, and entrepreneurship to produce scholarly outputs, share stories of progress, and empower international changemakers in more than 80 countries.

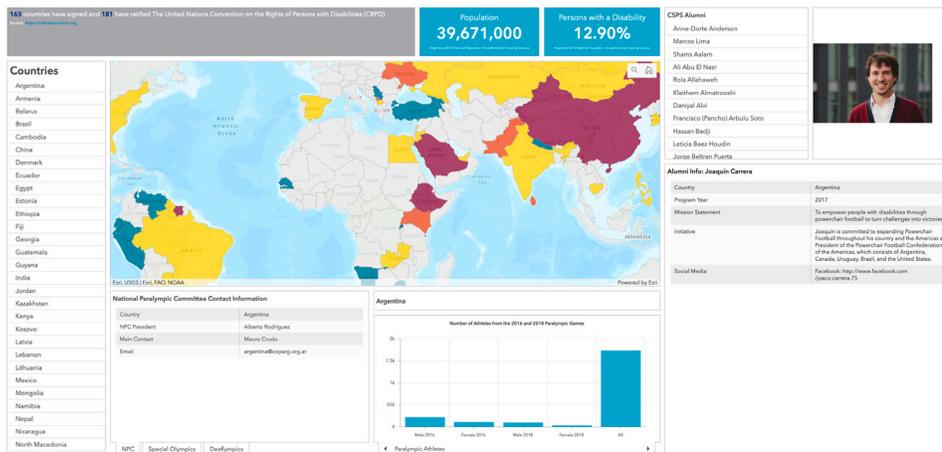
WHO WE WORK WITH

The primary beneficiaries of our work are women and girls, persons with disabilities, youth, refugees, marginalized populations, practitioners, advocates, and students.

HOW WE BEGAN

Although our director has worked in the field of empowerment and peacebuilding for nearly 30 years, the Center for Sport, Peace, and Society was officially founded in 2012. Soon after, we were awarded the inaugural Global Sports Mentoring Program (GSMP) cooperative agreement through the U.S. Department of State. Since then, we've been awarded nearly \$11 million to promote gender equality, disability rights, and peacebuilding on a global scale.

AY 2020 **ACTIVITIES**



University of Tennessee Center for Sport, Peace, & Society
Global Disability Rights Advocacy Project

- VERONICA ALLEN**, Department of Geography, Geospatial, Science and Technology, University of Tennessee
- TAYLOR WINKEL**, Department of Public Health, University of Tennessee
- OLGA KHOKHRYAKOVA**, Department of Public Health, University of Arkansas
- GRACE ATHANAS-LINDEN**, School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management, Temple University
- MANAL EL TAYAR**, Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University

Screenshot of the interactive global policy map.

EQUIPPING ADVOCATES FOR THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

PROBLEM

Persons with disabilities remain excluded from social life worldwide and face structural and social barriers.

In 2006, the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to promote, protect, and ensure all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all people with disabilities. However, structural and social barriers including unemployment, inaccessible transportation, lack of accessible buildings, and cultural misrepresentation of disability restrict the ability of all people to fully participate in society.

Alumni of CSPPS programs consistently identify the need for a greater understanding of the international, regional, and national laws and policies designed to protect people with disabilities. Alumni express a pressing need to know what laws exist in their respective countries, as well as within their geographical regions, for the purposes of connecting prudent information directly to their efforts to create more inclusive grassroots and elite sports initiatives.

Therefore, in July, we launched the Global Disability Rights Advocacy

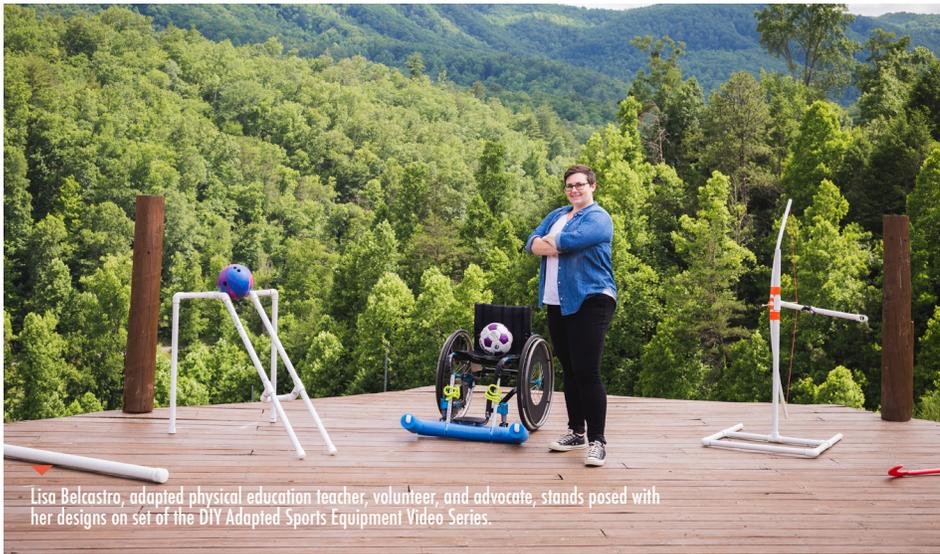
SOLUTION

Create an interactive global policy map and toolkit aimed to equip advocates to promote more inclusive laws and policies, especially within the sport sector.

Project to educate key stakeholders on disability rights policies that exist globally and sport for development initiatives designed to empower people with disabilities in countries around the world. The project includes an interactive global map showing laws that protect the rights of persons with disabilities worldwide; progress in the Paralympics, Deaflympics, and Special Olympics movements; and CSPPS alumni working and advocating for progress around the world. The project also includes an advocacy tool kit providing tips on how to foster change in local communities.

We hope that, by presenting information from a variety of sectors, citizens from every nation will gain a greater understanding of the intersection between sport and policy for people with disabilities. Ultimately, we desire for this project to serve as a tool that provides important information that can be used to advocate for inclusion and equitable rights for persons with disabilities, especially within the sport sector.

AY 2020 **ACTIVITIES**



PROMOTING INCLUSION AND ADVANCING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES

PROBLEM

People with disabilities are often excluded from participating in sports due to the lack of accessible and adequate sporting equipment.

According to the World Health Organization (2018), over a billion people—approximately 15% of the global population—are estimated to live with some type of disability. Research consistently reveals that participation in sport can contribute to the success and well-being of persons with disabilities and can serve as a mechanism for social change. However, structural and social barriers, including a lack of accessible equipment often prevent persons with disabilities from participating in sport and physical activity.

Therefore, in the summer of 2020, the CSPS partnered with adapted physical education instructor, advocate, and volunteer, Lisa Belcastro, and launched the D.I.Y. Adapted Sports Equipment Video Series. Each video

SOLUTION

Create a series of how-to video workshops showcasing inexpensive and easy equipment adaptations.*

in the eight-part series gives step-by-step instructions on how to easily build adapted sports equipment on a limited budget. A few examples include; a bow and arrow with PVC pipe and dowel rods to make archery accessible for athletes of all ability levels, a convertible PVC ramp for bowling and bocce athletes with disabilities, and a soccer plow for athletes who use wheelchairs.

Data garnered from our social media analytics show the series has reached a viewership of more than 250,000. Our hope is that the videos impact an even broader audience and continue to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in sports.

**Project funded by U.S. Department of State Sport Diplomacy Division.*



EPISODE 1 - INTRODUCTION



EPISODE 2 - STRIKING EXTENDER



EPISODE 3 - PVC BOW & ARROW



EPISODE 4 - ARCHERY STAND



EPISODE 5 - PVC BODY BAR



EPISODE 6 - GRIP AID



EPISODE 7 - SOCCER PLOW



EPISODE 8 - BOWLING/BOCCE RAMP

AY 2020 ACTIVITIES



SUPPORTING THE CSPS FAMILY DURING THE COVID-19 GLOBAL PANDEMIC

PROBLEM

Rates of individuals suffering from poor mental health have increased due to social isolation resulting from the COVID-19 global pandemic.

It is well documented by mental health professionals that long periods of social isolation have detrimental effects on mental well-being and physical health. As the need for social distancing and isolation continues with the spread of the COVID-19 virus, so does the need to think innovatively about ways to connect, encourage, and support the CSPS family.

Therefore, we developed virtual connection opportunities and mentorship programs for the CSPS family. First, we launched a peer mentor and virtual mentorship program to connect U.S. Department of State Global Sports Mentoring Program (GSMP): Sport for Community Delegates; individuals selected for the 2020 program (which was postponed) with peer alumni and American mentors to provide support and encouragement. We also offered best practice resources to help the delegates begin to formulate their strategic plans of action. This initiative offered opportunities for delegates, alumni, and mentors to meet each other, make connections across

SOLUTION

Facilitate mentoring opportunities for CSPS alumni, mentors, and program partners to connect and offer support to one another.

countries and disciplines, and become part of the changemaking family using sport to promote diplomacy across the world.

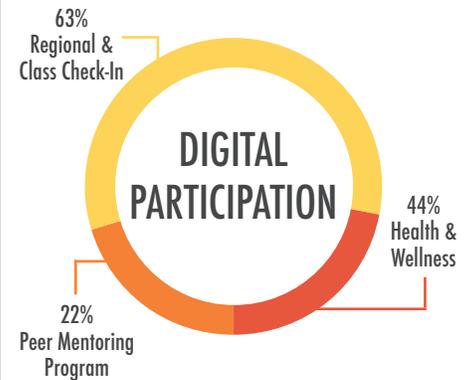
Second, we organized check-in calls with each GSMP cohort and with alumni from the same geographic region. Alumni in countries hit particularly hard by COVID-19, Ecuador and South Africa for example, are facing even more difficult situations related to food shortages, a lack of personal protective equipment, and a lack of aid money reaching actual citizens. These calls provided much-needed respite for them in a time of great need.

Finally, we launched an online health and wellness series led by CSPS program partners. These included meditation and mindfulness sessions, adaptive at-home workouts, workouts with families, and yoga.

NUMBER OF ALUMNI PARTICIPANTS

120

Throughout 2020, 120 alumni, mentors, and program partners participated in the various digital resources made available.



AY 2020 ACTIVITIES



Daphna Goldschmidt (Jerusalem, 2018 alumna) with her mentor Val Ackerman at Big East. Daphna was the GSMP Learning Lab Grant Writing instructor.

EQUIPPING WOMEN TO GAIN ACCESS TO AND EXCEL IN SPORT-BASED CAREERS

PROBLEM

Women and girls face severe inequalities worldwide and remain underrepresented in sport-based careers.

Although there is a global effort led by the United Nations to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” as part of the 2030 Global Goals for Sustainable Development, women continue to face severe inequalities including limited access to economic resources, gender-based violence, low levels of education, and high rates of poverty. Similarly, women are also underrepresented in sport-based careers such as sports journalism, as well as in leadership positions on sport boards and federations, Paralympic and Olympic committees, and national governing bodies.

Therefore, we organized a series of educational workshops to help CSPS alumnae continue to grow and refine their professional development skills. First, we launched the Learning Lab Series, educational training sessions taught by CSPS alumni for CSPS alumni. Two courses, non-violent communication and grant writing, were developed and delivered by female CSPS alumnae, providing these alumnae the unique opportunity to develop their leadership skills.

GLOBAL CHANGEMAKERS



Participants from every region of the world. ←

ALUMNAE PROFESSIONAL FIELDS

24% WORK AT AN NGO OR NON-PROFIT

19% WORK AT A LEAGUE/FEDERATION

18% WORK IN MEDIA/JOURNALISM

12% WORK AT CORPORATIONS

11% WORK IN GOVT

SOLUTION

Provide professional development workshops for women working to advance gender equity in the global sports industry.

Each course was delivered over an 8-week period, with the entire series running from July - November.

Second, we organized Office Hours, a series of one-hour Zoom calls with CSPS/GSMP mentors and alumnae designed to provide a safe and intimate space for mentors to share personal stories of success, overcoming challenges, and offering words of advice to encourage the CSPS family as they continue to lead the way for gender equity in their respective communities.

Lastly, we are developing a series of Masterclasses specifically for CSPS/GSMP alumnae. Classes will be taught by GSMP mentors and will include topics such as leadership, entrepreneurship, partnerships, fundraising, and much more. Masterclasses will be professionally produced and designed to meet the short-term and long-term educational and professional needs of the CSPS family.

AY 2020 ACTIVITIES



South African alumni, Patrick Selepe (2018), Siphamandla Gumbi (2017), and Qaphela Dlamini (2019) distribute food and personal hygiene supplies throughout their community in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are so grateful for your support!

Our athletes and communities now have access to food, clothing, and medical support because of you.
—Siphamandla Gumbi, S4C 2017 alumni

AVERAGE AWARD AMOUNT

\$14,130

\$381,500 distributed to 63 changemakers in 23 countries funding a total of 27 grant applications

SUPPORTING ALUMNI AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE

PROBLEM

GSMP alumni lack structural and financial support for their initiatives aimed at empowering their communities through sport.

Upon returning home from their GSMP experience, many of our change-makers lack the social, political, and economic support to implement their strategic plans of actions. Structural inequalities affecting communities across the globe leave our alumni under-equipped and under-funded when trying to advance their mission.

Therefore, as part of the U.S. Department of State Global Sports Mentoring Program (GSMP), CSPS manages a grant program, which in AY2020 distributed \$381,500 to directly support alumni initiatives.

Eleven alumnae from the 2019 GSMP program applied for and were awarded

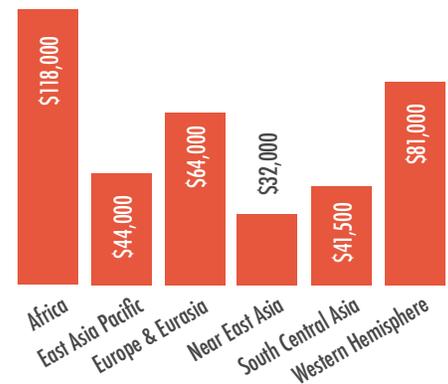
SOLUTION

Support alumni in home countries, while encouraging collaboration and providing financial support through grants provided by the U.S. Department of State.

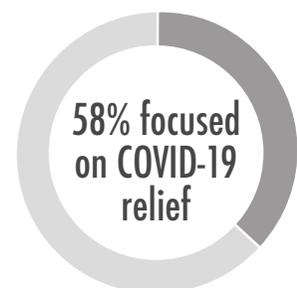
individual grant funding. In addition, sixteen collaborative grant applications were awarded funding with a total of 52 alumni working together in their respective regions. These grants were allocated to fund everything from sporting equipment for Aderonke Bello's Play It, Dream It project, to our group of four South African alumni led by Siphamandla Gumbi, who collaborated to combat the spread of COVID-19.

GSMP change-makers are working together to promote gender equality, disability rights, and peace. Even when facing a global pandemic, our alumni continue to think innovatively about ways to protect and empower their communities.

AWARDS BY REGION



AWARDS BY FOCUS OF IMPACT



AY 2020 **ACTIVITIES**



CSPS interns, Dr. Carolyn Spellings, and Dr. Sarah Hillyer with UT Chancellor Donde Plowman at the Chancellor's Associates Meeting in January 2020.

ACADEMIC COLLABORATIONS

- Geography 
- Sports Management 
-  Kinesiology
- Hospitality 
- Therapeutic Recreation 
-  Business
- Communication Studies 
- Political Science 
-  Deaf Studies
-  Public Health

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS



ENGAGING STUDENTS AND THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

PROBLEM

Students need meaningful professional development experiences that turn theory learned in the classroom into action applied in the real world.

In our global and now virtual world, it is critical that students have the opportunity to apply the knowledge they learn in the classroom to solving real-world problems. The CSPS is committed to engaging students and the academic community in meaningful professional development experiences to train students to use their passions and platforms to positively influence campus and their communities.

In 2020, CSPS mentored 16 students, from 11 different departments and academic homes, across the University of Tennessee, Knoxville campus, University of Arkansas, and Temple University through our robust student internship program. Students contributed to a variety of projects including, the Global Disability Rights Advocacy Project, journalism media pieces published on the CSPS and U.S. Department of State Global Sports Mentoring Program websites, grant writing and reports, academic research, and developing a partnership with a local refugee resettlement organization.

SOLUTION

Provide opportunities for students to collaborate with one another through internships designed to reflect professional work environments and to co-create tangible solutions with real-world implications.

In addition, CSPS collaborated with students and faculty at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, James Madison University, University of Kentucky, Technical University of Madrid, Spain, Johnson University, and George Mason University on research projects and academic writings to advance the field of sport for development and peace and sport diplomacy.

Two articles were published in peer-reviewed academic journals in 2020. The article titled "Barriers and empowerment for disability sports leaders" was published in *Managing Sport and Leisure's* special issue on *Organizational Innovation in Sport for Development and Peace*. "SDP's winning strategy for a post COVID-19 Era" was published in *Peace Review's* special issue *Sport for Development and Peace*. Two additional articles were submitted for review in the fall of 2020.

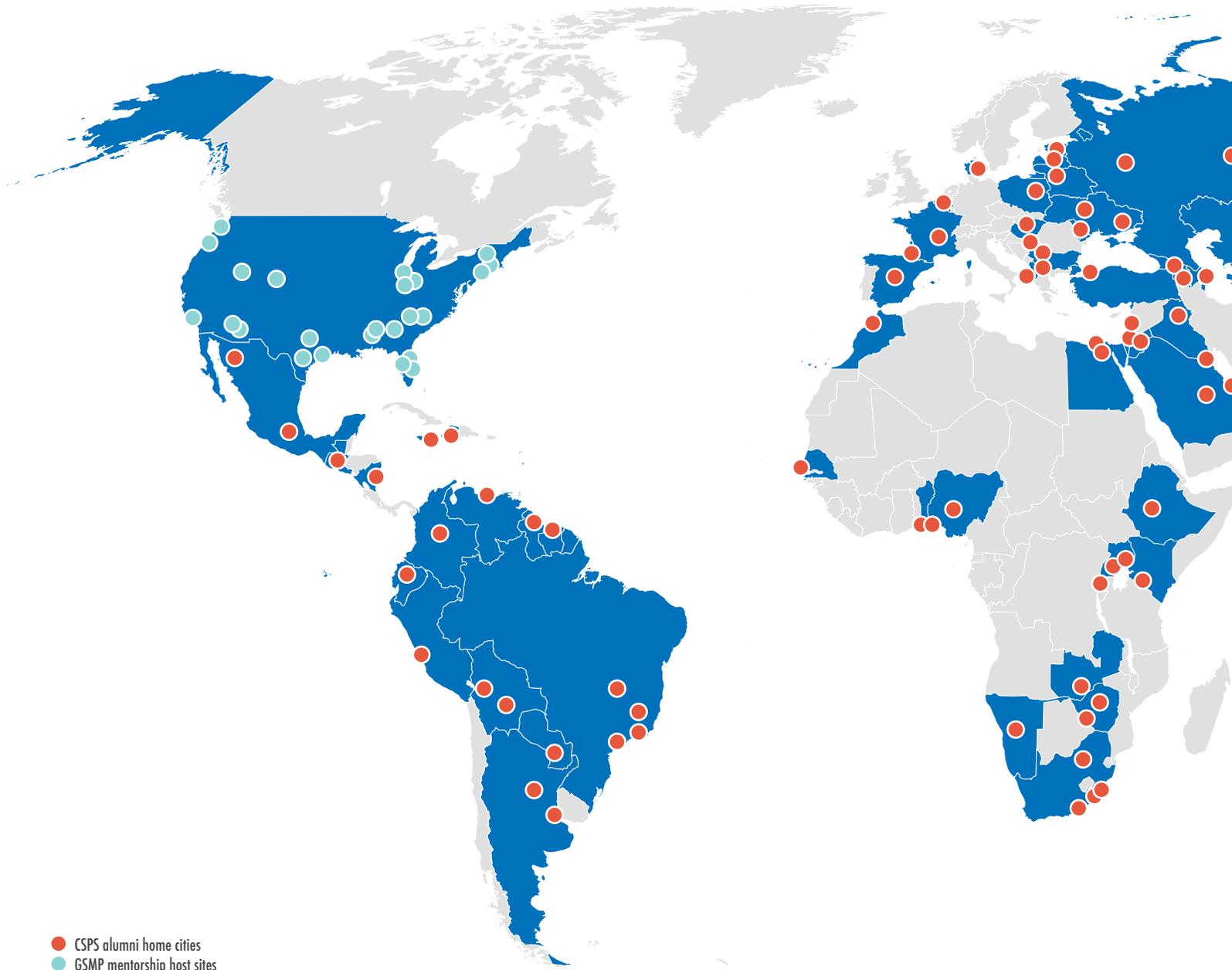


CARING COMMUNICATION

Diana Bonar, Founder of PeaceFlow, served as the first-ever GSMP: Learning Lab Peer Instructor. Under Diana's teaching, GSMP alumni learned about non-violent communication, negotiation, empathy, and much more. This work is particularly important given that the WHO estimates 35% of individuals die from interpersonal violence annually. (Diana Bonar, GSMP 2016, Brazil).

CSPS GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

SUPPORTING CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE



● CSPS alumni home cities
● GSMP mentorship host sites

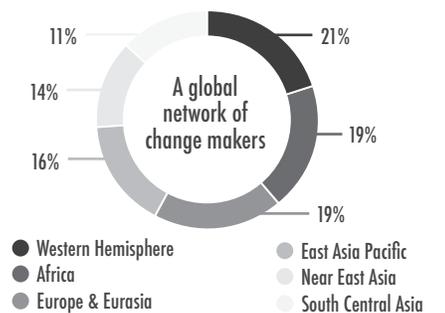
68%
OF DELEGATES ARE WOMEN

32%
OF DELEGATES ARE MEN

AVERAGE DELEGATE AGE

34

GSMP DELEGATES BY REGION



Since its founding, the Center for Sport, Peace, and Society has traveled the globe to support **change-makers in more than 80 countries who are working to address some of the world's most pressing social challenges**, including economic empowerment, disease prevention, human rights, sexual assault and gender-based violence, human trafficking, and peacebuilding with sport, education, and entrepreneurship as their tools for change.

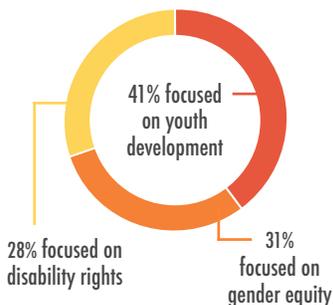


- ALBANIA
- ARGENTINA*
- ARMENIA
- AUSTRALIA
- AZERBAIJAN
- BANGLADESH
- BELARUS
- BELGIUM
- BENIN
- BOLIVIA*
- BRAZIL*
- BULGARIA
- CAMBODIA
- CHINA
- COLOMBIA
- DENMARK
- ECUADOR*
- EGYPT*
- EL SALVADOR
- ESTONIA
- ETHIOPIA
- FIJI
- FRANCE*
- GEORGIA
- GUATEMALA
- GUYANA
- HAITI
- HUNGARY
- INDIA*
- INDONESIA
- ISRAEL
- IRAQ*
- JAMAICA
- JORDAN*
- KAZAKHSTAN
- KENYA
- KOSOVO
- KUWAIT
- LATVIA
- LITHUANIA
- LEBANON*
- MACEDONIA*
- MALAYSIA
- MEXICO*
- MOLDOVA
- MONGOLIA
- MOROCCO
- MYANMAR
- NAMIBIA
- NEPAL
- NEW ZEALAND*
- NICARAGUA
- NIGERIA
- PAKISTAN
- PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES
- PAPUA NEW GUINEA
- PARAGUAY
- PERU*
- PHILIPPINES*
- POLAND
- QATAR
- RUSSIA
- RWANDA
- SAMOA
- SAUDI ARABIA
- SENEGAL
- SERBIA
- SINGAPORE
- SOUTH AFRICA*
- SOUTH KOREA
- SPAIN
- SRI LANKA
- SURINAME
- TAIWAN*
- TAJIKISTAN
- TIMOR-LESTE
- TURKEY
- TURKMENISTAN
- UGANDA
- UKRAINE
- UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
- UNITED STATES
- UZBEKISTAN
- VENEZUELA
- VIETNAM*
- ZAMBIA
- ZIMBABWE

ALUMNI PROFESSIONAL FIELDS



FOCUS OF IMPACT



* Denotes CSPS outbound exchange

ROLA ALLAHA

A CHAMPION FOR PEACE

On this night, the Radisson Hotel located in the vibrant city center of Amman, Jordan was alive with a celebration. Arabic drums and laughter provided the soundtrack and traditional food and dance enriched the dimly lit ballroom. More than 250 guests gathered to celebrate the newly wedded couple and the union of their two families. By all accounts, it was a perfect night with family and friends.

Until it wasn't.

Shortly before 9 pm, the ballroom went dark.

Chaos ensued.

Ceiling panels fell from the sky. Tables and chairs caught fire. Shards of glass filled the air. Family members were crying, screaming, and frantically searching for loved ones. The force from the blast displaced everything and everyone, including one woman's handbag – a critical detail that will soon become evident in the story of Rola Al-Amer Allahaweh.

The Radisson Hotel was one of three locations targeted in a series of coordinated suicide bombings that night. Fifty-nine people lost their lives and 115 were severely injured.

When first responders arrived they immediately began searching for survivors,

while also collecting clues to help identify victims who weren't so lucky. Using the contents of one woman's handbag lying near an unidentifiable body, Rola Al-Amer Allahaweh was pronounced dead on November 9th, 2005, and her family was notified on the scene.

But Rola wasn't dead.

The twenty-four-year-old was fighting for her life due to the shrapnel lodged in her back, neck, and brain. The trauma to Rola's body was so severe that by the time she arrived at the hospital, her heart had stopped beating. While doctors worked to save Rola's life, her family suffered with the news of her death.

Doctors successfully resuscitated Rola, then she slipped into a coma. At 2 am, news reached Rola's family that she was alive. Her mother didn't believe the military officer who delivered the message and refused to go to the hospital. She told her family that if it wasn't really Rola or if the news was false information, she couldn't stand to "lose my daughter's life twice in one night."

Rola was the second child in a tight-knit family of nine. Her father served in the Jordanian Armed Forces and all of his children attended military school, which fostered mental toughness and self-discipline. Drawing on these strengths, Rola's brother volunteered to go to the

hospital to determine if his sister really was alive. Although difficult to recognize, he confirmed her identity and updated his family on her condition and the uncertainties facing them all as a result of the severity of her injuries.

Rola eventually came out of her coma and started the long road to recovery. Due to the shrapnel still lodged in her spine and brain, she self-identifies as a complete quadriplegic, with mobility only in her shoulders.

"I am not going to tell you I was a 'hero' from the first day of my injury. I spent many nights crying myself to sleep and slipped into weeks of depression. One night in particular I remember saying to myself, 'If I keep crying what is the result? I'm still going to be disabled. This is only a physical injury and I cannot let it kill my spirit too.'"

Nearly fifteen years later, Rola's spirit is alive and well.

"I realized during rehab and my subsequent graduate studies the role sport and physical activity can play in the emotional and psychological well-being of a person. I am thankful for swimming and the great therapists who encouraged me to push my body and mind to become stronger and stronger."

AWEH



Rola Allahaweh (Jordan, 2018 alumna) and her mentor, Sarah Olson, at Ability 360.

After graduating with her MBA in Clinical Nursing, Rola accepted a position as Lecturer at Princess Muna College of Nursing at Mu'tah University. Her relentless determination to make Jordan a more inclusive country attracted the attention of the Jordanian Royal family and as a result, His Royal Highness Prince Mir'd bin Ra'ad called upon Rola to help him establish a delegation of soldiers to compete in the Invictus Games. As a result of their collaboration, soldier-athletes with disabilities have represented Jordan in the past three Games and Rola dreams of going even further in her pursuit of peace and sport for people with disabilities.

Rola refuses to let the worst terrorist attack in Jordan's history define her. But she never turns down an opportunity to share her story.

And it was Rola's story that caught the attention of the U.S. Embassy. In 2018, the cultural affairs office in Amman nominated Rola for the U.S. Department of State Global Sports Mentoring Program (GSMP). The GSMP is a five-week leadership development initiative sponsored by the Sports Diplomacy Division, housed in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The Sports Diplomacy

Division of the U.S. Department of State was born shortly after America's own horrific encounter with terrorism on September 11, 2001. Diplomacy efforts in the U.S. desperately needed an upgrade to more effectively address modern-day threats and sport was identified as one of the tools in a portfolio of new soft power strategies. Specifically, sports diplomacy was aimed at engaging marginalized youth in an effort to prevent those living on the margins of society from becoming radicalized. Since then, efforts have expanded to include promoting and protecting the rights of women, girls, and persons with disabilities.

Through a competitive selection process, Rola was chosen as one of only seventeen delegates from more than 50 applicants worldwide. She was matched with mentor Sarah Olson, Military Program Coordinator at Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center in Phoenix, Arizona. Sarah's work with wounded veterans and Rola's commitment to the Jordanian Royal Family to grow sport opportunities for soldiers with disabilities was a mentor-mentee match made in heaven.

"Rola was up for anything we threw her way," Sarah remembers. "She was always so eager to learn. Sometimes it was hard for me to accept or make sense of what she has lived through and experienced. She talked about her story and every time it would break my heart. I think what impressed me the most about Rola was her infectious zeal for life and the passion to do better, to make the world better – more peaceful and equitable. She helped me appreciate what I have and to use my voice to do better."

After the GSMP, Rola returned to Jordan with an even sharper focus on ways to promote peace and create change in her

country. She is still working as a Lecturer and training the next generation of nurses, while also giving more time and energy to adaptive sports, community integration, and raising awareness about bullying and negative attitudes towards children with disabilities. That's not all. Rola was inspired by what she experienced at Ability360 and started training as an athlete herself, with hopes of joining the Jordanian Team in the upcoming Invictus Games. She never thought of becoming an athlete – instead, she always viewed herself as a conduit to help others play sports – but after the GSMP, she returned home with a new mindset.

"The country sees me as a national hero because I survived the worst act of humanity. This gives me a huge platform to talk about peace, inclusion, empathy, accessibility, and equity. I want to shed light on the best parts of humanity and if I can show my country that even I can become an athlete, it will help dispel myths about what people with disabilities can and cannot do. I can provide a lot of hope to kids and parents, soldiers and athletes with disabilities. When people see someone else doing something courageous, they believe they can be brave too."

Rola teaches all of us about courage – in the way she sees the world, in the way she lives her life, and in the way she leads others with dignity and respect. Rola is writing a new chapter and we can't wait to turn the page and see what comes next for this champion of peace.

At the very least, we know we'll see her at the 2021 Invictus Games in the Netherlands. Not only did Rola achieve her dream to represent her country as an athlete, but she will also become Jordan's first-ever woman to be named Captain of the Invictus Games Team.



Rola Allahaweh (Jordan, 2018 alumna) and her fellow Invictus Games team members.

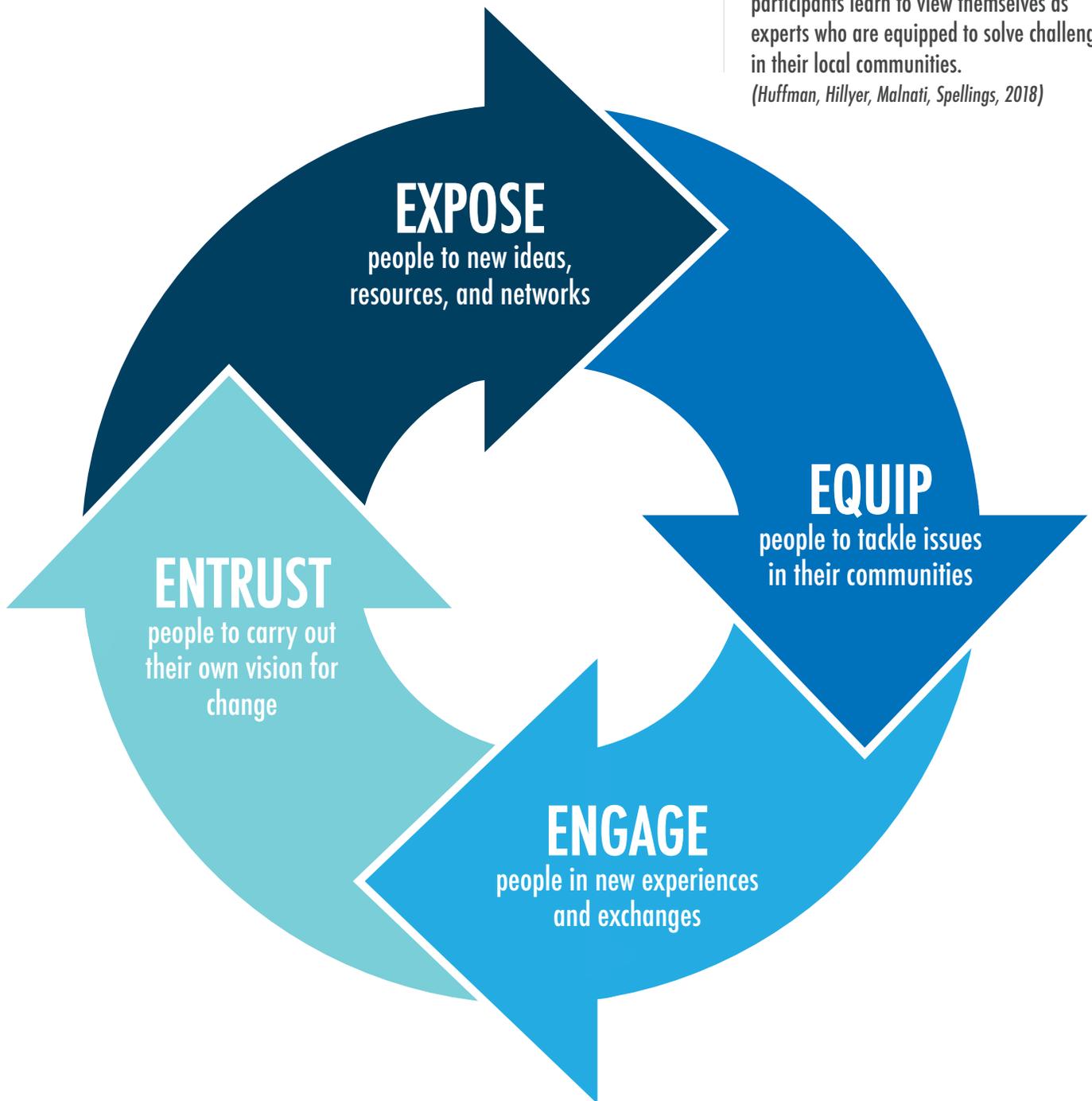
PHILOSOPHY

THEORY OF EMPOWERMENT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

HISTORY

The Theory of Empowerment for Social Change is the outgrowth of more than 30 years of experience in international sports programming and action-based, qualitative research. Through work with nearly 10,000 women, men, youth, and refugees from more than 80 countries, the CSPA developed a pedagogical philosophy of empowerment for social change. We apply this theory in a culturally-grounded manner where participants learn to view themselves as experts who are equipped to solve challenges in their local communities.

(Huffman, Hillyer, Malnati, Spellings, 2018)



CENTER FOR SPORT, PEACE, AND SOCIETY

PARTNERS AND NETWORKS

ABILITY360



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Shirley Ryan
Abilitylab



SPURS SPORTS
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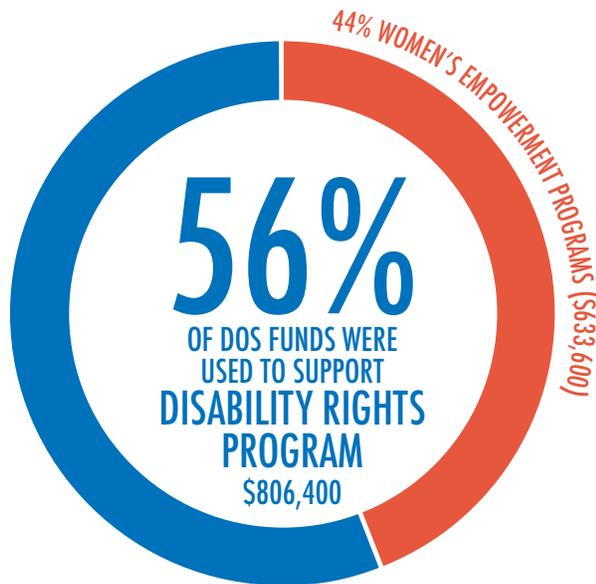


RESPONDING TO CRISIS

With many in the communities he serves without reliable access to internet or technology, Hassan Badji, a participant in the GSMP in 2019, refocused his efforts and outreach to educate and empower communities to protect themselves against the COVID-19 virus. Hassan and his sister, who is a medical doctor, created and distributed health pamphlets to families in rural areas of Senegal. With 42% of the population living in rural communities, a lack of information as to the causes of transmission of the corona-virus makes this work especially important.

CENTER FOR SPORT, PEACE, & SOCIETY FINANCES

AY 2020 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE PROGRAMMING BREAKDOWN



AY 2020 SUMMARY OF REVENUES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT	\$1,440,000
INTERNAL FUNDING	\$141,910
DONORS AND GIFTS	\$1,451
2019-2020 TOTAL:	\$1,583,361

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

1

FOLLOW US ON
SOCIAL MEDIA



@SportAndPeaceUT



@TheCenterforSportPeaceSociety



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2

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

[Click here](#) to join our mailing list so you can stay up-to-date on our activities and impact.

3

APPLY FOR A FELLOWSHIP

Send your resume and cover letter to CTurnley@vols.utk.edu to apply for a student or faculty fellowship.

We're always looking for great teammates to join us.

4

LEAVE A LEGACY

Help make an impact on underserved populations through sport, education, and media by making a donation to the Center for Sport, Peace, and Society [here](#).

THANK YOU

MENTOR ORGANIZATIONS

Ability 360 Sports & Fitness Center
Arizona Disabled Sports
Big East Conference
Burton Snowboards
Chicago Parks District
Creative Artists Agency
DLA Piper
ESPN
Equinox
FOX Sports
Gatorade
Glideslope
Google
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National Ability Center
NCAA
New Balance
New York Road Runners
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Spurs Sports & Entertainment
The Desert Ability Center
TIRR Memorial Hermann
Turnstone Center
USOPC
U.S. Tennis Association
University of Alabama
University of Arizona Adapted Athletics
University of Connecticut
University of Oregon
University of Tennessee
University of Texas-Arlington
Under Armour
U.S. Association of Blind Athletes
U.S. Golf Association
U.S. Tennis Association

MEET *the* TEAM



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