

## MOAACORNER

@MOAADiversity1



**China Jude, Ed.D.**

**University of Wyoming**  
Senior Associate AD/SWA  
2019-20 President

It is an honor to be named MOAA President. I look forward to working with the membership and collaborating with other NACDA Affiliate Associations throughout the year. We are working on many projects to engage the members and I ask for your continued support as we grow while providing quality educational programming and networking opportunities.

Instead of discussing MOAA's initiatives and my vision, I will discuss athletics identity and its connection to athletics alumni giving. On the surface of this introduction, there is a "transactional" approach. However, my doctoral research titled, *A Quantitative Survey of Motivations behind Athletic Alumni Financial Giving in a Historically Black University* (2017) explores the student-athlete "transformational" experience leading to financial giving. In the NCAA

GOALS (Growth, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Learning of Students in College) study, designed to provide data regarding

today's student-athletes, "college campuses have generally seen an increase in the number of students experiencing mental health issues such as anxiety and depression." As we begin this school year, let us not lose sight amid television contracts, ticket sales, name-likeness and imaging, and multimillion-dollar contracts. Ultimately, it all boils down to "valuing people," especially during these turbulent times. My dissertation demonstrates examples of separation anxiety, bringing light to some reasons why donors do not financially give:

*There are ongoing questions about whether there are any correlations between athletic identity and career decisions. Since student-athletes have invested a significant amount of time on the court or field, Hook (2012) initially believed that a student-athlete's confidence lessens when they have to make a career decision outside of the athletic arena. Oregon (2010) added that those possessing a strong athletic identity experience difficulties when eliminated from the team when they suffer a career-ending injury, or, as stated before, when making career-related decisions not related to athletics. Finally, Bunce (2013) contributed to the same sentiments, adding that forced career*

*termination, non-selection in the professional draft, and dismissal from the team due to disciplinary issues or academic failure become a detriment to the identity. At times, student-athletes believe that their special athletic talents will make up for their academic challenges (Osburn, 2014); to compound the challenge, coaches and administrators pacify students as they receive notoriety in the sport. Unfortunately, the academic or social setbacks may impact [financial] giving.*

Regardless of the sport, once it ends, the athletics separation becomes the next stage to nurture. Our continuous cultivation of donors must include resources to support the student athlete's mental welfare, especially during times of separation. These strategies demonstrate a genuine commitment from the start and beyond the finish line. I challenge everyone to continue to enhance the transformative relationships of our student-athletes, regardless of their athletics identity and success. In turn, you will have a seamless transition in cultivating the prospective donor. By the way, in my athletics department, I am proud to announce the recruitment of a well being coordinator to make sure that our students know that our focus is about the person, not the position.

## McLENDONCORNER



**Marissa Robinson**

**NCAA**  
Assistant Director of  
Leadership Development

Since its establishment in 1998, the John McLendon Minority Scholarship Foundation has awarded over 100 postgraduate scholarships, making a profound impact on the landscape of athletics administration and the lives of young men and women. To showcase the achievements of past John McLendon Minority Postgraduate Scholarship recipients, the Foundation presents "Where Are They Now?"

Marissa Robinson received the McLendon Scholarship in 2017. She is a 2016 graduate of Kean University, where she received a bachelor of arts degree in special education and psychology. During her time at Kean, Robinson was a four-time varsity letter winner for the Cougars field hockey program, serving as team captain for the 2014 and 2015 seasons. An NCAA Woman of the Year top-30 finalist in 2016, she received all-conference laurels twice, while being selected first team all-region and second team CoSIDA

All-American. A four-time National Field Hockey Coaches Association (NFHCA) Scholar of Distinction, Robinson was named to the Dean's List all eight semesters, and was an active member of the Kean University Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), serving as President for both Kean and the New Jersey Athletic Conference. A member of the NFHCA Academic team, Chi Alpha Sigma and Psi Chi honors societies, she carried a cumulative grade point average of 3.96.

Robinson currently serves as the assistant director of leadership development at the NCAA, a position she has held for the last two years.

**How has the John McLendon Scholarship impacted your career?**

The scholarship has granted me the opportunity to further my education by providing funds toward my master's degree. The scholarship has also encouraged me to expand my knowledge of college athletics and all of the opportunities it offers.

**Why did you pursue a career in athletics administration?**

I am an educator at heart with a passion for sports. There is no better place to marry my innate desire to help others reach their potential

and my passion for college athletics than athletics administration. As a former student-athlete, I attribute much of my success to the skills acquired and opportunities presented to me through sports. Pursuing a career in athletics administration not only allows me to marry passion with skill set and desire, it allows me to give back to an environment that gave so much to me.

**What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?**

The most rewarding aspect of my job is the ability and opportunity to positively impact student-athletes, coaches and administrators across all three NCAA divisions everyday.

**What career advice would you give your younger self?**

I would tell my younger self two things:

1. Enjoy the ride and live in the moment.
2. Prepare for the future in pencil, because you cannot plan out where life will take you even if you try!