

THE ACADEMY

A PUBLICATION OF THE UNITED STATES SPORTS ACADEMY

Renewal of a Long Standing Friendship

His Majesty Hamad bin Essa Al-Khalifa, the King of Bahrain, grants an audience to the Academy President to review sports program development in the island nation. (See story on page 8)



INSIDE:

Dr. Roch King makes the case for coaching *pg.3*

Chen, Sildaru named 2020 Athletes of the Year *pg.12*



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MISSION STATEMENT

The United States Sports Academy is an independent, non-profit, accredited, special mission sports university created to serve the nation and the world with programs in instruction, research and service. The role of the Academy is to prepare men and women for careers in the profession of sports.

ACCREDITATION

The United States Sports Academy is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of the Academy.

The United States Sports Academy accepts students regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or genetic information.



America's Sports University®

One Academy Drive
Daphne, AL 36526-7055
Phone: (251) 626-3303

Fax: (251) 621-2527

E-mail: academy@ussa.edu

Website: www.ussa.edu

Editor: Eric Mann

Layout and Design: Corey Blake

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

COVID-19: A Black Swan Event?

A "Black Swan" is a confluence of totally unexpected events that have the potential to significantly change the society in which it occurs. I could fill the pages of this edition of "The Academy" with the many ways that COVID-19 has impacted society with economic, geopolitical, and sociological aspects among them. However, let me focus on two areas in which the Academy is completely immersed: education and sports.



Dr. T.J. Rosandich
President and CEO
The United States Sports Academy

The education landscape from K-12 through higher education has been dramatically altered. Most states have directed the closure of primary through secondary schools and the list of colleges and universities that have closed seems to be longer than the list of those remaining open. The obvious solution to which many of these institutions have turned is to try and move some or all of their classes to an online environment. Unfortunately, many of the faculty and administrators involved in this effort have no idea how to go about it. The Academy is not among these.

The Academy began to move its entire curriculum to an online environment in 1994 and the institution's distance learning program was reviewed and approved by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in 1996. The Academy became so adept at online education that it was selected by the U.S. Department of Education to be a part of their distance education demonstration project in 2002.

With some 25 years of experience behind us, the Academy has proven that online education works. It is an effective and comparatively inexpensive educational alternative. So if you feel the need to stay away from residential-based classes and yet wish to continue to pursue your education, I would suggest that you can look to the Academy to meet your needs. With our rolling registration, we can enroll you in courses at just about any time. (*conti. pg 9*)

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A CASE FOR COACHING



Dr. Roch King Touts Virtue of Coaching Around the World

From teaching the Academy's post-secondary, non-degree education programs in Thailand to attending international coaching seminars in Tokyo to speaking at a coaching conference in Greece to traveling with students on a Sports Study Tour of the United States, Dr. Roch King has been a busy man the last few months.

King, the Academy's chair of sports coaching, recently returned from the International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE) Global Coach Conference in Tokyo, Japan, where he presented on his experience working in coaching mentorship programs in the United States.

The Academy is an organizational member of the ICCE as well as the United States Center for Coaching Excellence (USCCE). As the Academy's representative, King also co-presented a poster focused on university-based sports coaching education programs.

"It is interesting to me that no matter where I go to talk about coaching, people everywhere seem to understand that coaches matter," King said. "No matter where you are in the world, people know that a good coach can mean the world to an athlete, from the youth sports level all the way to professional and international competition levels. Coaches are a critical part of every athlete's experience, and I am happy to see that the ICCE is working to make sure coaches everywhere are better prepared to make a positive impact in the lives of athletes.

"For the Academy, it is great to be part of the ICCE because

it shows that the institution is willing to do what is necessary to do its part in training the next generation of coaches. The Academy has always been on the leading edge of sports education, and being part of the ICCE is just another example of the institution's commitment to making the world a better place through sport."

King also presented at a December conference at West Virginia University on the National Youth Sports Strategy, a federal initiative put forth by the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. The conference, "Examining Coaching and Coach Education in the United States," was hosted by the USCCE.



Dr. Roch King

Later, King further discussed the coaching profession at the Coach Force 21 event in Athens, Greece. The event was hosted by the Hellenic Olympic Committee and ICCE and co-hosted by the Erasmus+ Program of the European Union.

King was part of a panel that discussed "The Voice of the Coach," which touched on how sport is viewed as a profession.

"In Europe, coaches are represented by something like a trade union. In the United States, there are more than 2,000 coaching organizations for coaches at every level of sport, but almost none of them operate like a trade union. In the United States, there is no single organization that represents coaches. This fact has hindered the development of coaching as a profession.

"Around the world, there are many more people who work as coaches than as teachers or doctors. Coaches are viewed as important everywhere, but they are often overlooked as a workforce."

FACULTY FOCUS

Academy Takes Next Steps Toward ACBSP Accreditation

The Academy is taking the next steps toward earning accreditation for its sports management degree programs from the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), one of the world's leading business school accreditors.

Last year, the Academy hired a consultant to help guide the institution through the accreditation process.

Recently, the Academy welcomed to campus ACBSP mentor Dr. Kathleen Cornett, who advised the institution on the accreditation process and reviewed data that had been collected by Academy faculty and staff ahead of the visit. Following Cornett's visit, the Academy was advised that it could move forward in the process. The next step for the Academy is completion of a self-study by December 2020, followed by an evaluation and site visit from ACBSP early in 2021.



The United States Sports Academy's ACBSP accreditation mentor Dr. Kathleen Cornett and Academy Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Tomi Wahlstrom.

"ACBSP accreditation is a paradigm shift for the Academy," Academy Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Tomi Wahlström said. "Rather than focusing on offering sports management programs to sports professionals alone, this accreditation will help us to offer sports management as an option to management professionals."

Inaugural Doctoral Dissertation Seminar Hailed as a Success



Members of the Academy faculty welcomed doctoral students from all over the United States to the institution's inaugural Doctoral Dissertation Seminar in November 2019.

The Academy welcomed seven doctoral students from all over the United States for the three day Dissertation Writing Intensive Workshop hosted by the Robert Block Library on 13-15 November, 2019, on the institution's campus in Daphne, Ala.

Academy library director Dr. Vandy Pacetti-Donelson hailed the inaugural seminar as a success.

"The workshop offered students the opportunity to make progress in the dissertation process," Pacetti-Donelson said. "We learned valuable lessons about what we can accomplish and our capabilities as a staff to provide

an intensive face-to-face learning experience. It also provided some insights on areas where we can improve our services. I look forward to many more exciting opportunities to provide on-site programming for our students."

Doctoral student Lori Huckaby is the assistant athletic director and head women's basketball coach at Clarks Summit University in Pennsylvania. She is seeking her Doctor of Education degree in sports management with a leadership specialization.

"The intensive was an extremely helpful and very valuable experience for me," Huckaby said. "I was able to spend time getting to know the Academy faculty members, talking about not only the dissertation but also getting professionally linked with them. The information itself has allowed me the confidence that I can write a dissertation and that my professors are supportive and want to see me succeed. From a practical perspective, it was above and beyond what I anticipated and I am excited to actually get started with it. It gave me the boost and motivation to finish my doctorate."

Dr. Sandra Geringer Presents at SACSCOC Annual Meeting

Academy faculty member Dr. Sandra Geringer presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in Houston, Texas, in December.

Geringer, the Academy's director of recreation management and sports studies, has intimate knowledge of the SACSCOC assessment process after having served the last two years as the Academy's liaison to the regional higher education accrediting body.

Geringer's presentation, "Complying with Standard 12.6: Student Debt," covered updates to SACSCOC's policies related to student financial awareness. The Academy developed an online orientation module for financial aid literacy in preparation for the revisions to the SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation, specifically Standard 12.6. The presentation covered the findings from two semesters' worth of data from that module.



Dr. Sandra Geringer

Geringer has been heavily involved in coordinating, organizing and editing documentation for the Academy's recent reaffirmation process through SACSCOC. The Academy in December 2018 learned that its SACSCOC accreditation had been reaffirmed for another 10 years. As America's only freestanding sports university, the Academy was first accredited in 1983. The institution's accreditation was previously reaffirmed in 2008.

Dr. Roch King Serves USA Swimming Club Development Committee

Academy chair of sports coaching Dr. Roch King was recently reappointed to serve another year as a member of one of USA Swimming's influential committees.



Dr. Roch King

King will serve as a member of the national swimming governing body's Club Development Committee, which is charged with overseeing the growth and development of recreational and developmental USA Swimming-affiliated clubs around the country. The committee also works on policy development and serves as a liaison between clubs and USA Swimming. Additionally, it selects and hands out the governing body's annual awards, the Club Excellence program.

"It is important that Academy faculty members participate in boards and committees like this one because it shows that the institution has some skin in the game," King said. "We are educators, but we are also involved in sport organizations at the national governing body level and elsewhere. We want to do our part to put our mark on the world of sport."

Dr. Brandon Spradley and Robert Herron to Present on Concussion Issues at ACSM Conference

Academy chair of sports management Dr. Brandon Spradley and exercise science faculty member Robert Herron were recently selected to present at the upcoming American College of Sports Medicine conference to be held later this year in San Francisco, Calif.



Robert Herron

The pair had three abstracts accepted as poster presentations at the conference, which is scheduled for May 26-30. The presentations cover issues related to use of the King-Devick concussion test on high school athletes. Spradley is the lead author of the presentation titled "Between-Trial Reliability of the King-Devick Test in Female High School Athletes," while Herron is the lead author of "Between-Trial Reliability of the King-Devick Test in Male High School Athletes."



Dr. Brandon Spradley

Spradley and Herron have been key members of the Academy faculty involved in helping educate high school athletes in the Mobile, Ala., area about sport-related concussion issues.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Congratulations to the Academy's Students of the Month!

The Student of the Month program kicked off in September 2019 at the beginning of the current academic year. Each month, Student of the Month nominees are submitted by Academy faculty and staff, then a committee is charged with selecting the honoree. Students are selected based on their performance in the classroom, dedication to the Academy's programs, service to the community and more.

January 2020:

Ciara Taylor of Birmingham, Ala., is pursuing her Doctor of Education degree in Sports Management. She is an athletic trainer at Oak Mountain High School and is the Academy's student ambassador to the AAICU.



November 2019:

Brandon Fox of Littleton, Colo., is pursuing his Bachelor of Sports Science degree in Sports Management and would like to become a football coach at the collegiate level.

September 2019:

Kerrilyn Curtin of Manorville, N.Y., is pursuing her Doctor of Education degree in Sports Management. She is the Market Research Director for the Ladies Professional Golf Association.



February 2020:

Amphone Rasasombath of Seattle, Wash., is pursuing her Bachelor of Sports Science degree in Sports Strength and Conditioning and hopes to boost her career in the personal training field.

December 2019:

Jonathan Rosenberg of Riverdale, N.Y., is pursuing his Doctor of Education degree in Sports Management. He is the director of sports management at the College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale, N.Y.



October 2019:

Carmen Ward of Pace, Fla., is working to receive her Bachelor of Sports Science degree in Sports Management and hopes to use her new degree to become an elementary school physical education teacher.

August 2019:

Dennis Figures of Bryan, Texas, is pursuing his Doctor of Education degree in Sports Management. He already holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Academy.



Welcome Home!

Academy announces 2020 Graduation celebration

The Academy is pleased to announce it will host a ceremony to commemorate its graduates of the past and present on Thursday, 11 June 2020. If you earned your degree from the Academy or have wanted to visit the institution's campus on the beautiful Alabama Gulf Coast, now is the time! Meet our faculty and staff, tour our amazing facility, and take part in the full graduation experience at this special event. The Academy campus is located in Daphne, Ala., on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay and a few miles from beaches, vacation spots, and plentiful shopping more.

Who is Eligible?

Anyone that has not walked in the past and any present student that is in good standing and in their final courses by 31 August 2020. Any graduate student that will defend his/her final thesis/dissertation by 31 August 2020.

More information: www.ussa.edu/graduation



Honorary Guests

World Baseball Softball Confederation President Riccardo Fraccari, left, and United States eSports Federation President Vlad Marinescu plan to speak at the graduation event.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS



Mike Leach

(M.S.S. Sports Coaching 1988)

is the head football coach at Mississippi State University. He previously worked in the same role at Washington State University and Texas Tech University and is a former Academy Alumnus of the Year.



Vicky Bullett

(M.S.S. Sports Coaching 2015)

is the head women's basketball coach at West Virginia Wesleyan College and a member of the 1988 and 1992 U.S. Olympic women's basketball teams.

Dr. Tim Rice

(M.S.S. Sports Management 1999 and

Ed.D. Sports Management 2005)

was named assistant coach for the Ireland Under 20 Men's National Basketball Team.



Martin Clayes

(M.S.S. Sports Coaching 2013)

is the head men's and women's soccer coach at East Central College in Missouri.



Patrick Catullo

(M.S.S. Sports Management 2000)

is the director of athletics at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Va.



Byron Cunningham

(M.S.S. Sports Medicine 2002)

is the Director of Rehabilitation and Assistant Athletic Trainer for the NFL's Los Angeles Rams. He is the Academy's 2019 Alumnus of the Year.

Mike Behymer

(M.S.S. Sports Management 1987)

is the Vice President for Client Development at True Media in Kansas City, Mo. and a former Academy Alumnus of the Year.



Dr. Linda Hilgenbrinck

(M.S.S. Sports Fitness & Health 1984)

is the Adapted Physical Education Specialist for the Denton (Texas) Independent School District.



Daryl Jarvis

(M.S.S. Sports Management 2015)

is the head boys' basketball coach at West Florence (S.C.) High School.



Dr. Marty Durden

(Ed.D. Sports Management 2016)

is the director of athletics at Presbyterian School in Houston, Texas.

Dr. Keary Rouff

(Ed.D. Sports Management 2007)

is the program director for sports management and assistant professor of business at Alfred State College in New York.



Wayne Burley

(M.S.S. Sports Health & Fitness 1987)

is the owner of Tri-County Martial Arts in Waynesburg, Ohio, and a certified trainer in the C.O.B.R.A. self defense system.



UNITED BY SPORT

For almost 50 years, the United States Sports Academy has served as the only free standing sports university in America. Offering unmatched programs at all three degree levels, the Academy has produced more than 5,000 sport specific degree holders. The Academy's diverse network of graduates includes coaches, managers, educators, athletic directors, administrators, entrepreneurs, healthcare providers, researchers and professionals at every level, all **United by Sport**.



His Majesty Hamad bin Essa Al-Khalifa, the King of Bahrain (center), met with United States Sports Academy President and CEO Dr. T.J. Rosandich (center, left), to discuss the Academy's relationship with the Kingdom. Also pictured are His Highness Prince Nasser bin Hamad, the President of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (right) and American Ambassador to the Kingdom H.E. Justin Siberell (left).

Academy's adaptive sports program grows in Bahrain

The relationship between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the United States Sports Academy dates to 1977, when the Academy worked with the Bahrain General Organization for Youth and Sports to develop a physical fitness test used to gauge the fitness of every school-aged child in that country, providing the first profile of youth fitness in Bahrain.

A descendant of that test is still used today. For three years after, the Academy had full charge conduct of Bahrain's national sports effort including sports medicine and human performance research laboratory.

Since then, the Academy has conducted numerous programs in Bahrain focusing on physical education in schools, fitness, recreation, youth sports, the Bahrain National Olympic Committee, and fitness programs for police officers, among others.

The Academy also provided a team of coaches to prepare the Bahraini national teams in athletics, swimming, tennis, basketball and modern pentathlon. The Academy founded the Bahrain Sports Institute - the first sports medicine and human performance research centers as well as a modern strength and conditioning facility. In addition, the Academy provided curriculum so Bahraini citizens could improve their sports management and coaching skills through an innovative counterpart training program.

Today, the Academy's program to train physical education teachers to meet the needs of athletes with adaptive needs

is reaping dividends for students in the island nation in the Middle East.

While on a recent trip abroad, Academy President and CEO Dr. T.J. Rosandich was pleased to meet with His Majesty Hamad bin Essa Al-Khalifa, the King of Bahrain, to discuss the Academy's longstanding relationship with the kingdom.

Rosandich was also able to meet His Highness Prince Nasser bin Hamad, the President of the Supreme Council for Youth



Bahraini students take part in a wheelchair basketball exercise as part of the Academy's adaptive sports training program in that country.

and Sports, along with the American Ambassador to the Kingdom, H.E. Justin Siberell.

Recently, the Academy's program to train physical education teachers and coaches in the Kingdom of Bahrain to meet the needs of athletes with adaptive needs has culminated with 223 students completing the program.

Academy National Faculty member Marty Floyd traveled to the island nation three times in 2018 and 2019 to teach the post-secondary, non-degree certificate program in disabled and adaptive sport for the Bahrain Sports Federation for Disabilities (BSFD). Floyd returned to Bahrain in early 2020 to kick off the next wave of classes there.

The Adaptive Sports program is a unique course of advanced study designed for coaches and physical education teachers who have or want to have experience working with athletes with varying degrees of adaptive needs.

The program has already shown signs of success in Bahrain. Two students from one of Floyd's groups have already begun working with Paralympic athletes through the BSFD, while two others are teaching Taekwondo skills to disabled athletes in Bahrain.



Bahraini students take part in a training session that focuses on working athletes with vision impairment as part of the Academy's adaptive sports education program in that country.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN (CONT.)

The other fundamental change to society, both domestically and globally, is sports. In my 50 years of being involved in sports, either as a competitor or as an administrator, I have never seen an impact the profession as it is now. Aside from periodic labor stoppages, this is the first time since 9-11 in 2001 that competition schedules have been suspended. Never before since the first men's March Madness played in 1939, or the women's since 1982, has the collegiate basketball championships been cancelled. Across the entire spectrum among which is hockey, baseball, golf, and NASCAR have all similarly suspended play. Globally, events such as Olympic qualifying events and the SportAccord conference have also been shelved.

The United States, in what is arguably the largest sport industry in the world, has seen the resulting disruption has ripple through the entire economy. Sport employs millions and many of the people working in sport or related disciplines are looking at the very real possibility of going without a paycheck. These impacts also do not include sponsorships and media generated advertising dollars and even unrelated enterprises such as printing. It will be interesting to see the full dimension of this disruption once things will inevitably return to normal. However, here, too, this disruption could prove to be a watershed event that changes the way that people consume the sport product in the future.

If you are working in the sport profession and have been sidelined by COVID-19 related disruptions, this may be an opportune time to pursue a higher level educational credential - either a degree or certification - that will position you better in your career as these events resume. The Academy's world renown educational offerings have helped thousands of aspiring individuals to advance in the profession. This may be an unexpected opportunity for those seeking something to do while waiting out the storm.

Will COVID-19 turn out to be a "Black Swan" event that fundamentally changed education or sport or both? Only time will tell, but it certainly has the capability of doing so.

Dr. T.J. Rosandich
President and CEO

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

Meetings in Colombia

The Academy is strengthening its position in the world of higher education with recent outreach to the South American nation of Colombia. Academy vice president of academic affairs Dr. Tomi Wahlstrom visited Colombia and met government and higher education officials there for talks regarding the institution's post-secondary, non-degree international programs.

While in Colombia, Wahlstrom met Fulbright Colombia executive director Adriana Gaviria and Escuela Colombiana Rehabilitacion rector Goe Rojas. There, Wahlstrom discussed the Academy's various offerings including its new Maternity Wellness Program and its international certification programs in sports coaching and sports management.



Academy Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Tomi Wahlstrom met Fulbright Colombia executive director Adriana Gaviria and Escuela Colombiana Rehabilitacion rector Goe Rojas.



In Colombia, Academy Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Tomi Wahlstrom met members of the faculty at the Escuela Colombiana Rehabilitacion

Wahlstrom met with staff at the United States Embassy in Colombia to discuss the need to promote sports tourism in the country. He also met with Congressman Mauricio Peroni and Victor Malagon from the Colombia Ministry of Sports to discuss ways the Academy can aid in the development of the sports industry there.

Wahlstrom held meetings with the American Chamber of Commerce in Colombia and the Colombian Association of Education Institutions (ACIET) there.

SEA Games in Manila

Academy President and CEO Dr. T.J. Rosandich recently participated as an official observer at the 30th Southeast Asian (SEA) Games in the Philippines. As an official observer invited by the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), Rosandich was tasked with attending multiple events at different sites in the Philippines.

The visit came as the Academy is moving forward with an agreement with the PSC to enhance the national sport effort in the island nation. The Academy taught certification programs there in the early 1980s.



At the SEA Games in Manila, Academy President Dr. T.J. Rosandich met with Executive Secretary to the President of the Philippines Salvador Medialdea, left, and Philippine Sports Commission Chairman William Ramirez, right.

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH

American Football in Brazil

The Academy welcomed Brazilian professional football player Felipe Garcia and entrepreneur Sylvio Maia to campus for discussions on ways the Academy may be able to help foster the growth of American football in the South American nation.

Garcia and Maia were visiting Mobile, Ala., for the annual Reese's Senior Bowl college football all star game. Garcia, who plays at the top level of American football in Brazil, was also visiting Atlanta, Ga., to learn more about strength and conditioning training in the United States.



Members of the Academy faculty hosted Brazilian football player Felipe Garcia and entrepreneur Sylvio Maia to campus for talks.

SSCC Pilot Program in Thailand



Thai students participated in the Academy's Sports Strength and Conditioning Certification (SSCC) pilot program at the NSCA headquarters in Colorado Springs.

The Academy's Sports Strength and Conditioning Certification (SSCC) pilot program is part of the institution's efforts to develop a National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) approved preparation program to help strength and conditioning professionals as they take their Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist exam – the preeminent certification.

Academy chair of sports coaching Dr. Roch King accompanied a group of sports professionals selected by the Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) for the SSCC pilot to the NSCA headquarters in Colorado Springs for an immersive experience featuring classroom instruction, hands-on training, and interactive assessment in an online format.

Finnish Online Fitness Courses Launch

The Academy is now offering three online, video-driven personal fitness courses showcasing the cutting edge Finnish FasciaMethod, ProMethod, and PowerMethod concepts to the general public. The Academy in August 2018 signed a cooperative agreement with the Finnish company ProFTTraining Finland to provide educational opportunities to students in Finland, as well as to integrate that company's health care techniques into Academy coursework. After completing the course, students will be able to plan and instruct their own FasciaMethod, ProMethod, and/or PowerMethod body maintenance programs for themselves, their clients or for a group fitness session.

"These courses are historic for the Academy in many ways," Academy vice president of academic affairs Dr. Tomi Wahlström said. "It is the beginning of our new strategy to offer courses to general public, as well as the first time we offer a course developed by our partners. In addition, this course shows our new technological standard with the use of multimedia including online tutorials, videos, audio files, and digital handouts. These courses are our new benchmark and vision for all of our courses, in degree programs as well as continuing education courses."

AWARDS OF SPORT

Chen, Sildaru are 2019 Athletes of the Year

Following an online voting period that garnered thousands of votes from all corners of the world, American figure skating superstar Nathan Chen and Estonian freestyle skiing sensation Kelly Sildaru were selected as the Academy's 2019 Male and Female Athletes of the Year.

Chen became the first American man since 1984 to win back-to-back world championships. Chen won his third consecutive ISU Grand Prix Final and captured championships at the Internationaux de France and Skate America. He won his third consecutive U.S. title, smashing the record for the highest margin of victory at 58.21 points. Chen started 2020 with his fourth consecutive U.S. title.

At 16, Sildaru became the youngest freestyle skiing halfpipe world champion when she won gold in the event at the International Ski Federation (FIS) Snowboard, Freestyle and Freeski World Championships in Utah. Sildaru completed the first-ever switch 1080 performed by a female skier and won with a high score of 95.00 points. Sildaru also won gold, silver, and bronze in ski events at the Winter X Games in Aspen, Colo., in January 2019.



The male runner-up was Argentinian soccer star Lionel Messi and third place went to Norwegian biathlete Johannes Thingnes Boe.

The female runner-up was American gymnast Simone Biles and third place went to American swimmer Regan Smith.

Fraccari to Receive 2019 Eagle Award at June 2020 Graduation Ceremony

Because of his significant contributions to the growth of baseball and softball and his efforts to get both sports into the Olympics, World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) President Riccardo Fraccari has been named as the recipient of the United States Sports Academy's 2019 Eagle Award.

Fraccari will receive the Eagle Award at the Academy's graduation ceremony on Thursday, 11 June 2020 on the institution's campus.

Fraccari is a world sport administrator, holding various positions, and is the current president of the WBSC. Fraccari's leadership was instrumental in influencing the International Olympic Committee to reinstate baseball and softball into the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. He has served in seven Olympic Games as a baseball official.



Riccardo Fraccari

Fraccari also led negotiations between the WBSC and Major League Baseball for a multi-year, multi-million-dollar agreement for the ongoing operation and sanctioning of the World Baseball Classic tournament. Fraccari is serving in various roles such as Secretary General of the Association of IOC Recognized International Sport Federations (ARISF) and is currently a member of the Italian National Olympic Committee board. He was also elected to the Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF) Council. Serving in sports leadership since 1985, Fraccari has earned the Gold Star of Merit from the President of the Italian Olympic Committee, the Knight of Merit of the Italian Republic, and induction into the Hall of Fame of the Italian Baseball Softball Federation.

Trustee Joan Cronan Claims Her 2018 Honorary Doctorate

Former longtime University of Tennessee women's athletics director Joan Cronan can add a new title to her already impressive list of career accomplishments after she received an Honorary Doctorate from the Academy.

Cronan, an Academy Trustee, received the award from Academy President Dr. T.J. Rosandich and Board of Trustees Chairman Robert C. Campbell III at the institution's 35th annual Awards of Sport program in Daphne, Ala.

Cronan was the women's athletics director at Tennessee for 29 years until 2012. During her tenure, Tennessee expanded women's varsity sports from seven to 11, the Lady Vols earned 10 NCAA titles and 24 Southeastern Conference (SEC) Tournament Championships. Cronan has served on the Academy's Board of Trustees since 2014.



Former longtime University of Tennessee women's athletics director Joan Cronan received an Honorary Doctorate degree from the Academy during the institution's 2019 Awards of Sport program in Daphne, Ala. Cronan, an Academy Trustee, is pictured with Academy President Dr. T.J. Rosandich, left, and Board of Trustees Chairman Robert C. Campbell III, right.

2012 International Honorary Doctorate Recipient Muhyiddin Yassin Named Prime Minister of Malaysia



Muhyiddin Yassin, the newly named Prime Minister of Malaysia, met with Academy President and CEO Dr. T.J. Rosandich (right) during a 2013 visit to Daphne, Ala. The Academy bestowed its 2012 International Honorary Doctorate upon Yassin during his visit.

The Academy's 2012 International Honorary Doctorate recipient Muhyiddin Yassin, a veteran Malaysian politician, was named that country's prime minister on 29 February 2020.

Yassin earned the Academy's 2012 International Honorary Doctorate in recognition of his efforts to build his nation's youth sports programs. Yassin was the serving Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education and in that role directed the implementation of the "One Student – One Sport" initiative that aimed to foster a vigorous sports program for the country's youth.

The Academy conferred the honorary doctorate degree upon Yassin during his visit to Daphne, Ala., in 2013. During the course of his visit Yassin visited local educational institutions including the Daphne High School campus and met with students from the school's international baccalaureate program.

Marinescu Voted to Receive 2020 Honorary Doctorate at Graduation Ceremony in June

A leader in the expansion of eSports and a longtime administrator in global sports organizations, Vlad Marinescu has been named the recipient of the Academy's 2020 Honorary Doctorate.

Marinescu is the President of the United States eSports Federation and a member of the International eSports Federation Board. He has also worked as the Director General of SportAccord (GAISF) and as the Director of the International Judo Federation.

Marinescu will receive the Honorary Doctorate at the Academy's graduation ceremony on Thursday, 11 June 2020 on the institution's campus.



Vlad Marinescu

Eylanbekov's Eisenhower Memorial Sculpture Placed on National Mall in D.C.

The statues of Dwight D. Eisenhower and a group of paratroopers sculpted by two-time United States Sports Academy Sport Artist of the Year Sergey Eylanbekov were recently placed on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

The memorial featuring Eylanbekov's master-works will be officially dedicated during a special ceremony on 8 May 2020 – the 75th anniversary of VE Day – on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The scene sculpted by Eylanbekov depicts a moment when Eisenhower spoke to soldiers with the 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne division ahead of the Normandy invasion.



The 500-pound statue of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower and a group of paratroopers sculpted by two-time United States Sports Academy Sport Artist of the Year Sergey Eylanbekov was recently placed on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

Atlanta's Steven Lester is 2019 Sport Artist of the Year

After retiring from a career in the commercial creative leadership, Atlanta's Steven Lester fully embraced his passion for painting and quickly gained notoriety for what he calls "representational expressionism." Because Lester's action sports themes resonate with vibrant life and elicit a visceral, emotional response, he was named the Academy's 2019 Sport Artist of the Year.

Lester's painting of Olympic gymnast Simone Biles titled "Courage to Soar" depicts Biles performing on the balance beam at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The piece is now on permanent display at the Academy's American Sport Art Museum & Archives (ASAMA) on its campus.



Lester received the 2019 Sport Artist of the Year – Dr. Zhenliang He Culture Award from Academy President Dr. T.J. Rosandich and unveiled an original painting of American gymnast Simone Biles at the Academy's 35th annual Awards of Sport program in Daphne, Ala. The painting, called "Courage to Soar," depicts Biles performing on the balance beam at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The piece is now on permanent display at the Academy's American Sport Art Museum & Archives (ASAMA) on its campus.



Left: Painter Steven Lester received the United States Sports Academy's Sport Artist of the Year award during the institution's 2019 Awards of Sport program in Daphne, Ala. Lester, center, is pictured with Academy President Dr. T.J. Rosandich, left, and Board of Trustees Chairman Robert C. Campbell III, right.

PEOPLE, PLACES AND PROGRAMS

Academic Programs Earn High Marks

The Academy's degree programs continue to earn high marks from organizations that rank the quality of institutions of higher education.

The Academy's online Master of Sports Science (M.S.S.) degree in sports management was selected as the top of its kind by Online Schools Report, a website dedicated to providing students with simple, practical, and accurate information about available online programs.

The Academy's M.S.S. program was acclaimed by the site for its focus on preparing students for jobs in sports management at the local, collegiate, and professional levels. It was also recognized for its focus areas in NCAA rules and procedures, Olympic culture, and fundraising in sports.



Additionally, the institution's online Master of Sports Science degree in sports management was also recognized as one of the top 30 best online sports management degrees by Online College Plan. The service lauded the Academy for its non-traditional offerings on a range of sports-specific topics and called the institution's programs "top-notch" for the field of sports management. In addition, the M.S.S. degree earned praise as the program with the "Best Dual Degree Option" by intelligent.com. The Academy's Master of Sports Science degree in sports coaching was ranked as one of the top 40 degrees in that field.



Academy partners with NHSBA for education program

The Academy will work with the National High School Basketball Association (NHSBA) to provide post-secondary, non-degree sports education programs to train the organization's coaches, administrators, and coordinators in modern sports management techniques and coaching fundamentals.

Through its Center for Professional Studies and Continuing Education, the Academy signed an agreement with the NHSBA to begin delivering sport education programs to the organization in early 2020. The NHSBA is a national non-profit organization founded in 2006 with the purpose of providing a safe haven to youth to develop physically, emotionally, and intellectually.

IN MEMORIAM



Dr. Phillip Capps

The Academy is mourning the loss of alumnus and longtime international instructor Dr. Phillip Capps, who recently passed away at age 56.

Capps, of Macon, Ga., earned his Doctor of Education degree in Sports Management from the Academy in 2006, then later joined the Academy's roster of instructors credentialed to teach its post-secondary, non-degree programs internationally. Capps taught for the Academy in China, Malaysia, Thailand, and Dubai.

"Dr. Capps was a solid teacher who was loved by everyone he taught and by those he came into contact with," Academy President and CEO Dr. T.J. Rosandich said. "He will be sorely missed by all of us here at the Academy."

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One Academy Drive
Daphne, AL 36526-7055
1.800.223.2668
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