

3-15-2022

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Recommended Citation

Magnusen, Marshall (2022) "The Advancement of ASMA: Highlights from the 2022 Annual Conference," *Journal of Applied Sport Management*: Vol. 14 : Iss. 1.

<https://doi.org/10.7290/jasm14JvK3>

Available at: <https://trace.tennessee.edu/jasm/vol14/iss1/1>

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The Advancement of ASMA: Highlights from the 2022 Annual Conference

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The Applied Sport Management Association (ASMA) is a scholarly organization that aims to build research partnerships between faculty and students as well as strong connections between scholars and students studying sport and practitioners working in the sport industry. Each year, ASMA hosts a national (international) conference. The most recent conference was held in Indianapolis and hosted by Ball State University under the direction of Dr. Khirey Walker.

What is now known as ASMA started as the Southern Sport Management Association (SSMA) in 2005. The first conference was held at Troy University and directed by Drs. Fred Green and Jason Lee. The rebranding to ASMA occurred in 2015. Since 2005, ASMA has progressed to become the preeminent outlet for students and faculty to present research in a collegial and professional environment as well as build strong connects with sport industry practitioners. As evidence of the continued growth of ASMA, several noticeable events took place at the 2022 annual conference.

First, Dr. J. Michael Martinez became the inaugural recipient of the ASMA Distinguished Service Award. Previously, the ASMA Scholar Lifetime Achievement Award was an honor bestowed upon a person to recognize a career of continual and significant contributions to the field of sport management. Consistent with ASMA's mission of building strong connections between scholars studying sport and practitioners working in the sport industry, award recipients were specifically recognized for their efforts to make an impact on policies and practices in sport through research, teaching, and service. In 2022, the Scholar Lifetime Achievement Award was renamed and repurposed to the Distinguished Service Award. The ASMA Distinguished Service Award recognizes an ASMA member on a yearly basis who has exhibited continued, exemplary service to ASMA, the application of sport management, and/or a dedication to students and mentorship. Dr. Martinez has been involved with ASMA for over a decade, acting as a conference director on multiple occasions, serving in numerous leadership roles (including president), and even editing the *Journal of Applied Sport Management* (JASM), which is the official journal of ASMA. Upon receiving the award, he was asked to give a brief speech to the attendees of the 2022 conference. An edited version of Dr. Martinez's speech is included in this issue. The ASMA community is immensely grateful for his strategic thinking and administrative decisions that helped provide the necessary foundation for the association to grow and thrive for decades to come.

Second, the most recent conference also saw the launching of the ASMA Research Fellow award. This award recognizes scholars who have demonstrated a commitment to ASMA and its vision as well as distinction in applied sport management research. This award honors the scholarly contributions these researchers have disseminated through the ASMA conference and its official journal, JASM. Four individuals were part of the inaugural class of research fellows: Dr. Jordan Bass from the University of Kansas, Dr. Rob Hardin from the University of Tennessee, Dr. Marshall Magnusen

from Baylor University, and Dr. Brody Ruihley from Miami University. Contributions from scholars such as these have helped JASM grow into the top outlet for applied sport management research.

Lastly, a beloved member of the ASMA community passed away in 2021. Dr. Samantha Roberts, a professor at Texas A&M University-Commerce, was a significant member of the association's leadership team. Dr. Roberts had a strong passion for student development and mentorship and was heavily involved with the undergraduate and graduate case study competitions. Thus, at the 2022 conference, the case study competition was renamed to honor Dr. Roberts and her service to ASMA and the sport management discipline. The 2022 Dr. Samantha Roberts Undergraduate Case Study Competition winners were from Samford University and included Brittney Allen, Drake Anthony, Grayson Jones, and Davis Woodliff. The graduate case study competition winners were from the University of Louisville and included Michael Clemons, Ehren Green, Ancia Ifill, and Erica Thompson. Additionally, Samantha's dear friend and colleague, Dr. Clay Bolton, was asked to give tribute at the 2022 conference. His heartfelt words were edited and included in this issue. Though gone, Dr. Roberts will never be forgotten by the ASMA community. Together we forge ahead.