



Ajhanai Channel Inez Keaton, Ph.D.

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EDUCATION

University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut,

Ph.D. Learning, Leadership, and Educational Policy, concentration Sport Management, December 2021
Intersectional Indigeneity, Race, Ethnicity, and Politics Certificate, December 2021

The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas

M.Ed. Higher Education Leadership and Policy

Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado

B.A. Sociology

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor | University of Massachusetts Amherst | June 2024 –

Assistant Professor | University of Louisville | January 2022 – May 2024

CONSULTING APPOINTMENTS

[Newkirk Zwagerman P.L.C.](#), Expert Legal Witness

[Women's Sport Foundation](#), Subject Matter Expert, July 2025 – July 2026

[Black Student Athlete Summit](#), Academic Faculty Executive, 2023 --

[The Team Collective Think Tank](#) (formerly known as Wasserman) August 2023 --

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

[* = *Premier/A/A-* Based Upon Isenberg School of Management] | [Google scholar page](#)

***Keaton, A.C.I., Howe, J. Macaulay, C., Martinez, K. (Conditional Acceptance with Revisions)**
Framing the Hire: How Media Discourses Legitimize Transgressive Leadership as Proper
Organizational Behavior.

***Keaton, A.C.I. & Macaulay, C. (Minor Revision).** The Context of Sport as Theoretical Leverage:
Advancing Institutional Theory on Race and Organizations

Cooper, J.N., **Keaton, A.C.I., Mack, M (Major Revision).** Caretakers of Resistance: An
Intergenerational Analysis of Black Sportswomen in the United States.

Lyle, M., Isard, R., **Keaton, A.C.I., (2026).** Welcome to the W: Stakeholder Mnemonic
Communities in Times of Growth. *Academy of Management Best Paper Proceedings*
Best Paper (Top 10% of accepted papers), Academy of Management, 2026

Frederick, E., **Keaton, A.C., Foster, S., Hambrick, M. (2026).** Not so neon: Deion Sanders and
the white racial frame. *Journal of Sports Media*.



- Macaulay, C., Brougham, J. K., McLeod, C. M., & **Keaton, A. C. (2026)**. An Exploration of College Athletes' Action to Change the Eyes of Texas. A Chronological Case Study. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, 19(1), 4.
<https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1607&context=jiia>
- *Macaulay, C., Shaw, A., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Howe, J. (2026). Man-Not Like Us: The Cultural Castration of Black Athletic Resistance. *Sociology of Sport Journal*.
<https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2025-0125>
- ***Keaton, A.C.I.**, Sveinson, K. Burton, L. (2026). Speaking Equity, Enacting Whiteness: A Critical Discourse Analysis of White Women Leaders in College Sport
Journal of Sport Management. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2025-0075>
- ***Keaton, A.C.I.**, Branch, K., Frederick, E. (2025) Is Black Culture Marketable?": Angel Reese, TikTok Branding, and Respectability Politics in the NIL Era. *Sociology of Sport Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2025-0028>
- *Bopp, T., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Carter-Francique, A., Vadeboncoeur, T. (2025). "Comfortable in my own skin": The intersecting identities of Black women student-athletes at HWIHE. *Sport in Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2025.2510941>
- ***Keaton, A.C.I.** & Macaulay, C. (2025). Race and Institutionalism: How Race Shapes Organizational Behavior in Sport. *Sport Management Review*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14413523.2025.2497596>
- *Macaulay, C., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Hextrum, K. (2025). Accounting for Race A critical institutionalism approach. *Journal of Sport Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2024-0350>
- *Hindman, L., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Walker, N. (2025). "Slayyyed head to toe:" Fan Discourses of Blackness, Queerness, and Gender the WNBA Draft. *Journal of Sport Management*.
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2024-0068>
- *Macaulay, C. & **Keaton, A.C.I.** (2024). Racialized work strategies of racialized organizations. *Sport, Business, and Management: An International Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SBM-05-2023-0067>
- ***Keaton, A.C.I.**, Fredrick, E., Branch, K. Pegoraro, A. (2024). Britney Griner, Intersectionality, and "Woke Politics": A critical examination of BG's return to the United States. *Sociology of Sport Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2023-0090>
- *Howe, J., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Foster, S., Williams, L.A. (2023). Through the Decades: Critical Race Theory and Pathways Forward in Sport Sociology Research. *Sport Sociology Journal*.
<https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2023-0004>
- ***Keaton, A.C.I.** (2024) An interpretative phenomenological analysis of Black women Diversity and Inclusion Leaders in sport organizations. *Journal of Sport Management*.
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2022-0004>



- *Howe, J., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Rockhill, C. (2023). Utilizing a Theory of Racialized Organizations within Sport Management Research and Practice. *European Sport Management Quarterly* <https://doi.org/10.1080/16184742.2023.2237024>
- Keaton, A.C.I.**, Burton, L., McGarry, J. (2023). Athletic Diversity and Inclusion Officers and Institutional Entrepreneurship. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, 16, 220-242 http://csri-jiia.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/RA_2023_11.pdf
- *Nite, C., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Neff, P., Fulk, C. (2023). The legitimacy work of institutional disruption and maintenance: Examining the rivalry between LIV Golf and the Professional Golf Association. *European Sport Management Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16184742.2023.2229848>
- Keaton, A.C.I.** (2023). Anti-Racism in Sport Organizations. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 40(2), 121-122. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2023-0032>
- Cooper, J.N., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Mack, M., Herman, J., (2023). A New Paradigm for Sport Education Programs: An Equity-minded and Anti-ism Framework. *Sport, Education, and Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2023.2217835>.
- Cooper, J.N., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Fine, C. (2023). Intergenerational Resistance against Anti-Black Racism in College Sport in the United States. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*. http://csri-jiia.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023_SI_07.pdf
- *Frederick, E., Swim, N., **Keaton, A.C.I.** , & Pegoraro, A. (2023). Racist State and the State of Race: An Analysis of Instagram Commentary Pertaining to LeBron James. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 40(3), 259-271. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2022-0022>
- Keaton A. C. I.** (2022). Black women diversity leaders' perceptions of organizational inclusivity in college sports. *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*, 4, 923649. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fspor.2022.923649>
- Keaton, A. C.**, & Cooper, J. N. (2022). A Racial Reckoning in a Racialized Organization? Applying Racialized Organization Theory to the NCAA Institutional Field. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, 15, 189-218. http://csri-jiia.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/RA_2022_09.pdf
- *Sveinson, K., Taylor, E., **Keaton, A. C.**, Burton, L., Pegoraro, A., & Toffoletti, K. (2022). Addressing Gender Inequity in Sport Through Women's Invisible Labor. *Journal of Sport Management*, 36(3), 240-250. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2021-0229>
- Keaton, A.C.I.** (2022). Channel Inez Keaton, A. (2022). A critical discourse analysis of racial narratives from White athletes attending a historically Black college/University. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 14(6), 969-986. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2021.1944901>
- 8.0 (2023) Impact Factor | 7% acceptance rate**
- Newton, A. C. I.**, & Cooper, J.N. (2021). 'It doesn't bother me... I'm here for a reason': a qualitative examination of white college athletes' experiences at a historically black college/university (HBCU). *Whiteness & Education*, 6(1), 39-59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23793406.2021.1891961>



- Cooper, J. N., & **Newton, A. (2021)**. Black Female College Athletes' Sense of Belonging at a Historically Black College and University (HBCU). *The Journal of Negro Education*, 90(1), 71-83.
- Castillo-Montoya, M., Zastoupil, G., & **Newton, A. (2021)**. Developing Critical Consciousness: The Gains and Missed Opportunities for Latinx College Students in a Sport-Based Critical Service-Learning Course. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 27(1), 33-59.
- Keaton, A. (2021)**. A Conceptual Model of the Emergence of Diversity and Inclusion Officers in Division I Collegiate Athletics. *Journal of Higher Education Athletics & Innovation*, (8), 82-112.
- Cooper, J. N., **Newton, A. C.I.**, Klein, M., & Jolly, S. (2020). A call for culturally responsive transformational leadership in college sport: An anti-ism approach for achieving equity and inclusion. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 5, 65. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2020.00065>
- Lu, C., & **Newton, A.C.I. (2019)**. Being Black in a sea of Color: A phenomenological study exploring Black students' racial experiences at an AANAPISI and emerging HSI. *Journal Committed to Social Change on Race and Ethnicity*, 5(2), 66-93.

BOOK CHAPTERS

- Burton, L.J., & **Keaton, A.C.I. (2025)**. Managing Gendered Sport Organizations. In Handbook on Gender and Diversity in Sport Management.
- Burton, L., & **Newton, A. (2021)**. Organisational-Level Practices to Support Women in Coaching. In Improving Gender Equity in Sports Coaching (pp. 138-155). Routledge.
- Johnson, E. A., & **Newton, A. C. I. (2020)**. Gender inequities in collegiate sport: History, theory, policy, and practice. In N. S. Niemi & M. B. Weaver-Hightower (Eds.), *The Wiley Handbook of Gender Equity in Higher Education* (pp. 265-288). Wiley. DOI:10.1002/9781119257639

BOOK REVIEWS

- Keaton, A. C. I. (2025)**. Denied. *Social Forces*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soaf085>
*Top quartile of journals in the field of Sociology | 23/149 Sociology Journals
* Book review solicited by invitation from Social Forces Editor
- Newton, A. C. I. (2020)**. Race, Sports, and Education: Improving Opportunities and Outcomes for Black Male College Athletes. *Journal of Sport Management*, 34(5), 504-505.
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2020-0113>



MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPERATION

Lyle, M., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Isard, R. (**In-Progress**). Welcome to the W: Stakeholder Mnemonic Communities in Times of Growth.

Keaton, A.C.I.**, Malool, A, Walker, N., Macaulay, C. Agyemang. (**In-Progress**). The Social Contract of Inclusion Black Women's Emotional and Invisible Labor in Division I Basketball Special Issue in ***Journal of Sport Management.

Frederick, E, **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Pegoraro, A. (**In-Progress**). Error or Erasure: Examining Jackie Robinson's Removal from the Department of Defense Website. ***Sport and Communication***.

TEACHING

Assistant Professor | University of Massachusetts Amherst | September 2024 --

Undergraduate Courses	Diversity and Inclusion in Sport Sport Leadership People, Culture, and Sport Organizations Physical Activity and the Sociology of Sport Leadership, Sport, and Pop Culture
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Assistant Professor | University of Louisville | January 2022 – May 2024

Undergraduate Courses	SPAD 382 Sport Management and Leadership SPAD 489 Legal Aspects of Sport SPAD 284 Issues & Ethics in Sport
Hybrid Undergraduate and Graduate Courses	SPAD 561 Managing Diverse and Inclusive Sport Organizations SPAD 561 History of the Black Athlete [Online Course]

Adjunct Faculty | Colorado State University

Graduate Courses	Sport Law Sport in Communities Sport Management Capstone
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Instructor | University of Connecticut | August 2020 – May 2023

Undergraduate Courses	Sport Management Internship Contemporary Issues in Sport Sport Marketing Sport Law
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NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Keaton, A.C.I., Howe, J., Macaulay, C., Martinez, K. (2025, June). *“Second Chance U”: Legitimacy Work and the Hiring of White Men Head Coaches in the Southeastern Conference* [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for Sport Management. San Diego, CA, USA.

Keaton, A.C.I., Singer, J.N., McLeod, C. (2025, June). *Connecting the Dots: Sociological Inquiry to Inform Management (Re)solutions* [International Symposium Conference Presentation], North American Society for Sport Management. San Diego, CA, USA.

Macaulay, C., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Shaw, A. (2025, March). *Man-Not Like Us: The Cultural Castration of Black Athletic Resistance*. [National Conference Presentation], College Sport Research Institute. Columbia, South Carolina.

Keaton, A.C.I., Sveinson, K., Burton, L.J. (2025, March). *“Never really thought about the racial side of it”: A Critical Discourse Analysis of White Women Leaders’ Relationship to and with Whiteness* [National Conference Presentation], College Sport Research Institute. Columbia, South Carolina.

Cooky, C., Donnelly, M., Donnelly, P., **Keaton, A.C.I.** (2024, November). Scholarship and Public Media Engagement. [International Conference Panel Presentation], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. Chicago, IL, USA.

Travers, T., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Liao, J., Brown, L. (2024, November). WNBA in the Spotlight [International Conference Panel], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. Chicago, IL, USA.

Montez de Oca, J., Coakley, J., Singer, J., Allison, R., McLeod, C., **Keaton, A.C.I.** (2024, November). How Can Sport Management and Sport Sociology Support Each Other? [International Conference Panel], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. Chicago, IL, USA.

Keaton, A.C.I. & Macaulay, C., (2025, March). *Messy, Methodical, and Challenging Qualitative Projects* [International Conference Panel], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. Chicago, IL, USA.

Martinez, K., Hancock, K., **Keaton, A.C.I.** (2024, June). *Gendered Logics Influence on Transphobia in Sport*. [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for Sport Management. Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA.



Branch, K., **Keaton, A.C.I.** Frederick, E. (2024, June). *Is Black femininity marketable? A case study of Angel Reese and Black culture*. [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for Sport Management. Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA.

Branch, K., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Frederick, E. (2023, November). *Brittney Griner & the Weaponization of Intersectionality*. [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. New Orleans, Louisiana, USA.

Hextrum, K. Macaulay, C., **Keaton, A.C.I.** (2023, November) *The Dominant Institutional Logic of Whiteness in Sport* [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. New Orleans, Louisiana, USA.

Cooper, J.N., Herman, J., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Martinez, K. (2023, November). *A Continuum of Anti-Racist and Multicultural Organizations Analysis of Sports in the United States*. [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. New Orleans, Louisiana, USA.

Macaulay, C., & **Keaton, A.C.I.** (2023, June). *Reification of whiteness through institutional work*. [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for Sport Management. Montréal, Quebec, Canada.

Keaton, A.C.I., Hindman, L., Walker, N., Camara, B., Agyemang, K. (2023, June). *Media framing & discourses of Black women basketball coaches*. [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for Sport Management. Montréal, Quebec, Canada.

Darvin, L., Levine, J., **Keaton, A.C.I.** (2022, November). *Esports for all: Examining the culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion*. [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Macaulay, C. D.T., **Keaton, A.C.I.** (2022, November). *Reification of Whiteness through Institutional Work*. [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Hindman, L., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Walker, N (2022, November). *Fire emojis: Media and consumer discourses about WNBA athletes in the WNBA Draft and Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue*. [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Rockhill, C., **Keaton, A.C.I.**, Howe, J. *Decolonizing the NFL: How Brian Flores' lawsuit can dismantle deep-rooted racism in sport*. International Conference Presentation], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Keaton, A.C.I. (2022, June). *"Every time...things go bad, people go get Black women to fix it": An interpretative phenomenological analysis of Black women Athletic Diversity and Inclusion Officer leadership experiences*. [International Conference Presentation], North American Society of Sport Management. Atlanta, Georgia.

Keaton, A.C.I. (2022, April). *Black feminist Epistemologies and Diversity Leadership in Sport Organizations*. [International Conference Presentation], North American Society for the Sociology of Sport. Montreal, Quebec, Canada.



- Keaton, A.C.I.** (2022, March). *"A disruptor, but not an agitator": Athletic Diversity and Inclusion Officers' Institutional Entrepreneurship*. [National Conference Presentation], College Sport Research Institute. Columbia, South Carolina.
- Keaton, A.C.I.** (2022, March). *"We've had the inequity, the gaps, the discrimination, the oppression...": Black women Athletic Diversity & Inclusion Officers' perceptions of organizational inclusivity*. [National Conference Presentation], College Sport Research Institute. Columbia, South Carolina.
- Keaton, A.C.I.** & Burton, L.J. (2021, June). Examining Perceptions of Whiteness for White Women Working in College Athletic Administration [Conference Presentation], Virtual Conference. *North American Society for Sport Management*.
- Newton, A.C.I.** & Macaulay, C., (2021, January). *A theory of Black athlete activism's effect on institutional change in sport* [Conference Presentation]. The Black Student Athlete Summit, Virtual Conference.
- Macaulay, C., & **Newton, A.C.I.** (2020, November). *A theory of athlete activism's effect on institutional change in sport* [Conference Presentation]. North American Society for the Sociology of Sport, Virtual Conference.
- Cooper, J.N., **Newton, A.C.I.**, Mallery, M., Macaulay, D. (2020, November). *Disrupting and dismantling anti-Black racism in sport: Igniting transformative change across multi-level systems and lifespans* [Conference Presentation]. North American Society for the Sociology of Sport, Virtual Conference.
- Newton, A.C.I., & Burton, L.J.** (2020, May). *The emergence of Diversity and Inclusion Officers in intercollegiate athletic departments: A Conceptual Model* [Conference Session]. North American Society for Sport Management, San Diego, CA, United States. (Conference canceled)
- Macaulay, C., & **Newton, A.C.I.** (2020, May). *The relationship between abuse of student-athletes, mental health, & social identities* [Conference Session]. North American Society for Sport Management, San Diego, CA, United States. Conference canceled)
- Cooper, J.N., & **Newton, A.C.I.** (2020, April). *Black female college athletes' sense of belonging at a Historically Black College/University* [Paper Presentation]. American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, United States. (Conference canceled)
- Newton, A.C.I.** (2020, April). *Examining the adoption of Diversity and Inclusion Officers within Division I athletic departments* [Roundtable Presentation]. American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, United States. (Conference canceled)
- Macaulay, C., & **Newton, A.C.I.** (2020, January). *Black athlete reported mental health & institutional types* [Paper Presentation]. The Black Student Athlete Summit, Austin, TX, United States.
- Newton, A.C.I.** (2019, November). *"I'm the same as you, just more melanin": Increased Structural Diversity and Anti- Blackness in Higher Education* [Paper Presentation]. The Association for the Study of Higher Education, Portland, OR, United States.
- Newton, A.C.I.** (2019, November). *Diversity, Diversity, Diversity: A theoretical analysis of Diversity and Inclusion Officers within college athletics* [Paper Presentation]. North American Society for the Sociology of Sport, Virginia Beach, VA, United States.



Newton, A.C.I. (2019, November). The Prevalence of Sport Sociology in Society. *Research Connections | World of Research*, Storrs, CT, United States.

Newton, A.C.I. (2019, April). *Institutional Isomorphism: An examination of diversity & inclusion in sport and society* [Paper Presentation]. Association of Applied Sport Psychology, New York City, NY, United States.

Newton, A.C.I. (2019, April). *New role adoption within Division I collegiate athletic departments*. College Sport Research Institute, Columbia, South Carolina, SC, United States.

Newton, A.C.I. (2019, April). *Black female college athletes' sense of belonging at a historically black college/university*. College Sport Research Institute, Columbia, South Carolina, SC, United States.

McGarry, J., Evanovich, J., Ebron, K., **Newton, A.C.I.** (2019, March 27th – 30). *Making Meaning of Race through Critical Service Learning*. Association of American Colleges & Universities, Pittsburgh, PA, United States.

Newton, A.C.I. (2018, April). *Reaching Across the Aisle: How scholar-practitioners leverage themselves as an asset to Athletic Departments and the NCAA?* [Poster Presentation] College Sport Research Institute, Columbia, South Carolina, SC, United States.

Cooper, J.N., & **Newton, A.C.I.** (2018, January). *Strategic responsiveness to interest convergence: Collective Uplift and transformational empowerment*. The Black Student Athlete Summit, Austin, TX, United States.

Newton, A.C.I. (2017, November). *Building cultural competence amongst collegiate sport administrators*. North American Society for the Sociology of Sport, Virginia Beach, VA, United States.

Newton, A.C.I. (2017, November). *Collegiate coaches pivotal to holistic student athlete development*. North American Society for the Sociology of Sport, Virginia Beach, VA, United States.

Newton, A.C.I. (2016, November). *The Fallen Athlete: Future of Black female participation in sports*. North American Society for the Sociology of Sport, Virginia Beach, VA, United States.

MEDIA INTERVIEW COMMENTARY

Atwood, S. & Berg, K. (2026, April 24). Shiver reveals abortion, 'open secret' ties with Sherrone Moore. Experts weigh in. **The Detroit News**.
<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/sports/college/university-michigan/wolverines/2026/04/24/paige-shiver-abortion-open-secret-relationship-michigan-sherrone-moore/89768710007/>

Kane, M. (2026, February 4). UConn's Sport Management Program Empowers Women Leaders on the Court, on the Sidelines, and in Academia. **UConn Today**.
<https://today.uconn.edu/2026/02/uconns-sport-management-program-empowers-women-leaders-on-the-court-on-the-sidelines-and-in-academia/>

Armour, N. (2025, August 7). Immature crypto bros can't understand throwing sex toys at WNBA players isn't harmless fun. **USA Today**. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/columnist/nancy-armour/2025/08/07/crypto-bros-wnba-sex-toys-green-dildo/85563838007/>



- Hallman, C. (2025, June 14). AJ Keaton at BSA: NIL, DEI, and Black Athlete Identity. *Minnesota Spokesman Reporter*. <https://spokesman-recorder.com/2025/06/14/aj-keaton-bsa-summit-2025/>
- n.d. (2025, April 9). Women in sports leadership roles share wisdom with next generation. *Quinnipiac Today*. <https://www.qu.edu/quinnipiac-today/women-in-sports-leadership-roles-share-wisdom-with-next-generation-2025-04-09/>
- Hill, J. (2025, March 4). Trump Has a Funny Way of Protecting Women's Sports. *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2025/03/trump-womens-sports-title-ix/681905/>
- Savage, C. (2024, November 17). WNBA corporate sponsorship deals are growing - but not every athlete is getting their due *Yahoo Finance*. <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/wnba-corporate-sponsorship-deals-growing-041551542.html>
- Savage, C. (2024, November 17). WNBA corporate sponsorship deals are growing - but not every athlete is getting their due *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation* <https://www.cbc.ca/sports/basketball/wnba-sponsorship-deals-1.7385743>
- Savage, C. (2024, November 17). WNBA corporate sponsorship deals are growing. But not every athlete is getting their due. *Associated Press*. <https://apnews.com/article/wnba-draft-lottery-womens-sports-basketball-soccer-sponsorships-6706195c98ebae41e8369cd978bf0a14>
- Pickman, B. (2024, October 10). WNBA players say the troubling side of its rise is racism and threats. *Yahoo Sports*. <https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/5807201/2024/10/01/wnba-rise-racism-threats-social-media/?searchResultPosition=3>
- Pickman, B. (2024, October 10). WNBA players say the troubling side of its rise is racism and threats. *The New York Times (Athletic)*. <https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/5807201/2024/10/01/wnba-rise-racism-threats-social-media/?searchResultPosition=3>
- Hallman, C. (2024, September 16). New media and social media: The impact on the WNBA's Black players. *Minnesota Spokesman Reporter*. <https://spokesman-recorder.com/2024/09/16/wnba-social-media-toxicity/>
- Audry, T. (2024, July 7). Tunnel walks, 'aura' and bombshell brand deals: WNBA stars emerge as powerful players in fashion. *USA Today*. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/wnba/2024/07/07/wnba-fashion-beauty-2024/74307417007/>
- Hallman, C. (2024, April 16). Media quest for Great White Hope diminishes South Carolina's achievement. *Minnesota Spokesman Reporter* <https://spokesman-recorder.com/2024/04/16/great-white-hope-womens-basketball/>
- Klas, M.E. (2024, March 23). NCAA Needs to Get Off the Bench in DEI Fight. *Bloomberg Opinion*. <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2024-03-23/alabama-governor-signs-bill-banning-dei-at-state-s-public-universities>



- Green, T. (2023, July 10). Habits, Wellness and Growth for Black Women | Habits, Wellness and Growth for Black Women. **2! Ninety**. <https://21ninety.com/stereotypes-influence-black-women-athletes-nil-deals-louisville-professor-says>
- Green, T. (2023, July 10). Stereotypes Influence Black Women Athletes NIL Deals, Louisville Professor Says. **Yahoo News**. <https://news.yahoo.com/stereotypes-influence-black-women-athletes-163600725.html>
- Hallman, C. (2023, July 5). Stereotypes influence Black women athletes' NIL deals. **Minnesota Spokesman Recorder**. <https://spokesman-recorder.com/2023/07/05/stereotypes-influence-black-women-athletes-nil-deals/>
- Snipe, M. (2023, June 8). Racism Pervades College Sports. It's Taking An Alarming Toll On Athletes. **Capital B**. Retrieved from <https://capitalbnews.org/racism-collegiate-sports/>
- Lever, K. (2023, June 16) Spotlights and Shadows in Media Coverage of Women's Sports. **Global Sport Matters**. Retrieved from <https://globalsportmatters.com/culture/2023/06/16/spotlights-shadows-womens-sports-media-coverage/>
- Stewart, M. & Bohanon, M. (2022, February 11). Athletic Departments Bring DEI Officers Aboard to Improve the Culture of College Sports. **Insight Into Diversity**. Retrieved from <https://www.insightintodiversity.com/athletic-departments-bring-diversity-and-equity-officers-aboard-to-improve-the-culture-of-college-sports/>
- Clark, L. (Host). (2021, October). *African American in sports leadership* [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from <https://open.spotify.com/episode/4MITwLZXTHg7yAStmbIRNY?si=ccd2e400b4554de1>

OP-EDS & LONG FORM VIDEO INTERVIEWS

- Keaton, A.C.I., & Jeffries, C. (2025, November 6). You can ban the acronym, but you can't ban the practice: DEI in sport still wins. **Sports Business Journal**. <https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Articles/2025/11/05/you-can-ban-the-acronym-but-you-cant-ban-the-practice-dei-in-sport-still-wins/>
- Keaton, A.C.I. (2025, March 25). Learning from the experts: A NASSM Conversation with Dr. Ajhanai (AJ) Keaton. **North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM)** <https://nassm.org/blog/learning-from-the-experts-a-nassm-conversation-with-dr-ajhanai-aj-keaton>
- Keaton, A.C.I. (2025, February 25). Leadership and Diversity in Sport. **The Tucker Center for Research on Girls and Women in Sport**. <https://creators.spotify.com/pod/show/tucker-center-talks/episodes/Dr--AJ-Keaton-Redefining-Leadership-Through-a-Racial-and-Gender-Lens-e2vco2s>
- Keaton, A.C.I. (2025, February 20). Sport is the mirror Americans now need most. **Daily Hampshire Gazette**. <https://www.gazettenet.com/The-Real-Score-Sport-is-Mirror-Americans-Now-Needs-Most-Ajhanai-AJ-Keaton-59533091>



Keaton, A.C.I. (2024, April 8). Angel Reese Is a Black Woman in America. Remember That. ***Bloomberg Opinion***. <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2024-04-08/angel-reese-is-a-wnba-hopeful-but-she-s-also-a-black-woman?srnd=undefined>

Keaton, A.C.I., & Branch, K. (2024, April 4). Bundles, lashes and fades: Brands must support Black women's aesthetic in college basketball. ***Sports Business Journal***. <https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Articles/2024/04/04/oped-04-keaton-branch>

Hindman, L., Keaton, A.C.I., Walker, N. (2024, April 11). WNBA set the standard for fan inclusion in social -- by letting fans drive. ***Sports Business Journal***. <https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Articles/2024/04/11/oped-11-hindman-keaton-walker>

Keaton, A.C.I., (2024, January). BG, Intersectionality, and Woke Politics. [Interview with Dave Zirin]. **Edge of Sports Podcast**.

Keaton, A.C.I. (2023, December 7). Sports must make intersectionality a connector for fractured political landscape. ***Sports Business Journal***. <https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Articles/2023/12/07/oped-07-keaton.aspx>

Cavil, K. (Host). (2022, June). Ep 276 - Dr. Cavil's Inside the HBCU Sports Lab w/ Mike, Charles and guest Dr. Ajhanai Keaton. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7EcJr0oy2S8>

INVITED KEYNOTES AND LECTURE SERIES

Keaton, A.C.I. (2026, April 15th). Challenging the Politics of Academic Rules and Boundaries. University of Florida Sport Management Department A.C. & Elizabeth Martin Moore Lecture

Keaton, A.C.I. (2024, August). *Media Lab Arts Apple*

Keaton, A.C.I. (2023, March). *College Sport Research Institute Emerging Scholar Plenary Address*. 2023 College Sport Research Institute Conference, University of South Carolina.

Keaton, A.C.I. (2023, February). *The Politic of Identity for Black Women Athletes*. Keynote Luncheon, Johns Hopkins University.

Hawkins, B., & **Keaton, A.C.I.** (2023, February). *Athlete Activism*. Institute for the Transformation of Sport and The Department of Kinesiology and Health Practitioners, University of Kentucky.

INVITED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

***Keaton, A.C.I.** (2023, February). *College Sport and Anti-DEI Legislation*. Johns Hopkins University.

***Keaton, A.C.I.** (2023, February). *Title IX and Intersectionality*. Johns Hopkins University.

***Keaton, A.C.I.** (2023, February). *Creating Conscious sport and recreational leaders in a divisive socio-political environment*. Johns Hopkins University.

INVITED PANEL OPPORTUNITIES



Keaton, A.C.I., Batouly, C. (March 31, 2026) Women in sports leadership roles share wisdom with next generation. Quinnipiac University, School of Business.

Keaton, A.C.I., O'Sullivan, C., Ruderman, K., Harris, K., Clayton, T (October 18, 2025). United We Row" Breakfast Event. United States Rowing at the Head of the Charles Regatta.

Keaton, A.C.I., Batouly, C., Gartner, N., Matuska, N. (2025, April). Women in sports leadership roles share wisdom with next generation. Quinnipiac University, School of Business.

Keaton, A.C.I., Humphrey, D., Jude, C., Wells-Mangold, K. (2023, February). *DEI officers in sport and recreation creating new pathways in the sport and recreation industry*. Inclusive Sport Summit, University of Colorado Boulder.

Keaton, A.C.I., Buzuvis, E., Jackson, V., Sharrow, E., Whiteside, E. (2022, October). *Changing Landscape of College Sport & the Impact on Women*, Tucker Center Distinguished Lecture (DLS), Virtual Event.

Keaton, A.C.I. & DIECE (2022, April). *Maximize Your Impact as an Athletic Diversity and Inclusion Designee*. National Collegiate Athletic Association, Virtual Event.

Keaton, A.C.I (2022, June). *Title IX Turns 50*. Invited panelist, Voice in Sport Symposium, Washington D.C.

Newton, A.C.I. (2020, April 23rd). Black student-athletes living in limbo: Adapting as a student while the athlete is on hold. [**Panelist**]. *The Black Student-Athlete Summit* [Virtual Panel]

Newton, A.C.I. (2020, February). Diversity and the Workforce. [**Panelist**] University of Connecticut School of Business, Storrs, CT, United States.

Newton, A.C.I. (February 2020). *More of the same: The lack of diversity in sport leadership*. Invited panelist, University of Connecticut *Beyond the Field*, Virtual Event.

Newton, A.C.I. (2016, July 23rd). Holistic Development and Collegiate Athletics. *National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Accelerating Academic Success Program*, Orlando, FL, United States.

INVITED GUEST LECTURES

[* = Delivered as an Assistant Professor]

***Keaton, A.C.I (2023, May).** *The role of sport organizations in addressing socio-political and socio-cultural violence*. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Business. University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

***Keaton, A.C.I. (2022, November).** *Social Work and College Athletics*. Dr. Victor Kidd.



***Keaton, A.C.I.** (2022, October). *(Real)Phenomenology Ain' for Everybody*, Doctoral Seminar, Texas Agriculture and Mechanical University.

***Keaton, A.C.I.** (2022, October). *(Real)Phenomenology Ain' for Everybody*, ELFH 704: Introduction to Qualitative Methods, University of Louisville.

***Keaton, A.C.I.** (2022, October). *(Real)Phenomenology Ain' for Everybody*, Introduction to Qualitative Methods, University of Connecticut.

PANEL MODERATOR

[* = Delivered as an Assistant Professor]

***Keaton, A.C.I.** (2023, May 24th). DEI is Dead. Now What? The Black Student Athlete Summit.

***Keaton, A.C.I.** (2023, May 22nd). The Political Balancing Act of Diversity Leadership, The Black Student Athlete Summit.

Newton, A.C.I., Macaulay, C. (2020, October 21st). A global pandemic and college sport. University of Connecticut Sport Management Program, *Beyond the Field* [Virtual Panel]

Newton, A.C.I., Wolf, E. (2020, September 16th). Black lives matter and athlete activism. University of Connecticut Sport Management Program, *Beyond the Field* [Virtual Panel]

Newton, A.C.I. (2020, February 6th). A conversation with Taylor Kielpinski-Rogers: What is the role of social media in Sport. *University of Connecticut Sport Business Association*, Storrs, CT, United States.

Newton, A.C.I. (2019, July 23rd). Title IX, funding of women's athletics, and gender equality in athletics. *University of Connecticut Summer Economics Course*, Storrs, CT, United States.

Newton, A.C.I. (2019, January 28th). Gender equity in sport: The progress made and the obstacles yet to be overcome. University of Connecticut Sport Business Association, Storrs, CT, United States.

EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBER

Sociology of Sport Journal | 2023 –2026

Journal of Intercollegiate Sport | 2023 –

Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics | 2023 –

Journal of Sport Management | 2026 –

GUEST JOURNAL REVIEWER

Qualitative Market Research | 2025, 2026

The Journal of Whiteness and Education | 2019

Journal of Sport Management | 2022, 2024, 2025



Journal of Sport & Social Issues | 2022, 2025
Sport Management Review | 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026
Journal of Intercollegiate Athletics | 2022 - 2026
Sociology of Sport Journal | 2022, 2023 - 2026
Sport, Education, and Society | 2022
International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship | 2022, 2025
Sport, Business, Management: An International Journal | 2022, 2025, 2026
Frontiers Special Issue, Intersectionality | 2022
International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics | 2025, 2026

ASSESSMENTS & REPORTS

Newton, A.C.I. (2019). "We really need representation": How Black/African-American students affiliated with OASIS move to and through programs and services [Unpublished Report]. Office of Academic Support and Instructional Services, University of California San Diego

Newton, A.C.I. (2016). The University of Texas at Austin Discover Law Assessment [Unpublished Report]. The Division of Diversity & Community Engagement, The University of Texas at Austin

RESEARCH & TEACHING GRANTS

Submitted Grant (No Award) | Atlantic Coast Conference and Center for Research in Intercollegiate Athletics. (Fall 2022). *An Exploratory Study College Athlete Perceptions of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*. Keaton, A.C.I., Taylor, E., Thompson, E.

American Athletic Conference Academic Consortium Grant. (2019-2020). *A Mixed Methods Exploratory Study of American Athletic Conference (AAC) Student-Athletes' Adjustment to College, Sense of Belonging, and Mental Health*, Challenger, C., Cooper, J.N., **Newton, A.C.I.**, Dougherty, S. \$10,000. Awarded.

Thomas J. Dodd Research Center Grant. (2019 -2020). *Sport Talk: Creating Dialogical Classrooms for the Development of Future Sport Leaders*, **Newton, A.C.I.**, Macaulay, C. & Burton, L.J. \$5,000. Awarded.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE – NON-UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

US Department of State and ESPNW Global Sport Mentoring Program

Lead Site Mentor for Fall Delegate (2023) | **University of Louisville**
Assistant Program Mentor for Karen Chammas (Lebanon) (2019) | **University of Connecticut**
Assistant Program Mentor for Jane Nguyen (Vietnam) (2018) | **University of Connecticut**

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

University Diversity Council, *University of Connecticut*, 2018, 2019
Neag School of Education Social Justice Committee, *University of Connecticut*, 2018
Collective Uplift, *University of Connecticut*, 2017, 2018
Fearless Leadership Institute, *The University of Texas at Austin*, 2016, 2017



DEPARTMENT SERVICE | UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Curriculum Committee | 2025 - 2026

Tenure-Track Search Committee | 2025 - 2026

DEPARTMENT & PROGRAM SERVICE | UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

Curriculum Committee

Chair of Clinical Instructor Search Committee

Doctoral Acceptance Committee

Assistant Professor Search Committee

DISSERTATION COMMITTEES

Committee Member | Sydni Morris, Spring 2023 | [Defended August 2023 | Passed].

Committee Member | Stephanie Davis, Fall 2025 -- | University of Minnesota | [Defended May 2026 | Passed].

Committee Member | Keisha Branch Fall 2025 -- | University of Louisville | Status [ABD]

Committee Member | Kayla Martinez Fall 2025 -- | University of Louisville | Status [ABD]

Committee Member | Camden Cone, Spring 2025 | University of Connecticut | Status [Comprehensive [Exams]

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

North American Society for the Sociology of Sport (NASSS, 2016 - present)

North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM, 2019 – present)

SELECTED HONORS & AWARDS

Academy of Management Best Paper Proceedings	2026
North American Society for Sport Management Research Fellow	2026
Outstanding Research Award Isenberg School of Management	2026
College Sport Research Institute Outstanding Research Article	2025
North American Society for the Sociology of Sport Research Fellow	2024
University of Louisville Digital Storytelling Institute Fellow	2023
University of Louisville Student Champion Award	2023
College Sport Research Institute Emerging Scholar Award	2023
P.E.O National Scholar Award Finalist	2020
Excellence in Teaching Neag School of Education	2019, 2018
North American Society for the Sociology of Sport Gary Sailes Award	2019
Initiative on Campus Dialogues (ICD) Fellowship	2019
National Ford Foundation Fellow (<i>Honorable Mention</i>)	2018
Giolas-Harriett Fellow (<i>Doctoral Fellowship</i>)	2017
Residence Life Advisor of the Year	2017
NCAA Emerging Leader Seminar Acceptance	2017



UT Austin Best Educational Program Recipient, “Let’s Talk About Race Baby”	2016
The University of Texas at Austin Residence Life Outstanding New Faculty/Staff	2015
NCAA Ethnic Minority Postgraduate Scholarship Recipient (<i>1 of 26 nationally selected</i>)	2015
Bill Green Colorado State University Outstanding Athlete Award	2015
Mountain West Conference Champion	2015
Colorado State University Black Excellence Leadership Award	2015
Academic All-Mountain West	2015
Mountain West Conference Champion	2014
Academic All-Mountain West	2014
Mountain West Scholar Athlete	2014
Second Team All Mountain West	2014
Colorado State Athletic Director Academic Excellence	2014
Colorado State Athletic Director Academic Excellence	2013
All-American National Junior College Athletic Association	2013
Coast Conference Most Valuable Player	2013
National Collegiate Athletic Association ~ Scholarship Athlete	2010 – 2015

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

The University of Texas at Austin

Black Student Athlete Summit

Student-Athlete Development Coordinator

(2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020)

- Led two student-athlete breakout sessions for the duration of two hours at the Black Student Athlete Summit
- Develop and cultivate questions in relationship to issues pertaining to social justice
- Facilitate large group discussions in reference to identity development of Black student – athletes
- Illuminate the historical context of Black athletes and activism within the United States
- Engage students to challenge the role of athlete activism within professional and collegiate spaces

The University of Texas at Austin

January 2016 – May 2017

UT Athletics Department

Football Academic Staff Member

- Promoted the development of students' ability to effectively transition from high school to college
- Encouraged students to adopt effective study strategies that will lead to academic success
- Oversaw student’s daily academic preparation, which included monitoring individual progress and attendance
- Assessed students’ abilities to comprehend and interrupt learning material in order to achieve academic success
- Engaged with students to question how learning material for class is displayed within society
- Challenged students to critically examine their identities outside of athletics

The University of Texas at Austin

September 2016 – May 2017

Recreational Sports Center

Longhorn Run Post Race/Sponsorship Chair

- Led and delegated tasks for a team of four members through the process of securing sponsorships for a 5k and 10k race with 5,500 participants and 300 volunteers
- On-site coordinator for organizing sponsors and their activity and experience during the time of the event



- Managed and execute recognition of sponsors on digital communication
- Developed sponsorship recruitment timelines and sponsor communication kits to strategically communicate the goals and value of their participation within Longhorn Run

University California of San Diego

May 2018 – October 2019

Office of Academic Support and Instructional Services (OASIS)

Academic Achievement Consultant

- Conducted quantitative research analysis on existing survey data from past Summer Bridge African American participants
- Conducted individual interviews and focus groups with African American Summer Bridge participants
- Collaborated with the Black Resource Center to collect data and provide feedback to Summer Bridge staff as it relates to African American students.
- Drafted a proposal summarizing lessons learned from prior Summer Bridge programs as it relates to African American students
- Created a strategic plan for next year's Summer Bridge operations to enhance the experience for African American students

The University of Texas at Austin

February 2016 – September 2016

The Division of Diversity & Community Engagement

Discover Law Assessment Coordinator

- Conducted evaluation research through summative methods for a 6-week intensive summer Law School program focused on developing 20 UT minority undergraduate students and preparing these students for an academic future within the field of law
- Facilitated focus groups to increase the understanding of the attitudes and perceptions of students participating in the program
- Constructed surveys with Qualtrics software that incorporated various coding strategies to compose and organize specific data results
- Conducted written analysis of qualitative and quantitative data based on survey feedback provided by students
- Tailored survey data collection to coordinate with learning objectives stated within **\$300,000** grant provided by the Law School Admission Council