

# **DEVELOPING A VIBRANT STUDENT ORGANIZATION: PARTNERS IN SPORTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE**



**AKA**

American Kinesiology Association



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# partners in sports

*Creating Opportunities  
for Tomorrow's Sports Leaders*

*Founded April 30, 1998  
Dr. Buck Jones – Founding Director*



## Who We Are

Partners in Sports is the student organization for Sport Management majors and other students at The University of Tennessee who are interested in pursuing careers in the sport or recreation industry. The organization is active within the university and regional sports community. The mission of the organization is to create opportunities for tomorrow's sports leaders through practical experiences and professional development opportunities.



# Governance

## Student Board



## Faculty



# Advisory Board

## Purpose

- Long-Term Direction
- Idea Sounding Board
- Fresh Perspective
- Programming Guidance
- Meet as Needed

## Members



# Membership



~ 150 Students



~ 10 Faculty & Staff

# What We Do?

## Fall

Membership Drive

Success in Sport Panel

Fall Conference



## Spring

Women's Roundtable

Spring Reception



## Summer

USA Cycling Championships

Golf Tournament





# Other Activities

- Legacy Parks Foundation Luncheon
- Phillip Fulmer Golf Classic
- Eric Berry Youth Football Camp
- IMG 7x7 Football Tournament
- IMG/Vol Network Playbook Distribution
- SEC Swimming & Diving Championships
- SEC Men's Tennessee Tournament
- Mercedes-Benz Collegiate Golf Championship
- Rhythm & Blooms Musical Festival



Partners in Sports has been able to develop a mutually beneficial relationship with the Southeastern Conference during the past 10 years. More than 80 students have been able to volunteer at a variety of championship and other events which has enable them to gain valuable experience and networking opportunities. The Southeastern Conference, in turn, has been able to have emerging professionals provide operational support in the management of these events

# Student Recognition

- Scholarships (2000)
- Buck Jones Award (2002)
- Partners Service Award (2010)
- Dr. Joy T. DeSensi Award (2013)
- Joan Cronan Graduate Fellowship (2015)
- Emile Catignani Award (2017)

**\$132,000**





Tennessee Sport  
Management



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partnersinsports.com



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# THE VALUE OF THE HAND-WRITTEN NOTE

# Our Partners



# What's Next?

## Challenges

- Student Awareness
- Benefit Awareness
- Student Priority
- Board Priority
- Too Much Programming

## Opportunities

- Conduit to Volunteering
- Conduit for Support
- Add Appropriate Programming
- Student Driven

# Lessons Learned

## The Good

- Small Student Board
- Be of Service
- Ask How You Can Assist
- Membership Dues
- Steady Growth
- Selective Involvement
- Go First Class – It's Worth It

## Oops!

- Business Meetings
- Forced Involvement
- Placing No Value on Activities
- Don't Always Have Your Hand Out



# TAKE AWAYS



# CREATE A CULTURE



# IT TAKES TIME



# STICK TO YOUR PURPOSE



## Development and Organization of a Student-Operated Sport Management Cocurricular Club: Partners in Sports

Robin Hardin and James Bemiller  
University of Tennessee

Joshua Pate  
James Madison University

Experiential learning is a critical component to a college education in the area of sport management as students must enter the workforce with hands-on industry experience. One experiential learning tool is a cocurricular club that offers volunteer work experience for sport management majors. The University of Tennessee's Partners in Sports is an example of a sport management cocurricular club that prepares students for working in the sport industry through volunteer experiences. The purpose of this study was to provide a governance and organizational framework of a student-operated sport management cocurricular club and explore how it fits into the Foster Five-Step Experiential Learning Model (Foster & Dollar, 2010). This study examines the governance, student involvement, leadership, opportunities, financials, and yearly activities of Partners in Sports and offers practical applications for each area. The exploration revealed that a cocurricular club fits on the Volunteer Exploration step of the Foster Five-Step Experiential Learning Model as it introduces students to the sport industry by offering experiential learning opportunities. Providing a cocurricular club allows sport management programs to maximize initial industry exposure to students.

Experiential learning is a critical component to a college education in the area of sport management where hands-on experience is difficult to initially obtain yet required for beginning a career. Foster and Dollar (2010) stated that experiential learning is when an individual is "working or volunteering for an organization in order to gain on-the-job experience in their preferred field of work before graduation from an academic program" (p. 10). Experiential learning is a process whereby knowledge is created through a transformational experience while on the job (Kolb, 1984). From this perspective, learning takes place as an individual experiences a behavior as opposed to reading about it in a textbook or listening to a professor's lecture. Therefore, actual hands-on experience complements classroom assignments, and may serve as a greater education tool in some areas of sport management. Experiential learning has shown to be effective in the areas of sport marketing (Miller, Meaney, & Podlog, 2012; Pauline & Pauline, 2008), event management (Canberg, 2009; Charlton, 2007), and sport sales (Irwin,

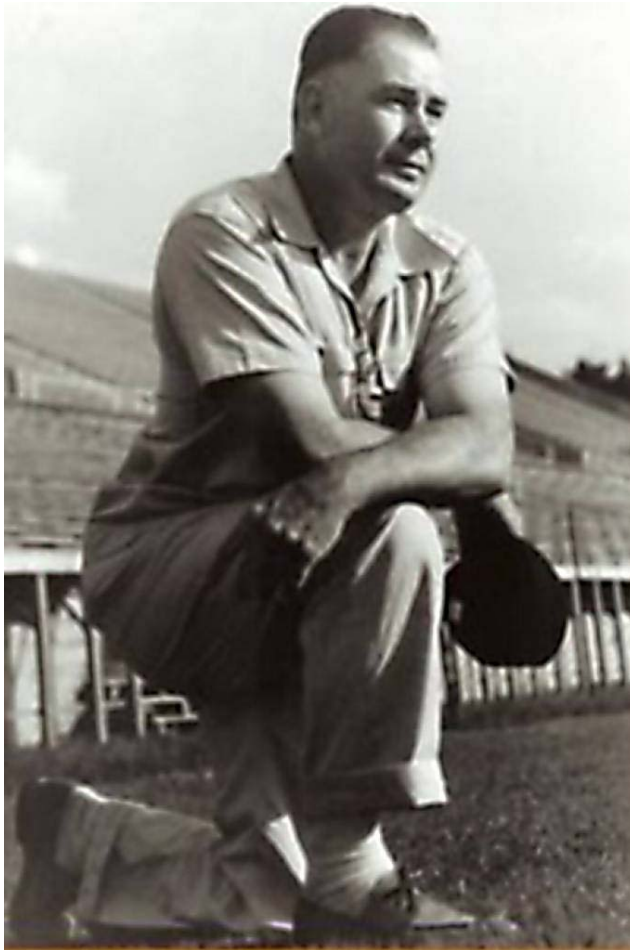
Southall, & Sutton, 2007; McKelvey & Southall, 2008; Pierce, Petersen, & Meadows, 2011).

Foster and Dollar (2010) identified applicable terms for experiential learning, in sequential order from the lowest level of involvement to the highest: volunteerism (no reward provided for work), practicum or apprenticeship (practicing work for academic credit), cooperative education (on-site job training combined with classroom experience), service learning (combining community service with academic study), and graduate assistantship (part-time work for academic credit or job experience). College students are exposed to these levels of involvement through opportunities that count for credits toward a degree, and universities consider these opportunities part of the educational experience (Kelley, Beitel, & DeSensi, 1994; Parilla & Hesser, 1998; Young & Baker, 2004). The Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA) recognizes the need for these learning experiences and includes internships and linkages to the sport industry as part of the accreditation process (Commission on Sport Management Accreditation, 2010). These requirements for graduation are beneficial because students receive practical, hands-on experience rather than entering the workforce with only a degree in hand and a thin resume. The importance of converting of theoretical classroom knowledge to practical application in the work environment certainly enhances the professional

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# Partners Maxims



1. Work every day to put yourself in position to be successful.
2. Look for opportunities, take advantage of the ones that come your way, and prove your value.
3. Things may not go as planned. Learn from the experience and use it to improve yourself.
4. Protect your personal brand and build personal relationships.
5. Volunteer, intern, and seek opportunities to be involved for this is how you gain experience.
6. Complete every task, no matter how small, to the best of your ability. The small details sometimes matter the most.
7. Work hard but be productive and efficient with your time.



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