

# ATHLETIC DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION OFFICERS IN DIVISION I ATHLETIC DEPARTMENTS: SYMBOLIC GESTURE OR A MOMENTOUS CULTURAL SHIFT?

RESEARCH FROM THE FRONT PORCH

*"WE MUST REMAIN INQUISITIVE ABOUT THE ADOPTION, NAVIGATION, AND LEGITIMIZATION OF ADIOS TO ENSURE THESE INAUGURAL ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS CAN ASSIST IN CREATING AND SUSTAINING MEANINGFUL ORGANIZATIONAL INCLUSIVITY, RATHER THAN THESE POSITIONS SERVING AS SHORT-TERM SYMBOLIC GESTURES."*

## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- Since 2013, Division I athletic departments have adopted Athletic Diversity and Inclusion Officers (ADIO), but an emergence of position adoptions coincides with Black Lives Matter protests in sport.
- The adoption of the ADIO position coincides with NCAA bylaws that mandate Division I athletic departments designate a diversity and inclusion role (not position) to a college administrator either within or outside of athletics.
- Athletic departments should approach the adoption of ADIOs through a multi-level lens being attentive to the influence of broader social movements upon the leadership agendas and experiences of ADIOs, the agentic capabilities of ADIOs to alter institutional conditions of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and consider the history of DEI in their respective athletic departments.
- For success, collegiate athletic departments must critically consider the purpose, structure, and power of these formal diversity leaders in sport.

## QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

- What institutional power is embedded into my department's ADIO position(s)?
- What is the history of DEI in my athletic department and my campus?
- What support should our department's ADIO be offered to navigate competing and dominant institutional logics that conflict with the advancement of department DEI initiatives?



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### Additional Resources:

Newton-Keaton. A.C.I (in-press). A Conceptual Model of the Emergence of Athletic Diversity and Inclusion Officers in Division I Collegiate Athletics. *Journal of Higher Education Athletics & Innovation*.

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