

USC Race and
Equity Center

**RACIAL AND
GENDER EQUITY
FOR BLACK WOMEN
STUDENT-ATHLETES**

**2024 NCAA Women's
Basketball Tournament
Edition**

By Dr. Shaun Harper



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While watching an NCAA women's basketball tournament game last weekend, I noticed that nine of the ten student-athletes on the court were Black women — almost for the entirety of the contest. Their head coaches were white. Same trend in the next two games I watched. Same phenomenon in the men's tournament. I've noticed this before. It's a racial dynamic that annually plays itself out in front of millions of fans and viewers. But this year, I was more distracted, and frankly more frustrated by it.

Several universities in the 2024 basketball tournaments are located in states where governors and legislators have banned or severely defunded diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. The unacceptable irony here is that it's Black student-athletes who make college basketball and football (the two revenue-generating sports) most racially diverse. DEI opponents apparently think it's fine to generate billions of dollars on the backs of Black student-athletes while simultaneously slashing the programs, services, and resources that help improve representation, retention, academic success, and sense of belonging for them, their Black peers, and other students of color and LGBTQ collegians. It's not fine. It's absurd. It's also harmful to Black people, higher education, and our democracy.

To be sure, I'm not advocating for a reduction in the numbers of Black student-athletes. Talented ballers deserve to play on the biggest stages in college basketball. But they also deserve more head coaches and athletics directors who are Black. They deserve more Black professors. They deserve culturally-responsive classrooms and a culturally-relevant curriculum that honors the contributions of Black intellectual icons like Toni Morrison, W. E. B. Du Bois, Audre Lorde, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Derrick Bell, Lani Guinier, Patricia Hill

Collins, Nikole Hannah-Jones, bell hooks, Gloria Ladson-Billings, and Lori Patton Davis, to name a few. They deserve Black culture centers, multicultural affairs offices, and chief diversity officers who work to right past and present institutional wrongs that chronically disadvantage Black students. And they deserve non-Black teammates, coaches, athletics department staff, institutional leaders and faculty, and fans who will stand up not only in defense of their favorite Black women ballers, but also in support of other Black women and other students on campus whom anti-DEI efforts are guaranteed to further disadvantage. No Black collegians — including those who play on high-profile sports teams — deserve anti-Blackness. Politicized attacks on DEI are incontestably and destructively anti-Black. Given how indispensable they are, Black student-athletes collectively have the power to fight back.

Watching a trio of women's basketball games last weekend inspired me to produce this report, hence its emphasis on Black women student-athletes at universities in this year's tournament. I provide statistical portraits for every team that advanced to the Sweet 16. These data, on their own, make painstakingly clear that we need more, not fewer DEI initiatives in higher education. Without them, racial and gender inequities in intercollegiate athletics and elsewhere on campuses are guaranteed to worsen. I believe Black women, men, and genderqueer athletes can stop the anti-Black political madness that will continually wreak havoc on Black students and Black employees well past March. Loving Black people when they score baskets and advance in the tournament, while simultaneously dismantling initiatives designed to ensure their wellness and success is unforgivably cruel. Together, current student-athletes and influential Black alumni athletes can end the madness.

Shaun Harper, Ph.D.

University Professor

Provost Professor of Education, Business, and Public Policy
Clifford and Betty Allen Chair in Urban Leadership

USC Race and Equity Center Founder and Executive Director



BLACK WOMEN AT UNIVERSITIES IN THE SWEET 16

Sixty-eight colleges and universities are selected for participation in the annual NCAA basketball tournaments. Throughout this report, I highlight a few data points that are inclusive of all 68 institutions in this year's contest. But the centerpiece of this document is the presentation of statistics at the intersection of race and gender from universities that advanced to the Sweet 16 round of the 2024 tournament. Ten are public institutions and six are private. They span 11 states and a multitude of geographic regions.

On the pages that follow, photographs of all players and head coaches are furnished, which will give readers a visual sense of the representation of Black women across the 16 universities. The intersectional data portrait of racial and gender equity I paint for Black women student-athletes at each Sweet 16 school relies on quantitative statistics from the NCAA and the U.S. Department of Education. Details are provided below.

Ten-Year Enrollment Comparisons

The NCAA maintains an open-access database that includes statistics for every member college and university across the nation. Each institution's report includes enrollment data. I compared the number of Black undergraduate women enrolled at each of the 16 universities in 2013 to their representation a decade later. I also calculated Black women's share of overall undergraduate student enrollments in 2023, the most recent year for which data are available in the NCAA database.

NCAA Graduation Success Rates

Federal graduation rates do not account for undergraduates who transfer from one institution to another. Transfer students are counted as dropouts. In response to this limitation, the NCAA calculates a Graduation Success Rate (GSR) for every member institution. The NCAA explains on its website that the GSR “adds to the first-time freshmen, those students who entered midyear, as well as student-athletes who transferred into an institution and received athletics aid. In addition, the GSR will subtract students from the entering cohort who are considered allowable exclusions (i.e., those who either die or become permanently disabled, those who leave the school to join the armed forces, foreign services or attend a church mission), as well as those who left the institution prior to graduation, had athletics eligibility remaining and would have been academically eligible to compete had they returned to the institution.” I retrieved GSRs for Black women student-athletes and student-athletes overall at each of the 16 universities from the NCAA’s publicly available database.

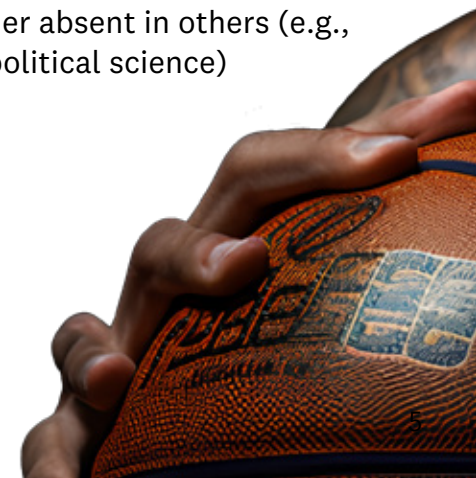
Federal Graduation Rates

GSRs do not provide a consistent set of conditions by which to compare student-athletes to undergraduates who do not participate on intercollegiate sports teams. Put differently, there is no GSR calculation for other groups beyond athletics. Because of this, I am also using federal graduation rates that treat student-athletes the same as all other collegians in this report. Besides, no published evidence or anecdotal reports suggest that Black women student-athletes are any more or less likely than other racial groups or non-athletes to transfer. Lastly, federal graduation rates I present in this report are across four cohort years. The NCAA only reports GSRs one cohort at a time, as opposed to a four-cohort average, thus making it a less durable indicator.

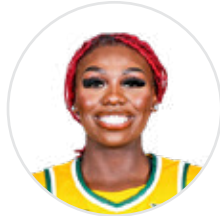
Black Women Faculty Representation

In *Black Students at Public Colleges and Universities: A 50-State Report Card*, Dr. Isaiah Simmons and I juxtaposed Black undergraduate student enrollments with the representation of Black faculty members at 506 postsecondary institutions. Of the four equity indicators in our 2019 study, this one garnered the most response from Black students across the country. Most said they found it a useful prism through which to think multidimensionally about the importance of Black representation on campuses, as well as the critical role that same-race faculty members play in the success of Black collegians.

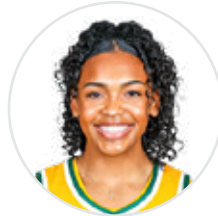
In this year’s report on the Sweet 16 schools, I used the U.S. Department of Education’s Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to retrieve the numbers of full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks at each of the 16 universities during the 2022-23 academic school year. I also analyzed the numbers of Black faculty overall, as well as the numbers of Black women faculty. One limitation is that IPEDS does not indicate the disciplines and departments in which these professors teach. It very well could be that Black women faculty are most heavily concentrated in particular fields (e.g., Africana and ethnic studies, gender studies, sociology, and education) and severely underrepresented or altogether absent in others (e.g., economics, chemistry, business, and political science) at the 16 universities.



BAYLOR UNIVERSITY



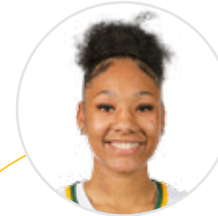
Aijha Blackwell



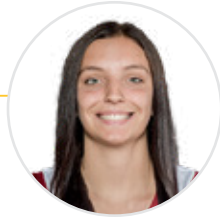
Bella Fontleroy



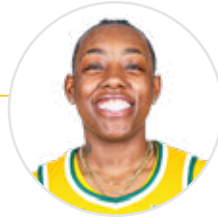
Catarina Ferreira



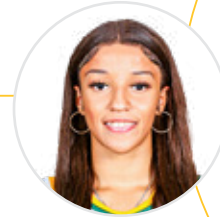
Darianna
Littlepage-Buggs



Denae Fritz



Dre'Una Edwards



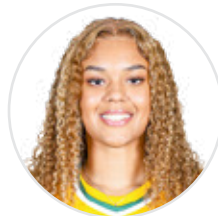
Jada Walker



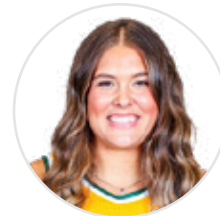
Jana Van
Gytenbeek



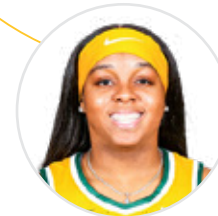
Kyla Abraham



Lety Vasconcelos



Madison Bartley



Sarah Andrews



Nicki Collen
Head Coach



Yaya Felder

Private University
Waco, Texas

20,709 Students
5% Black
61% White

Big 12 Conference

3 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, Baylor University enrolled 593 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 152 fewer Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 3.0% of undergraduates at Baylor in 2023.

Among Baylor's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 94%. Baylor's most-recent GSR is 6 percentage points higher (100%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 80% of Baylor students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 4 percentage points lower for Black women (76%). And it is 9 percentage points lower (71%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, Baylor employed 873 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 36 were Black, 25 of whom (2.9%) were Black women.

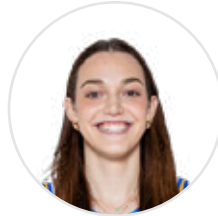
Baylor is located in one of the 10 states where diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses have been legislatively banned, heavily restricted, or severely defunded, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES



Amanda Muse



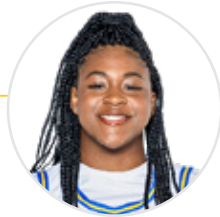
Angela Dugalić



Camryn Brown



Charisma
Osborne



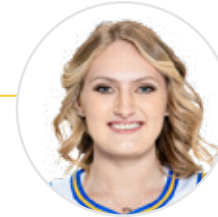
Christeen Iwuala



Emily Bessoir



Gabriela Jaquez



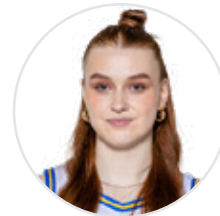
Izzy Anstey



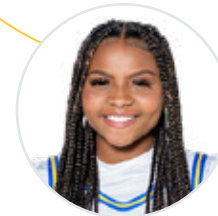
Kiki Rice



Lauren Betts



Lina Sontag



Londynn Jones



Cori Close
Head Coach

Public University
Los Angeles, California

46,430 Students
3% Black
26% White

Pac-12 Conference

0 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, UCLA enrolled 494 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 280 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 2.4% of undergraduates at UCLA in 2023.

Among UCLA's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 89%. UCLA's most-recent GSR is 8 percentage points higher (97%) for Black women student-athletes.

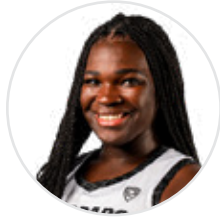
Across four undergraduate cohorts, 92% of UCLA students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 5 percentage points lower for Black women (87%). And it is 8 percentage points lower (84%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, UCLA employed 3,674 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 144 were Black, 76 of whom (2.1%) were Black women.

UCLA is located in a state where there are no active legislative bills that threaten to ban, heavily restrict, or severely defund diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO



Aaronette Vonleh



Brianna McLeod



Charlotte Whittaker



Frida Formann



Jadyne Atchison



Jaylyn Sherrod



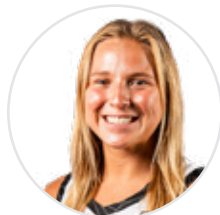
Kennedy Sanders



Kindyll Wetta



Lele Tanuvasa



Maddie Nolan



Mikayla Johnson



Quay Miller



JR Payne
Head Coach



Ruthie
Loomis-Goltl



Sara-Rose Smith



Shelomi Sanders



Sophie Gerber



Tameiya Sadler

Public University
Boulder, Colorado

39,585 Students
2% Black
68% White

Pac-12 Conference

0 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, University of Colorado enrolled 159 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 36 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 0.7% of undergraduates at Colorado in 2023.

Among Colorado's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 90%. Colorado's most-recent GSR is 10 percentage points higher (100%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 73% of Colorado students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 4 percentage points lower for Black women (69%). And it is 18 percentage points higher (91%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, Colorado employed 1,163 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 34 were Black, 14 of whom (1.2%) were Black women.

Colorado is located in a state where there are no active legislative bills that threaten to ban, heavily restrict, or severely defund diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

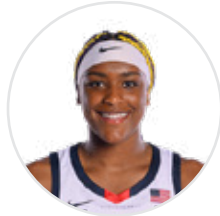


Despite making up so many players on basketball courts in this year's tournament, Black women comprise 3.8% of undergraduates at the 68 participating universities.



**Among the 352 Athletics
Directors at NCAA
Division I universities
in 2023, only 13 (3.7%)
were Black women.
Six of them worked at
Historically
Black Colleges
and Universities.**

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT



Aaliyah Edwards



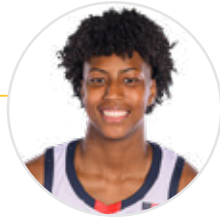
Amari DeBerry



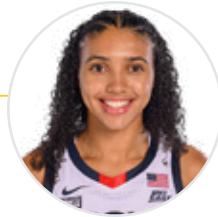
Ashlynn Shade



Aubrey Griffin



Ayanna Patterson



Azzi Fudd



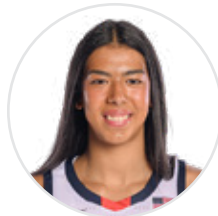
Caroline
Ducharme



Ice Brady



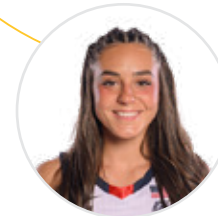
Inês Bettencourt



Jana El Alf



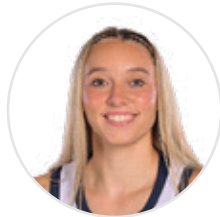
KK Arnold



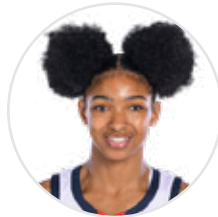
Nika Mühl



Geno Auriemma
Head Coach



Paige Bueckers



Qadence Samuels

Public University
Storrs, Connecticut

27,003 Students
7% Black
51% White

Big East Conference

11 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, University of Connecticut enrolled 521 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 234 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 4.1% of undergraduates at UConn in 2023.

Among UConn's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 94%. UConn's most-recent GSR is 1 percentage point higher (95%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 84% of UConn students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 4 percentage points lower for Black women (80%). And it is 7 percentage points lower (77%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, UConn employed 2,002 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 58 were Black, 33 of whom (1.6%) were Black women.

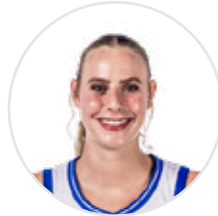
UConn is located in a state where there are no active legislative bills that threaten to ban, heavily restrict, or severely defund diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



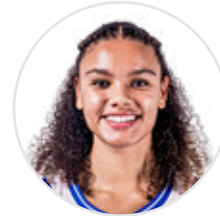
DUKE UNIVERSITY



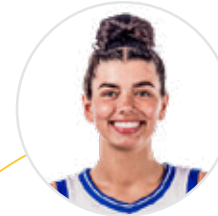
Ashlon Jackson



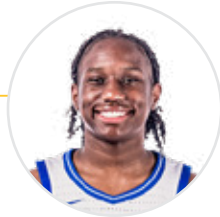
Camilla Emsbo



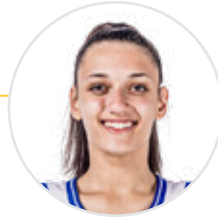
Delaney Thomas



Emma Koabel



Jadyne Donovan



Jordan Wood



Kennedy Brown



Louann Battiston



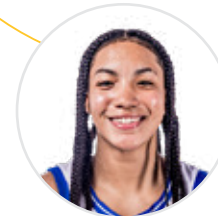
Olivia Martin



Oluchi Okananwa



Reigan
Richardson



Taina Mair



Kara Lawson
Head Coach



Vanessa de Jesus

Private University
Durham, North Carolina

18,023 Students
9% Black
37% White

ACC Conference

0 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, Duke University enrolled 405 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 47 fewer Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 5.4% of undergraduates at Duke in 2023.

Among Duke's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 98%. Duke's most-recent GSR is 2 percentage points higher (100%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 96% of Duke students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 1 percentage point lower for Black women (95%). And it is 17 percentage points lower (79%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, Duke employed 3,658 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 209 were Black, 108 of whom (3.0%) were Black women.

Duke is located in one of the 10 states where diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses have been legislatively banned, heavily restricted, or severely defunded, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



GONZAGA UNIVERSITY



Bree Salenbien



Brynna Maxwell



Calli Stokes



Claire O'Connor



Destiny Burton



Eliza
Hollingsworth



Ella Hopkins



Esther Little



Kayleigh Truong



Kaylynne Truong



Lauren Whittaker



Maud Huijbens



Lisa Fortier
Head Coach



Naya Ojukwu



Payton Muma



Yvonne Ejim

Private University
Spokane, Washington

7,253 Students
1% Black
64% White

West Coast Conference

0 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, Gonzaga University enrolled 30 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 6 fewer Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 0.5% of undergraduates at Gonzaga in 2023.

Among Gonzaga's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 96%. For the most recent cohort year, no GSR is reported for Black women student-athletes at Gonzaga.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 86% of Gonzaga students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 11 percentage points lower for Black women (75%). And it is 19 percentage points lower (67%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, Gonzaga employed 422 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 10 were Black, 5 of whom (1.2%) were Black women.

Gonzaga is located in a state where there are no active legislative bills that threaten to ban, heavily restrict, or severely defund diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



INDIANA UNIVERSITY



Arielle Wisne



Chloe
Moore-McNeil



Henna Sandvik



Julianna
LaMendola



Lenée Beaumont



Lexus Bargesser



Lilly Meister



Mackenzie
Holmes



Sara Scalia



Sharnecce
Currie-Jelks



Sydney Parrish



Yarden Garzon



Teri Moren
Head Coach

Public University
Bloomington, Indiana

47,005 Students
4% Black
67% White

Big Ten Conference

0 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, Indiana University enrolled 781 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 55 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 2.4% of undergraduates at Indiana in 2023.

Among Indiana's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 90%. Indiana's most-recent GSR is 4 percentage points lower (86%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 80% of IU students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 14 percentage points lower for Black women (66%). And it is 17 percentage points lower (63%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, IU employed 1,666 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 82 were Black, 35 of whom (2.1%) were Black women.

IU is located in one of the 10 states where diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses have been legislatively banned, heavily restricted, or severely defunded, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

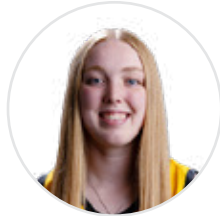


Black women were 21% of the 355 head women's basketball coaches at NCAA Division I universities in 2023. White male coaches outnumbered them by 5 percentage points.

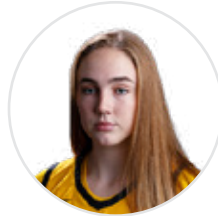


**Among full-time
instructional
assistant, associate,
and full professors
at universities that
advanced to this year's
Sweet 16, just over **600**
(2.3%) are Black women.**

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA



Addison O'Grady



AJ Ediger



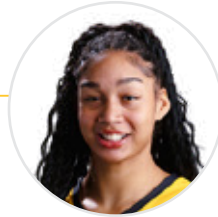
Ava Jones



Caitlin Clark



Gabbie Marshall



Hannah Stuelke



Jada Gyamfi



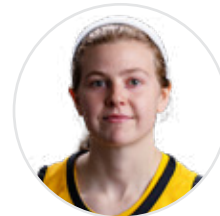
Kate Martin



Kennise Johnson



Kylie Feuerbach



Molly Davis



Sharon Goodman



Lisa Bluder
Head Coach



Sydney Affolter



Taylor McCabe

Public University
Iowa City, Iowa

30,015 Students
3% Black
74% White

Big Ten Conference

0 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, University of Iowa enrolled 299 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 30 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 1.6% of undergraduates at Iowa in 2023.

Among Iowa's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 89%. Iowa's most-recent GSR is 1 percentage point lower (88%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 73% of Iowa students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 13 percentage points lower for Black women (60%). And it is 33 percentage points lower (40%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, Iowa employed 2,254 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 55 were Black, 32 of whom (1.4%) were Black women.

Iowa is located in a state where there are no active legislative bills that threaten to ban, heavily restrict, or severely defund diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



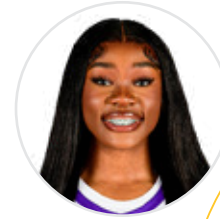
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY



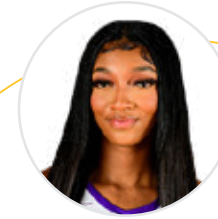
Aalyah Del
Rosario



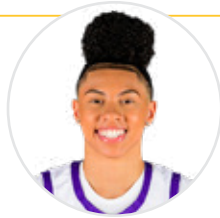
Amani Bartlett



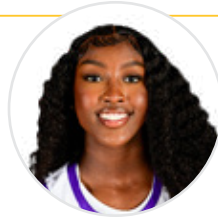
Aneesah Morrow



Angel Reese



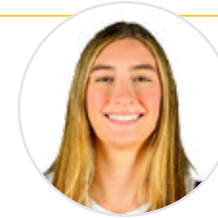
Angelica Velez



Flau'jae Johnson



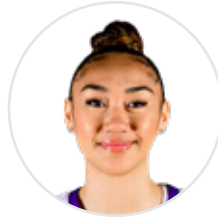
Hailey Van Lith



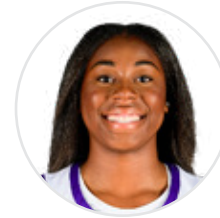
Izzy Besselman



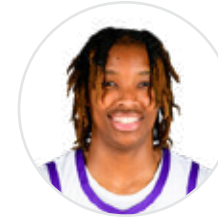
Janae Kent



Last-Tear Poa



Mikaylah Williams



Sa'Myah Smith



Kim Mulkey
Head Coach

Public University
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

37,348 Students
17% Black
63% White

SEC Conference

1 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championship

In 2013, Louisiana State University enrolled 1,433 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 1,431 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 10.9% of undergraduates at LSU in 2023.

Among LSU's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 91%. LSU's most-recent GSR is 6 percentage points higher (97%) for Black women student-athletes.

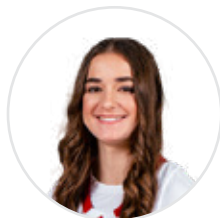
Across four undergraduate cohorts, 66% of LSU students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 8 percentage points lower for Black women (58%). And it is 13 percentage points higher (79%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, LSU employed 1,014 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 46 were Black, 24 of whom (2.4%) were Black women.

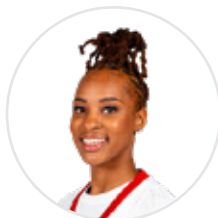
LSU is located in a state where there are no active legislative bills that threaten to ban, heavily restrict, or severely defund diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY



Alyssa Lewis



Aziaha James



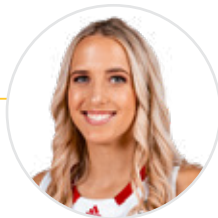
Jannah Eissa



Katie Peneueta



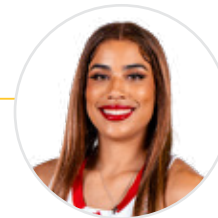
Laci Steele



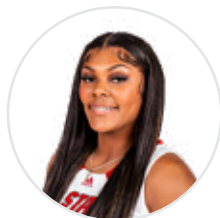
Lizzy Williamson



Maddie Cox



Madison Hayes



Mallory Collier



Mimi Collins



River Baldwin



Saniya Rivers



Wes Moore
Head Coach



Zoe Brooks

Public University
Raleigh, North Carolina

36,700 Students
6% Black
67% White

ACC Conference

0 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, North Carolina State University enrolled 914 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 162 fewer Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 3.2% of undergraduates at NC State in 2023.

Among NC State's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 92%. NC State's most-recent GSR is 5 percentage points higher (97%) for Black women student-athletes.

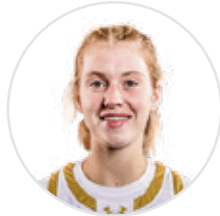
Across four undergraduate cohorts, 85% of NC State students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is exactly the same for Black women (85%). And it is 3 percentage points lower (82%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, NC State employed 1,636 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 72 were Black, 41 of whom (2.5%) were Black women.

NC State is located in one of the 10 states where diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses have been legislatively banned, heavily restricted, or severely defunded, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education.



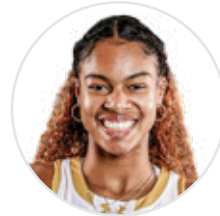
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME



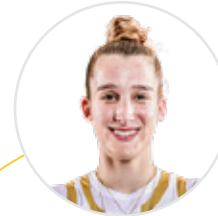
Anna DeWolfe



Becky Obinma



Cassandre Prosper



Emma Risch



Hannah Hidalgo



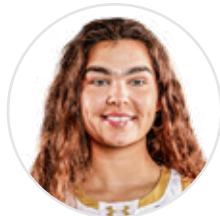
Jenna Brown



KK Bransford



Kylee Watson



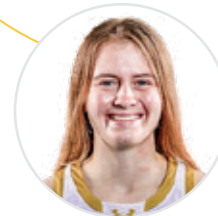
Maddy Westbeld



Natalija Marshall



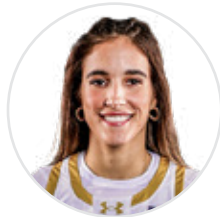
Olivia Miles



Sarah Cernugel



Niele Ivey
Head Coach



Sonia Citron

Private University
Notre Dame, Indiana

13,105 Students
4% Black
63% White

ACC Conference

2 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, University of Notre Dame enrolled 144 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 53 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 2.2% of undergraduates at Notre Dame in 2023.

Among Notre Dame's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 98%. Notre Dame's most-recent GSR is 6 percentage points lower (92%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 96% of Notre Dame students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 2 percentage points lower for Black women (94%). And it is 10 percentage points lower (86%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, Notre Dame employed 913 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 25 were Black, 8 of whom (0.9%) were Black women.

Notre Dame is located in a state where diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses have been legislatively banned, heavily restricted, or severely defunded, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



In 2023, a total of 331,076 undergraduates were enrolled at universities that advanced to the Sweet 16 round in the 2024 tournament – 11,308 (3.4%) were Black women.



**Excluding Historically
Black Colleges and
Universities, Black
women were **4.1%** of
associate and assistant
athletics directors
at NCAA Division I
universities in 2023.**

OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY



Adlee Blacklock



AJ Marotte



Dominika
Paurová



Donovyn Hunter



Kelsey Rees



Kennedie Shule



Lily Hansford



Martha Pietsch



Raegan Beers



Sela Heide



Susana Yepes



Talia von
Oelhoffen



Scott Rueck
Head Coach



Timea Gardiner

Public University
Corvallis, Oregon

34,292 Students
2% Black
63% White

Pac-12 Conference

0 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, Oregon State University enrolled 83 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 55 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 0.7% of undergraduates at Oregon State in 2023.

Among Oregon State's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 88%. Oregon State's most-recent GSR is 12 percentage points higher (100%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 69% of Oregon State students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 17 percentage points lower for Black women (52%). And it is 31 percentage points higher (100%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, Oregon State employed 854 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 15 were Black, 6 of whom (0.7%) were Black women.

Oregon State is located in a state where there are no active legislative bills that threaten to ban, heavily restrict, or severely defund diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA



Ashlyn Watkins



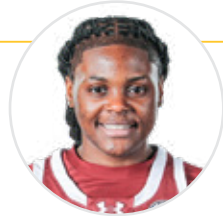
Bree Hall



Chloe Kitts



Kamilla Cardoso



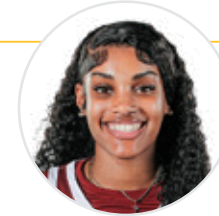
MiLaysia Fulwiley



Raven Johnson



Sahnya Jah



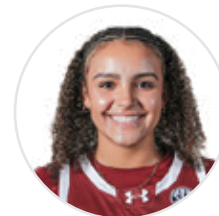
Sakima Walker



Sania Feagin



Te-Hina Paopao



Tessa Johnson



Dawn Staley
Head Coach

Public University
Columbia, South Carolina

35,653 Students
9% Black
73% White

SEC Conference

2 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, University of South Carolina enrolled 1,358 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 2 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 5.2% of undergraduates at South Carolina in 2023.

Among South Carolina's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 94%. South Carolina's most-recent GSR is 2 percentage points higher (96%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 78% of South Carolina students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 2 percentage points higher for Black women (80%). And it is 9 percentage points lower (69%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, South Carolina employed 1,433 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 97 were Black, 71 of whom (5.0%) were Black women.

University of South Carolina is located in a state where legislative bills that will ban, heavily restrict, or severely defund diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives in higher education have been introduced and are pending, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



Aaliyah Gayles



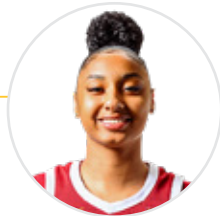
Clarice Akunwafo



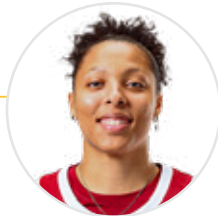
Dominique Darius



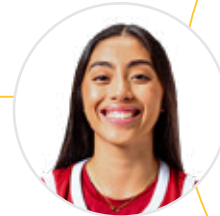
India Otto



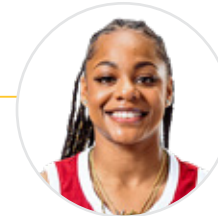
JuJu Watkins



Kaitlyn Davis



Kayla Padilla



Kayla Williams



Malia Samuels



McKenzie Forbes



Rayah Marshall



Roxane Makolo



Lindsay Gottlieb
Head Coach



Taylor Bigby

Private University
Los Angeles, California

48,945 Students
6% Black
30% White

Pac-12 Conference

2 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, University of Southern California enrolled 472 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 344 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 4.1% of undergraduates at USC in 2023.

Among USC's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 93%. USC's most-recent GSR is 7 percentage points higher (100%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 92% of USC students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 2 percentage points lower for Black women (90%). And it is 24 percentage points lower (68%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, USC employed 2,263 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 123 were Black, 70 of whom (3.1%) were Black women.

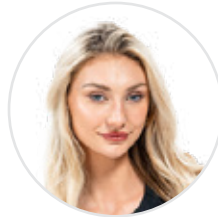
USC is located in a state where there are no active legislative bills that threaten to ban, heavily restrict, or severely defund diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



STANFORD UNIVERSITY



Brooke Demetre



Cameron Brink



Chloe Clardy



Courtney Ogden



Elena Bosgana



Hannah Jump



Jzaniya Harriel



Kiki Iriafe



Lauren Green



Nunu Agara



Stavi Papadaki



Talana Lepolo



Tara VanDerveer
Head Coach

Private University
Stanford, California

18,283 Students
8% Black
25% White

Pac-12 Conference

3 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championships

In 2013, Stanford University enrolled 224 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 84 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 4.0% of undergraduates at Stanford in 2023.

Among Stanford's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 97%. Stanford's most-recent GSR is 2 percentage points lower (95%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 95% of Stanford students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is the exact same for Black women (95%). And it is 5 percentage points lower (90%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

During the 2022-23 academic school year, Stanford employed 2,010 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 56 were Black, 26 of whom (1.3%) were Black women.

Stanford is located in a state where there are no active legislative bills that threaten to ban, heavily restrict, or severely defund diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



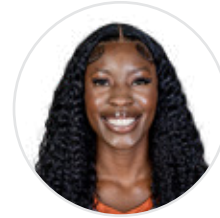
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN



Aaliyah Moore



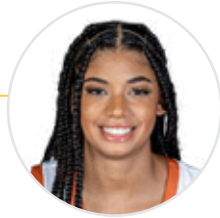
Abbie Boutilier



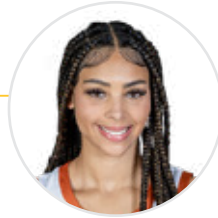
Amina
Muhammad



DeYona Gaston



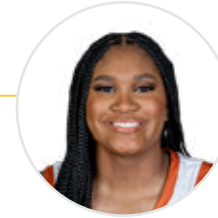
Gisella Maul



Jordana Codio



Khadija Faye



Madison Booker



Ndjakalenga
Mwenentanda



Rori Harmon



Sarah Graves



Shay Holle



Vic Schaefer
Head Coach



Shaylee Gonzales



Taylor Jones



Tionna Herron

Public University
Austin, Texas

52,384 Students
5% Black
33% White

Big 12 Conference

1 NCAA Women's Basketball
Tournament Championship

In 2013, University of Texas at Austin enrolled 1,015 Black undergraduate women. A decade later, 146 more Black undergraduate women were enrolled. Black women comprised 3.0% of undergraduates at UT in 2023.

Among UT's student-athletes, the overall Graduation Success Rate (a formula the NCAA created specifically for student-athletes) is 89%. UT's most-recent GSR is 5 percentage points higher (94%) for Black women student-athletes.

Across four undergraduate cohorts, 87% of UT students graduate within six years. The six-year graduation rate is 3 percentage points lower for Black women (84%). And it is 10 percentage points lower (77%) across four cohorts of Black women student-athletes.

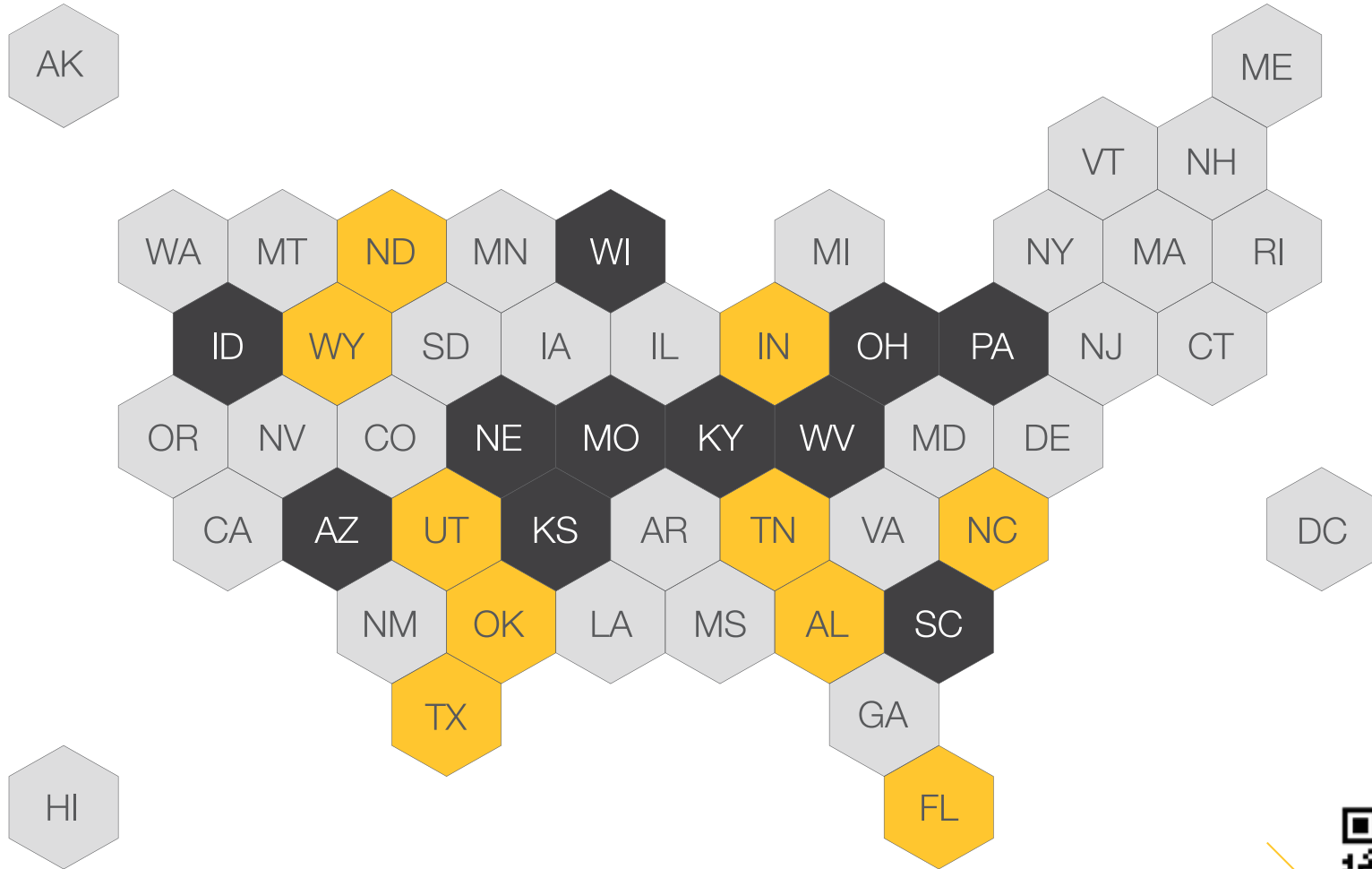
During the 2022-23 academic school year, UT employed 1,891 full-time instructional faculty members at the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Just 107 were Black, 55 of whom (2.9%) were Black women.

UT is located in a state where diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on college and university campuses have been legislatively banned, heavily restricted, or severely defunded, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.



State-Level Anti-DEI Legislative Actions

■ No Active Bills ■ Bills Signed Into Law ■ Bills Introduced and Pending Action



Source: Chronicle of Higher Education

Follow the Chronicle of Higher Education's Anti-DEI Legislative Tracker at usrec.info/chronicletracker





SUPPORTING BLACK WOMEN STUDENT- ATHLETES


While I am considered an expert on intercollegiate athletics, I fully acknowledge and appreciate that Black women are most expert on their lived experiences. Hence, here is my most important recommendation: ask Black women student-athletes which supports would best meet their expectations, affirm them, and maximize their opportunities for academic and athletic success. I provide additional recommendations below for coaches and athletics department staff, administrators at predominantly white institutions, and the NCAA and athletics conferences.

Coaches and Athletics Department Staff

Black women student-athletes would benefit tremendously from the increased representation of same-race mentors and possibility models – and not just at the lowest levels in athletics departments. More Black women head coaches ought to be hired and given fair shots, sufficient resources, and ample amounts of time to turn around sluggish programs and ultimately succeed. Pay equity will

help retain them, so too will consistent demonstrations of respect for them as people, as Black women, and as experts.

Coaches, counselors, and student-athlete success advisors should commit themselves to understanding and honoring the unique ways in which race and gender intersect for Black women student-athletes, as well as how race, gender, and sexual orientation intersect for Black women student-athletes who are queer. Microaggressions experienced because of these identity intersections often compromise sense of belonging, academic success, and athletic performance. Colorblind approaches to student-athlete counseling can be harmful to Black women because they do not experience campus environments or off-campus spaces in colorblind ways. They need navigational tools. They also need athletics department employees to leverage their power and influence to disrupt racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia at the institution and in the local community.



Politicized attacks on DEI are attacks on Black women and queer people – student-athletes are not exempt. National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education data show that Black women comprise the largest group of chief diversity officers on campuses. As these people's budgets are being cut and their positions are being eliminated, it is Black women who will be most disproportionately impacted. These are Black women who often serve as role models, advocates, and protectors of diverse students on campuses, including Black women within and beyond athletics. Joining the fight to save the important work they do will ultimately benefit Black women who run, dribble, jump, throw, swing, and swim for institutions.

In addition to joining the fight against harmful attacks on DEI, coaches and athletics administrators should not stand in the way of student-athletes who elect to bravely leverage their own name, image, and likeness in protests. Coaches do not usually like it when players organize and participate in activist activities. But this particular moment would benefit tremendously from their leadership. Black women student-athletes need self-proclaimed allies to either step up or step aside, definitely not stand in their way.

Administrators at PWIs

Presidents hire athletics directors. More effort should be devoted to finding more extraordinarily talented Black women to lead athletics departments. They exist. The breakdown usually occurs via an overreliance on search firms that have too few Black leaders in their networks; they routinely supply slates that lack racial and gender diversity. Their

top customers (presidents) have to insist that firms work harder to diversify candidate pools. And the diversification has to be real – meaning, not tokenizing and haphazardly tossing Black women's names on lists who actually stand no serious chance of being ultimately selected. Given the overrepresentation of Black women, men, and genderqueer student-athletes in revenue-generating sports, the least a president could do is work as hard as possible to fill the top athletics job with highly-qualified leaders who are Black. They exist.

Athletics directors hire associate and assistant athletics directors. They also hire head coaches (in partnerships with presidents in many contexts). ADs must be much more mindful and strategic in their efforts to diversify their leadership teams and coaching rosters. They should recognize that an underrepresentation of Black leaders in a department that profits largely from the labor of Black student-athletes is a sign of organizational contradiction. The absence of Black women coaches and administrators strongly conveys to Black women student-athletes that people like them are incapable or undeserving of opportunities to lead, which is far from true.

Following Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin's murder of George Floyd in summer 2020, some athletics departments hired their first-ever chief diversity officers. Those professionals and the important work they do must be protected during this era of assaults on DEI. Athletics CDOs are not exempt from legislative bans. Simply changing their titles and laying low about what they do for athletics departments are the wrong strategies. Big-time sports powerhouses have the ability

to correct the record about what DEI is and isn't. This has to occur before more states jump on the incredibly consequential 'DEI must DIE' bandwagon. Eliminating the Athletics CDO role will surely undo progress that has made departments more responsive, equitable, and inclusive for diverse student-athletes, including Black women.

To be sure, any effort that focuses on student-athletes' races, genders, sexual orientations, and gender identities qualifies as DEI. Black women and their teammates need more, not fewer of these initiatives. They need powerful campus administrators both within and beyond athletics to fight harder to protect campus-level CDOs, athletics department CDOs, and DEI efforts.

NCAA and Athletics Conferences

Mary Ellen Klas, a *Bloomberg* columnist, recently published an article titled, "NCAA Needs to Get Off the Bench in DEI Fight." She is right. The organization exists, in part, to protect student-athletes. Black women, other student-athletes of color, and LGBTQ+ student-athletes are lacking protection from politicized attacks on initiatives that help them succeed. ESPN estimates that the NCAA women's and men's basketball tournaments will generate approximately \$900 million, which is roughly 69% of the NCAA's total annual revenue. As usual, there are a lot of Black student-athletes in these tournaments; some of them are queer. At times, they make up 7, 8, 9, or all 10 players on courts in tournament games. The NCAA, conferences, and participating universities are profiting enormously from their labor. Defending DEI initiatives would be timely, well-deserved, and hard-earned payback.

The NCAA and athletics conferences also need to invest in stronger preparatory programs that result in more racially and gender diverse pipelines of recruitable coaches and senior-level athletics administrators. They could become suppliers of highly-qualified prospective hires to search firms, search committees, presidents, and ADs. Rotational experiences for diverse professionals at the NCAA headquarters in Indianapolis or at the various conference offices also could be beneficial. In addition to playing a role in diversifying athletics departments on campuses, these organizations themselves have to become far more rigorous and strategic in their internal efforts to hire, retain, and promote Black women.

Conclusion

Admittedly, my recommendations focus lopsidedly on defending DEI. These highly consequential times justify this emphasis. I know for sure that what I have proposed here does not capture the full spectrum of Black women's expectations and needs in intercollegiate athletics. I therefore reiterate my first and most important recommendation: recognize that Black women student-athletes are experts on their own experiences; invite their input on institutional, departmental, conference, and NCAA activities needed to improve racial and gender equity; and work as hard as possible to bring those women's bright ideas to fruition and sustain them over time.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr. Shaun Harper is one of our nation's most highly respected racial and gender equity experts. He is a Provost Professor in the Rossier School of Education, Marshall School of Business, and Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California. In 2022, he was appointed University Professor, a distinction bestowed only to 30 of 4,700 USC full-time faculty members. Dr. Harper also is the Clifford and Betty Allen Chair in Urban Leadership, founder and executive director of the USC Race and Equity Center, and a *Forbes* contributor. He served as the 2020-21 American Educational Research Association president and the 2016-17 Association for the Study of Higher Education president. He was inducted into the National Academy of Education in 2021.

Professor Harper has published over 100 peer-reviewed journal articles and other academic papers, plus an additional 125 op-eds and essays in major newspapers and magazines. His 12 books include *Scandals in College Sports*. He has been interviewed on ESPN, CNN, MSNBC, and NPR. *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Bleacher Report*, and several hundred other news outlets have quoted Shaun and featured his research. He also has worked with more than 400 educational institutions, businesses, government agencies, and professional sports organizations, including the NFL and Major League Baseball. The recipient of dozens of top awards in his field and four honorary degrees, Dr. Harper was ranked the nation's 4th most influential scholar in *Education Week* for 2023. His bachelor's degree is from Albany State, a public Historically Black University in Georgia. His master's and Ph.D. are from Indiana University.

Professor Harper's *Forbes* articles on DEI in business, politics, and higher education are available at uscrec.info/harperforbes



ABOUT THE USC RACE AND EQUITY CENTER

University of Southern California is home to a dynamic research, professional learning, and organizational improvement center that helps leaders strategically develop and achieve equity goals, better understand and correct climate problems, avoid and recover from DEI-related crises, and foster sustainable cultures of inclusion. Our rigorous approach is built on research, scalable and adaptable models of success, and continuous feedback from partners, clients, and communities.

The mission of the USC Race and Equity Center is to illuminate, disrupt, and dismantle racism in all its forms. We do this through rigorous interdisciplinary research, high-quality professional learning experiences, the production and wide dissemination

of useful tools, trustworthy consultations and strategy advising, and substantive partnerships. While race and ethnicity are at the epicenter of our work, we also value their intersectionality with other identities, and therefore aim to advance equity for all persons experiencing marginalization.

The Center annually serves hundreds of K-12 schools and districts, colleges and universities, government agencies, businesses and firms, and other organizations spanning a multitude of sectors. More than \$22 million in grants from Atlantic Philanthropies and the Bill and Melinda Gates, ECMC, Spencer, Ford, Lumina, Kellogg, Kresge, Sloan, College Futures, Annie E. Casey, and Open Society Foundations have funded our research and partnerships.

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