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**Annual  
Salute to**

# WOMEN IN SPORTS

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**Wednesday, October 13, 2021**

A FUNDRAISING BENEFIT FOR THE

**WSF Women's Sports  
Foundation**





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# Greetings

Sports, the universal connector. It draws people together and unites them in a common goal.

Once again, we come together to celebrate extraordinary achievements of women and leaders on and off the field of play, and to advocate for equality and inclusion, all to benefit young girls across the country. Welcome to our Annual Salute to Women in Sports.

As the world moves forward in this transitional year, we move too, with hope, encouragement and determination. We relish bringing people together via our Salute, be it virtually through our national broadcast or in-person. We are united in the common cause to be an ally, advocate and catalyst for tomorrow's leaders and to enable girls and women to reach their potential in sport and life.

## A year to celebrate and advocate

In a year that saw the first women coaches win Super Bowl rings, a former WNBA player become a franchise co-owner, and Team USA women in Tokyo winning 58% and 60% of the Team's Olympic and Paralympic medals, respectively, there is much to celebrate. The power, impact and popularity of women's sports and athletes continue to grow — with athletes serving as inspiration and role models, motivating the next generation of young girls to #KeepPlaying.

Our research has shown that sport participation provides many life-long benefits, including health and wellness, goal-setting and mastery, discipline, confidence and leadership skills. While our Salute welcomes everyone to revel in the celebration, it also serves to remind all of the ongoing need for equitable access, inclusion and opportunity in sport for girls and women.

Every game needs more girls. Every team, league, corporation and entity needs more women at the top. There is a reason why the equal sign is in every math equation — it's vital for the best result. Equitable access and opportunity adds up to a healthier society and a better world. We need your continued advocacy to get there.







# Greetings, cont.

## Our community and our gratitude

The WSF is strong and enduring because of our remarkable group of stakeholders — our founder Billie Jean King, our Board of Trustees and Trustees Emeriti, our National Partners, corporate supporters, athletes and fellow advocates. Through the generosity of our community — from our lead donors and partners to those who send sustaining contributions each month — our effectiveness and impact continue to grow. We are immensely grateful to all of whom make our work possible.

From the impact of the girl-serving community programs we serve to aspiring champions making their mark and women breaking glass ceilings, together we are showing the world what can happen when you give girls and women equal access and opportunity. And we thank you.

Yours in Sport,

Dr. Deborah Antoine  
WSF CEO

Phaidra Knight  
WSF President





# Our Partners

## Presenting Sponsors



## Award Partner



## Event Partners





# Benefactors

The Women's Sports Foundation is grateful to the following individuals and institutions who, by supporting the Annual Salute to Women in Sports, are advancing our advocacy, research and community impact programs on behalf of girls and women.

## Presenting Sponsors

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# Benefactors, cont.

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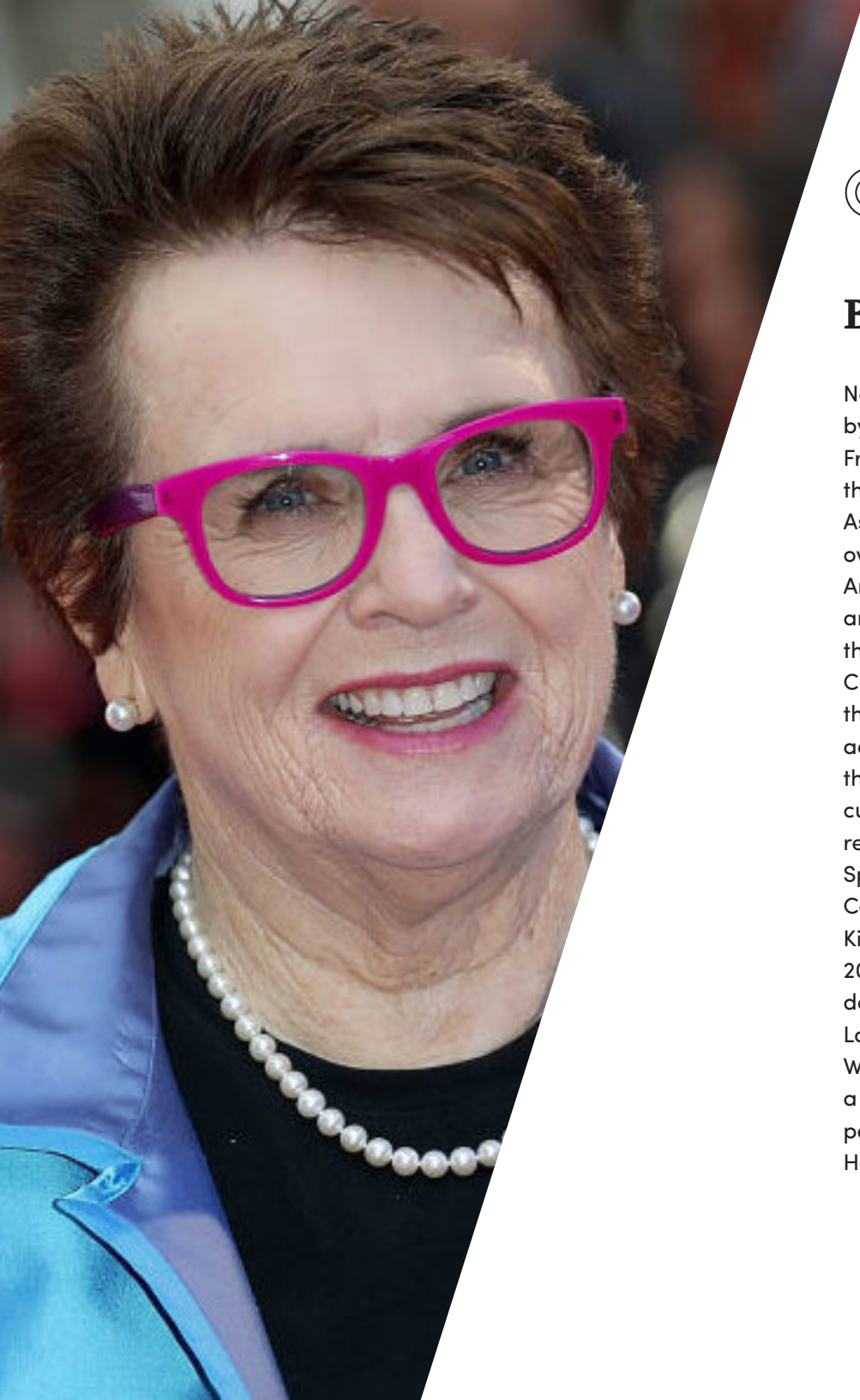
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*as of October 8, 2021*





# Our Founder

## Billie Jean King

Named one of the “100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century” by *Life* magazine and a 2009 recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Billie Jean King is the founder of Billie Jean King Enterprises, the Billie Jean King Leadership Initiative, the Women’s Tennis Association and the Women’s Sports Foundation. King is part of the ownership groups of the Los Angeles Dodgers, Los Angeles Sparks and Angel City FC. In September 2020 King became the first woman to have an annual global team sports event named in her honor when Fed Cup, the women’s world cup of tennis, was rebranded as the Billie Jean King Cup. The National Tennis Center, home of the US Open, was renamed the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in 2006 in honor of her accomplishments on and off the court. In 2017 Fox Searchlight released the critically acclaimed film, *Battle of the Sexes*, which depicts the cultural and social impact of the groundbreaking match. In 2018 King received a Lifetime Achievement Award as part of the prestigious BBC Sports Personality of the Year Awards; in 2019 King’s deep Southern California roots were recognized with the opening of the Billie Jean King Main Library in her hometown of Long Beach, California; and in 2020 King was honored with the release of the Billie Jean King Barbie doll, part of Mattel’s Inspiring Women Series. In 2021 King received the Laureus Lifetime Achievement Award. King serves on the board of the Women’s Sports Foundation, is an adidas Global Ambassador and is a past member of the board of the Elton John AIDS Foundation and a past member of the President’s Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition. Her autobiography, *All In*, was released in August 2021.



# Host, National Broadcast

## Jessica Mendoza

Two-time Olympic medalist Jessica Mendoza broke the professional baseball glass ceiling on August 24, 2015, when she became the first woman in history to serve as an analyst for a Major League Baseball game, which she did for ESPN. She has since become one of the leading voices in ESPN's Major League Baseball coverage. Mendoza continued her trailblazing ways in 2020, becoming the first woman to serve as a World Series game analyst. She spent this summer covering the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo as a softball and baseball analyst.

Mendoza's success wasn't born overnight. She was a softball standout at Stanford University who led the Cardinal to its first Women's College World Series appearance. A four-time First-Team All-American, Mendoza is also an Olympic gold and silver medalist and a three-time world champion. These accomplishments helped pave the way for her induction into the National Softball Hall of Fame in 2019.

In addition to her in-booth duties with Major League Baseball, Mendoza recently spent one season as a special advisor for the New York Mets, is a correspondent for "Good Morning America" and since 2007 has served as the lead analyst for ESPN's coverage of the NCAA Women's College World Series. She also served as the Women's Sports Foundation President in 2009 and 2010 and was the WSF Team Sportswoman of the Year in 2008.





# Host, NYC Celebration

## Katrina Adams

Katrina Adams is a woman of many firsts: the first African American to lead the United States Tennis Association (USTA), its first two-term chair and president (2015–18) and the first former player to hold that honor. The USTA achieved several major milestones under her tutelage, including the opening of the 100-court USTA National Campus in Florida, the strategic transformation of the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in Flushing Meadows, N.Y., and an unprecedented outreach into underserved communities in an effort to share the sport of tennis with more people.

As a collegiate athlete, Adams led Northwestern University to a Big Ten Championship in 1986 before winning the 1987 NCAA Doubles Championship. A familiar face in sports commentary since 2003, Adams also competed professionally for 12 years on the WTA Tour, winning 20 career doubles titles and reaching the quarterfinals or better in doubles at all four Grand Slam events.

Adams has been named on the “Most Powerful Women in Sports” list of both *Adweek* (2016, 2017) and *Forbes* (2017), as well as *Ebony*’s “Power 100” list (2017). She holds leadership positions within the International Tennis Federation, Billie Jean King Cup Committee, Gender Equality in Tennis Committee, International Tennis Hall of Fame, and Harlem Junior Tennis and Education Program. Adams is a co-host on CBS Sport Network’s “We Need to Talk” and also maintains various board positions with Athletes Unlimited, Full Court Tennis and Highlight Pro Skydiving Team, among others. Her maiden novel, *Own the Arena*, was published earlier this year.





# Board of Trustees & Trustees Emeriti

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Jim Wilkinson

# Special Guests

## Appearing at NYC Celebration

### **Bianca Belair, *WWE Superstar***

WWE debut, 2017; winner, SmackDown Women's Championship, 2021; first Black woman to headline WrestleMania; strong presence with WWE Community partners, working with Girl Up, Special Olympics and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America

### **Sasha DiGiulian, *Climbing***

USA Climbing National Champion (Sport), 2010, 2011, 2012; overall female world champion, 2011; five-time Pan American gold medalist (bouldering, sport and combined), 2010, 2012; climber who accomplished over 30 first female ascents and eight significant first ascents around the world, including the first female free ascent of Mora Mora, one of the world's most challenging walls, 2017 <sup>B, AAP</sup>

### **Grete Eliassen, *Skiing***

Six-time Winter X Games medalist (gold, 2005, 2006; silver, 2007, 2009; bronze, 2010, 2011); four-time U.S. Open Champion, 2004–07; two-time world championships bronze medalist, 2005, 2013; Guinness World Record holder for Women's Hip Jump <sup>PP, AAP</sup>

### **Aja Evans, *Bobsled***

Olympic bronze medalist, 2014; Olympian, 2018; seven-time World Cup medalist; Women's Bobsled World Cup gold medalist, 2016; world championship bronze medalist, 2017; USA Bobsled Rookie of the Year, U.S. Push Champion, 2012 <sup>TT, AAP</sup>

### **Sarah Fisher, *Auto Racer***

Nine-time Indianapolis 500 starter, the most by a woman; first woman to win the pole position for a major North American open-wheel event; fastest woman to qualify for the Indianapolis 500; current track record holder at Kentucky Speedway; four-time "Most Popular Driver" in INDYCAR and NASCAR series

### **Rachel Garcia, *Softball***

Olympic silver medalist, 2020; WBSC Women's World Championship gold medalist, 2018; Japan Cup gold medalist, 2019; USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year, 2018, 2019; two-time Honda Cup winner, 2019, 2021; NCAA champion with UCLA, 2019 <sup>AAP</sup>

PP – Past President, Women's Sports Foundation; B – Current Member, Board of Trustees; AAP – Current Member, Athlete Advisory Panel; TT – Grantee, Travel & Training Fund; CCG – Grantee, The Power of She Child Care Fund; SOY – 2021 Sportswoman of the Year; WR – Wilma Rudolph Courage Award, past recipient; AA – WSF Athlete Ambassador



# Special Guests, cont.

## **Sophia Herzog, *Swimming***

Paralympic bronze medalist, 2020; Paralympic silver medalist, 2016; six-time Pan Pacific Para Swimming Championships gold medalist, 2018; world championship gold medalist, 2017<sup>TT, AA</sup>

## **Wendy Hilliard, *Rhythmic Gymnastics***

Three-time world championships participant, 1979, 1981, 1983; nine-time U.S. national team member; USOC Rings of Gold Award recipient, 2001; USA Gymnastics Hall of Fame inductee, 2008; World Acrobatics Society Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, 2021<sup>PP, TT</sup>

## **Sarah Hughes, *Figure Skating***

Olympic gold medalist, 2002; five-time U.S. national championships medalist; USOC Sportswoman of the Year, 2002; James E. Sullivan Award recipient, 2002; ESPY Award winner for “Best Olympian,” 2002; U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame inductee, 2002; WSF Sportswoman of the Year, 2002<sup>AAP</sup>

## **Phaidra Knight, *Rugby, MMA***

U.S. Women’s Rugby National Team player, 1999–2013; three-time Women’s Rugby World Cup participant; All-World Team honoree, 2002, 2006; USA Rugby’s Player of the Decade, 2010; World Rugby Hall of Fame inductee, 2017; current WSF President<sup>AAP, B, TT</sup>

## **Jessica Long, *Swimming***

Sixteen-time Paralympic gold medalist, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016, 2020; eight-time Paralympic silver medalist; five-time Paralympic bronze medalist; five-time Paralympian, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016, 2020; 32-time world championships gold medalist; two-time *Sports Illustrated* “World’s Best Female Athletes” list member, 2001, 2006<sup>AAP</sup>

## **Tatyana McFadden, *Track & Field***

Eight-time Paralympic gold medalist, 2012, 2016, 2020; eight-time Paralympic silver medalist; four-time Paralympic bronze medalist; five-time world championship gold medalist; six-time Paralympian, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2020; first athlete to win three consecutive wheelchair marathon Grand Slams — Boston, London, Chicago and New York — in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016<sup>WR, AA</sup>

## **Natalya, *WWE Superstar***

Third-generation professional wrestler who holds multiple championships since debuting with WWE in 2008 and has been continually involved in WWE Community activations, supporting Girl Up, UNICEF USA and Susan G. Komen

PP – Past President, Women’s Sports Foundation; B – Current Member, Board of Trustees; AAP – Current Member, Athlete Advisory Panel; TT – Grantee, Travel & Training Fund; CCG – Grantee, The Power of She Child Care Fund; SOY – 2021 Sportswoman of the Year; WR – Wilma Rudolph Courage Award, past recipient; AA – WSF Athlete Ambassador

# Special Guests, cont.

## **Dawn Riley, *Sailing***

First woman to manage an America's Cup syndicate, 1992; first American to sail in three America's Cups and two Whitbread Round the World (now The Ocean Race) races; Rolex Yachtswoman of the Year, 1999; *Sports Illustrated* "Top 100 Greatest Female Athletes of the 20th Century" list member; National Sailing Hall of Fame inductee, 2021<sup>PP</sup>

## **Angela Ruggiero, *Ice Hockey***

Olympic gold medalist, 1998; Olympic silver medalist, 2002, 2010; Olympic bronze medalist, 2006; four-time world championship gold medalist, 2005, 2008, 2009, 2011; nine-time U.S. Women's National Team member; NCAA championship participant with Harvard University; member: U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame, U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee Hall of Fame<sup>PP, AAP</sup>

## **Maggie Steffens, *Water Polo***

Three-time Olympic gold medalist, 2012, 2016, 2020; three-time FINA World Championships gold medalist, 2015, 2017, 2019; three-time NCAA champion with Stanford University, 2014, 2015, 2017; two-time FINA World Player of the Year, 2012, 2014; Olympic scoring record-holder for most goals scored in water polo with 49<sup>TT, AA</sup>

## **Lora Webster, *Sitting Volleyball***

Two-time Paralympic gold medalist, 2016, 2020; Paralympic silver medalist, 2008, 2012; Paralympic bronze medalist, 2004; five-time Paralympian; World ParaVolley Championship silver medalist, 2018<sup>CCG</sup>

# Appearing in the Broadcast

## **Meghan Duggan, *Ice Hockey***

Olympic gold medalist, 2018; two-time Olympic silver medalist, 2010, 2014; world championship gold medalist, 2017; two-time Clarkson Cup champion, 2012, 2015; ESPN Sports Humanitarian Team of the Year recipient, 2018<sup>AAP, B, WR</sup>

## **Kaleo MacLay, *Sitting Volleyball***

Two-time Paralympic gold medalist, 2016, 2020; Paralympic silver medalist, 2012; World ParaVolley Super 6 and Parapan American Games gold medalist, 2019; World ParaVolley Championship silver medalist, 2018<sup>CCG</sup>

PP – Past President, Women's Sports Foundation; B – Current Member, Board of Trustees; AAP – Current Member, Athlete Advisory Panel; TT – Grantee, Travel & Training Fund; CCG – Grantee, The Power of She Child Care Fund; SOY – 2021 Sportswoman of the Year; WR – Wilma Rudolph Courage Award, past recipient; AA – WSF Athlete Ambassador



# Special Guests, cont.

## **Kendall Coyne Schofield, *Ice Hockey***

Olympic gold medalist, 2018; Olympic silver medalist, 2014; six-time world championship gold medalist, 2011, 2013, 2015-17, 2019; world championships silver medalist, 2012; six-time Four Nations Cup champion, 2011, 2012, 2015-18; USA Hockey Bob Allen Women's Player of the Year, 2019 <sup>AA, WR</sup>

## **Naya Tapper, *Rugby***

Olympian, 2020; gold and silver medalist, World Rugby Sevens Series, 2018; World Rugby Sevens Series silver medalist, 2017 <sup>AA</sup>

## **Elana Meyers Taylor, *Bobsled***

Olympic silver medalist, 2014, 2018; Olympic bronze medalist, 2010; eight-time World Championships medalist, 2009-2017; nine-time U.S. Push Champion; four-time USABS Women's Bobsled Athlete of the Year, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017; first U.S. bobsled driver in 56 years to win a World Championship title on a non-North American track, 2015 <sup>AAP, TT, PP</sup>

## **Community Partner & Young Athletes**

### **The Cycle Effect**

**Roxana Alvarado, *Participant, Mountain Biking***

**Alexa Colin Carbajal, *Participant, Mountain Biking***

**Isabel Rodriguez, *Coach***

### **SurfearNEGRA**

**Nina Stouffer, *Participant, Surfing***

### **Junior Tennis Champions Center**

**Robin Montgomery, *Participant, Tennis***

2021 US Open Girls Singles and Doubles Champion

PP – Past President, Women's Sports Foundation; B – Current Member, Board of Trustees; AAP – Current Member, Athlete Advisory Panel; TT – Grantee, Travel & Training Fund; CCG – Grantee, The Power of She Child Care Fund; SOY – 2021 Sportswoman of the Year; WR – Wilma Rudolph Courage Award, past recipient; AA – WSF Athlete Ambassador

*as of October 8, 2021*

# Awards

## **Wilma Rudolph Courage Award**

The Wilma Rudolph Courage Award is presented to a female athlete who exhibits extraordinary courage in her athletic performance, demonstrates the ability to overcome adversity, makes significant contributions to sports and serves as an inspiration and role model for others. The award is named in honor of Wilma Rudolph, the first American woman to win three gold medals in an Olympic Games. Rudolph overcame many childhood diseases, including polio, to become a world champion. Rudolph died in 1994 of brain cancer.

## **Champion for Equality Award**

The Champion for Equality Award is presented to an individual or organization that has shown an unwavering commitment to gender equality and to the advancement of girls and women in sports. Through their personal and professional example, the recipients have inspired others to advocate for diversity and inclusion, to hire, support, mentor and elevate women, and to strive for equality because it's the right thing to do.

## **Billie Jean King Leadership Award**

The Billie Jean King Leadership Award, presented with the Billie Jean King Leadership Initiative, honors an individual or group who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and made significant contributions to the advancement of women through achievements in sports and the workplace. Through their personal and professional example, the recipients have inspired women and girls and demonstrated a lasting commitment to the growth of sports and physical activity for all women and girls. The Leadership Award is presented with the Billie Jean King Leadership Initiative, a non-profit dedicated to promoting equality and inclusion in the workplace. Founded by Billie Jean King in 2014, the organization advocates for equal pay for equal work, and partners with leaders who are making positive change.

## **Sportswoman of the Year Award**

Every athlete has at least one crowning moment in their career when they feel completely invincible. A truly exceptional athlete has many such moments throughout her athletic career. When a series of high points comes in a particular year, the athlete earns a special distinction of being eligible for the Women's Sports Foundation Sportswoman of the Year Award. Two champions – one individual and one team sport athlete – are honored for extraordinary performances that distinguish them from their peers.



A photograph of three young girls running through a grassy field under a clear blue sky. The girl in the foreground is wearing an orange t-shirt and dark shorts, smiling broadly. Behind her, another girl in a red and white striped shirt is also running and smiling. To the left, a third girl in a white tank top is partially visible, also running. The image has a bright, sunny feel with a pink diagonal graphic element on the right side.

Our 2021  
honorees  
are...





© Graham Denholm/Getty Images

# Wilma Rudolph Courage Award

## Naomi Osaka

Four-time Grand Slam Champion, Tennis

Tennis pro, trendsetter, activist, mental health advocate, and history maker are just a few monikers that describe our 2021 Wilma Rudolph Courage Award recipient, Naomi Osaka.

Since breaking into the professional tennis circuit with her powerful serve and strong forehand in 2013, Osaka has become a four-time Grand Slam champion — winning both the US Open and the Australian Open twice. Osaka is the first Asian player to hold the WTA world number-one ranking in singles and the first Japanese player to win a Grand Slam. Representing her native country of Japan, Osaka was bestowed the prestigious honor of lighting the cauldron at the opening ceremony for the 2020 Olympic Games.

Osaka has become known as a voice in activism on and off the court. She ceaselessly uses her platform and her voice to advocate for social change, gender equity in sport, and mental health. During last year's Western and Southern Open, she withdrew from playing, helping to raise awareness for the tragic deaths of Jacob Blake, Tamir Rice and many other Black men and women. Her powerful message on social media resulted in the tournament pausing play for 24 hours.

# Wilma Rudolph Courage Award

Three days later, Osaka walked into Arthur Ashe Stadium wearing a black face covering. It bore the name Breonna Taylor, a Black woman who was fatally shot by police. Over the course of the US Open, Osaka wore a different mask for each of her seven victories, each mask commemorating a Black person who was a victim of violence. Osaka emerged as the champion of the US Open, lifting the trophy to honor Black lives and making a bold statement against racism and inequality.

Earlier this year, Osaka took a stand for her own mental well-being and, in so doing, brought world-wide attention to the topic of mental health and the challenges elite athletes face. Expectations, constant demand and the weight of perfectionism can all spur anxiety. Heralded by the fans as you rise, yet the cheers can turn in a moment when you falter. With the courage to put her mental well-being first, Osaka received accolades from health-care professionals and appreciation from fellow athletes across sports, and she spurred the general public to stop and think about mental health. Courage and character beyond her 23 years.

Pursuing passion and achievements off the court as well, Osaka made her debut at New York Fashion Week in 2020, showcasing a collection she co-designed with Adeam, and served as co-host of the 2021 MET Gala. Osaka is also an entrepreneur, recently launching a skincare brand named KINLO, in homage to her bicultural heritage (Kin and Lo meaning “gold” in Japanese and Haitian Creole, respectively.)

Osaka is a three-time member of Time’s annual list of the 100 most influential people in the world and was named one of the 2020 *Sports Illustrated* Sportspersons of the Year and *Adweek* Most Powerful Women in Sports.

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***“Before I am an athlete, I am a Black woman. And as a Black woman, I feel as though there are much more important matters at hand that need immediate attention, rather than watching me play tennis.”***



# Champion for Equality Award

## Larry Scott

Former Commissioner, Pac-12 Conference; former Chairman & CEO, WTA Tour

Throughout his career, Larry Scott has been a bold, innovative leader with a vision for transformative change. From fighting for equal prize money at Wimbledon to creating the Pac-12 Networks, which exponentially grew the broadcast of collegiate women's sports, and co-creating a fund designed to recruit and retain more women in collegiate coaching — these achievements and more propelled Larry Scott to be named our 2021 Champion for Equality Award recipient.

In his most recent role as Pac-12 Commissioner, Scott orchestrated an unprecedented revitalization of the conference, including but not limited to: transforming both its men's and women's basketball tournaments into must-attend events; creating Pac-12 Networks, the first integrated media company owned by a collegiate conference, and one that dramatically increased exposure for women's and Olympic sports. Scott also was the impetus for the WSF to honor the remarkable career of Stanford Women's Basketball Coach, Tara VanDerveer. In partnership with the WSF, he established the Tara VanDerveer Fund for the Advancement of Women in Coaching, specifically designed to help build the pipeline of women coaches — a critical need, given the paucity of women in collegiate coaching positions.



# Champion for Equality Award

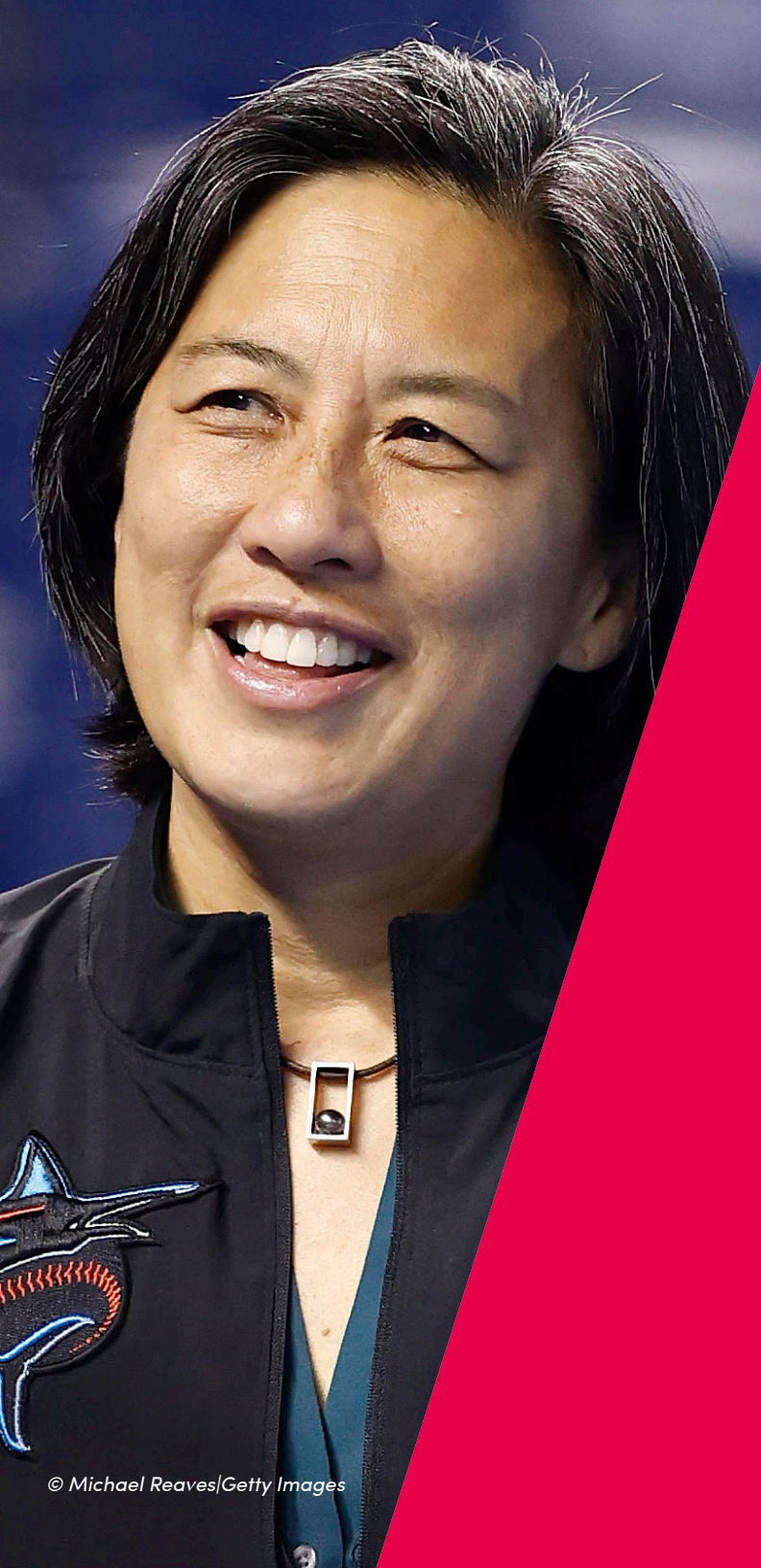
Prior to joining the Pac-12, Scott served for six years as Chairman and CEO of the Sony Ericsson Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Tour, where he helped generate unprecedented growth and popularity for women's professional tennis on a global scale. Scott worked with WSF Founder Billie Jean King and others to achieve the long-sought goal of equal prize money for women in tennis' grand slam events. He also became the architect of the largest-ever sponsorship in both women's sports and professional tennis, a six-year \$88-million title sponsorship agreement with Sony Ericsson. His many other WTA achievements include the largest television deal in women's tennis history, a reform package that led to a 40 percent increase in prize money and \$750 million in facilities investments, and a partnership with UNESCO to support gender equity around the world.

Scott has been a finalist for the Sports Executive of the Year Award given by *Sports Business Journal* and was awarded the Vision Award by Cynopsis Sports. He was also honored with the Americanism Award by the Anti-Defamation League, in tribute to his mission of fostering positive change through sports, and where he currently serves as Vice Chair of the Board of Directors.

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***“When I look at fan attendance, sponsorship and TV hours for women’s sports, the excitement and interest is there. I want to see a pioneering, bold TV network or sponsor step up and bet on women, bet BIG on the future.”***





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# Billie Jean King Leadership Award

## Kim Ng

General Manager, Miami Marlins

Each year the Billie Jean King Leadership award is presented to an individual who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and made significant contributions to the advancement of women through achievements in sports and the workplace. This year we honor Kim Ng, the Miami Marlins General Manager, for her excellence, persistence and commitment to breaking down barriers in sports.

Ng joined the Marlins organization in November 2020, becoming the fifth person in club history to hold the top position in baseball operations. She is the highest-ranking woman in baseball operations among the 30 MLB teams, the highest-ranking Asian-American female baseball executive, and the first woman hired to the general manager position by any of the professional men's sports teams in the North American major leagues.

A recognized trailblazer, Ng has more than 30 years in Major League Baseball, including a combined 21 years of experience in the front offices for the Chicago White Sox (1990–96), New York Yankees (1998–2001), and Los Angeles Dodgers (2002–11). She has been an integral part of eight postseason appearances, including six league championship series and



# Billie Jean King Leadership Award

three World Championships (all with the Yankees, 1998–2000). Prior to the Marlins, Ng spent nine years as Senior Vice President of Baseball Operations with MLB, where she directed international baseball operations, working with the front offices of the 30 major league clubs and many other baseball leagues and entities around the world. Ng also focused her efforts on growing the game of baseball, leading MLB's efforts to improve the quality of play, caliber of talent, and rate of participation for amateur baseball around the world while also supervising MLB playing initiatives for girls and women. Additionally, she served on MLB's Diversity Pipeline Advisory Committee.

Ng has appeared on *Forbes'* list of the Most Influential Minorities in Sports, *Forbes'* list of the Most Influential Women in Sports, and *Adweek's* Most Powerful Women in Sports. Most

recently, she was named one of *InStyle Magazine's* Badass 50 Women, and was included among the *South Florida Business Journal's* Power Leaders. Ng serves on the Anti-Defamation League's Sports Leadership Council, and took part in the 2021 Presidential Inauguration as part of the Celebrating America event.

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***“When I got into this business, it seemed unlikely a woman would lead a major league team, but I am dogged in the pursuit of my goals.”***



© Harry How/Getty Images

# Individual Sportswoman of the Year

## Allyson Felix

Track & Field

World record holder, 11-time Olympic medalist, 18-time World Championship medalist over the course of her two-decades-long career, a historic performance at the 2020 Tokyo Games. Allyson Felix is a powerhouse, and this year's WSF Individual Sportswoman of the Year Award winner.

In Tokyo, Felix earned a bronze medal in the 400-meter race — her first Olympic event since giving birth to her daughter, Camryn, in 2018 — breaking her own 400-meter W 35 (women athletes between the ages of 35–39) masters athletic record in the process. She followed up that strong performance by helping the U.S. women's 4x400-meter relay team win the gold medal the following day with the fifth-fastest time in the event's history. Since she stated prior to the 2020 Olympic Games her intention to retire before the 2024 Games, winning gold in her final Olympic race was especially meaningful for Felix, as it moved her ahead of Carl Lewis to become the most decorated American track & field Olympian in history.

At this stage of her career, Felix also has found passions off the track, which she believes are her true calling. She is driven by all of her experiences



# Individual Sportswoman of the Year

— as athlete, mom and social justice advocate — to use her voice to create change for mom-athletes and all women who are striving to successfully combine their professional careers and motherhood. Earlier this year she launched her own footwear company, Saysh, designed for and by women, which she wore during her historic Tokyo performance. Through her advocacy and increasing awareness of the challenges mom-athletes face in sport, Felix helped inspire the Power of She: Child Care Grant, a new program launched in partnership with Athleta and the Women's Sports Foundation to help support mom-athletes and allow them to compete without barriers. Additionally, Felix serves on the board of Right To Play, raising awareness for underserved children in developing regions, as well as &Mother, which envisions “a culture where motherhood is not a limiting factor in how women succeed professionally or personally.”

Having accomplished so much through sport, Felix says that her true, greatest achievement and greatest love is her daughter, who reminds her every day that she can never stop fighting for what is right in this world. She continues to strive for greatness in all areas, demonstrating that we all can achieve things we have never even dreamed of.





# Team Sportswoman of the Year

## Jordan Larson

Volleyball

When the U.S. Women's National Volleyball Team won their first Olympic gold medal at the Tokyo Games, Jordan Larson was the one to score the winning point. When her kill made contact with the court, Larson collapsed to the floor in pure joy and was embraced by her teammates. Larson, who has been team captain since 2017, had finally achieved her dream of being an Olympic gold medalist. The U.S. women swept Brazil, who had never lost an Olympic final before, 3-0 (25-21, 25-20, 25-14). Larson's incredible performance, including being named both Olympic Most Valuable Player and best outside hitter of this historic team, is why she is this year's WSF Team Sportswoman of the Year Award winner.

Larson is one of the premier all-around players in her sport. She has an exceptionally high IQ on the court, which has easily earned the respect of teammates and competitors alike. The past year has been especially momentous for Larson, adding gold medals and championship titles to her impressive list of accolades. With the inaugural season of the Athlete Unlimited volleyball league in February of 2021, Larson was finally able to play professionally in the United States. Larson was not only the first player to sign with the new league, she was the inaugural season's champion



# Team Sportswoman of the Year

after earning 4,569 points over the five-week-long season. In June, Larson won her first gold medal of the year in the 2021 FIVB Volleyball Women's Nations League finals. The U.S. women's team beat the Brazilian squad, 3-1 (26-28, 25-23, 25-23, 25-21) to claim the gold. And just a few months earlier, in 2020, Larson became one of the youngest members to be inducted into the University of Nebraska Hall of Fame. While she was a Husker, Larson won a national championship in 2006, and in 2008 she became the first woman in Big 12 history to be named the league's Player of the Year and Defensive Player of the Year in the same season.

Now a three-time Olympian, winning silver and bronze medals in the 2012 and 2016 Olympics, Larson has played professionally in Puerto Rico, Russia, Turkey, China and the United States. To sustain her on this inspiring journey, she treasures every challenge along the way and proudly wears the "Play For Kae" tattoo on her left wrist in memory of her mom, who lost her fight to breast cancer in 2009.



# Women's Sports Foundation Team

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# In Memoriam

## All-American Girls Professional Baseball League

The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL) was a professional women's baseball league, which was founded by Philip K. Wrigley in 1943 and existed until 1954.

The AAGPBL is the forerunner of women's professional sports leagues in the United States. More than 600 women played in the league, which eventually consisted of 10 teams located in the American Midwest. In 1948, league attendance peaked at over 900,000 spectators. The most successful team, the Rockford Peaches, won a league-best four championships. The 1992 motion picture *A League of Their Own* is a mostly fictionalized account of the early days of the league and its stars.

All members were inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1988.

**Rita J. (Rehrer) Carteaux, 93, Baseball**

Peoria Redwings, Racine Belles

**Dorothy Christ, 95, Baseball**

Fort Wayne Daisies, South Bend Blue Sox

**Alice (Tognotti) Collins, 93, Baseball**

Fort Wayne Daisies

**Audrey Haine Daniels, 94, Baseball**

Minneapolis Millerettes, Fort Wayne Daisies, Grand Rapids Chicks, Peoria Redwings, Rockford Peaches

**Helen "Nickie" Nicol Fox, 101, Baseball**

Kenosha Comets, Rockford Peaches

**Julie Kathleen "Gutzie" Gutz, 94, Baseball**

Springfield Sallies, Muskegon Lassies, Kenosha Comets

**Grace Piskula, 94, Baseball**

Rockford Peaches

**Therese "Terry" Uselmann, 93, Baseball**

Muskegon Lassies

**Joyce Westerman, 95, Baseball**

Grand Rapids Chicks, Fort Wayne Daisies, Racine Belles, Peoria Redwings, South Bend Blue Sox

**Violet Kathleen (Schmidt) Weitzman, 93, Baseball**

Rockford Peaches



# In Memoriam, cont.

## **Nancy Darsch, 68, Basketball**

Head women's basketball coach at Ohio State University for 12 years who led the Buckeyes to their lone Final Four appearance, in 1993, Darsch began her coaching career as an assistant at Tennessee under the legendary Pat Summitt. After her NCAA career, Darsch became the first coach to win a WNBA game as head coach of the New York Liberty in 1997. Summitt and Darsch teamed up again, with Summitt as head coach and Darsch as an assistant coach, when they won gold with USA Basketball at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles and the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta.

## **Sue Donohoe, 61, Basketball**

Donohoe joined the NCAA in 1999, serving as the director of the Division I women's basketball tournament and in 2002-03 held that position for the Division I men's tournament. From 2002-11 Donohoe served as the NCAA's Vice President of Women's Basketball and later became the Director of the Kay Yow Cancer Fund until 2015. Before she joined the NCAA, Donohoe served as the Assistant and later Associate Commissioner of the Southland Conference. Donohoe was also the Associate Director of Athletics at Arkansas, where she was previously an assistant women's basketball coach under Gary Blair.

## **Christan Dowling, 47, Softball**

A member of the first USA Softball Women's Slow Pitch National Team, Dowling participated with the Red, White and Blue at the inaugural Women's Border Battle, appearing in every game of the competition and leading the team with two home runs, five walks and a 2.000 slugging percentage with five RBIs and three runs scored. In 2018, Dowling was named USA Softball Female Slow Pitch Athlete of the Year, and in 2019 was inducted into the USSSA Hall of Fame.

## **Dianne Durham, 52, Gymnastics**

Durham was the first Black senior national gymnastics champion for the United States. Known for a combination of skill, artistic expression and power on the mat, Durham and her teammate, Mary Lou Retton, ushered the sport of gymnastics past an era dominated by tumbling and fast-paced progression. Durham is remembered by many as a trailblazer in the sport of gymnastics, making history during the 1983 national championships when she became the first Black woman to win an event.

## **Margaret Forsyth, 59, Netball**

Forsyth was selected for the New Zealand national netball team, the Silver Ferns, in 1979 at the age of 17. During the 1980s, Forsyth formed a notable shooting partnership with fellow Silver Ferns shooter Margharet Matenga, known together as the "two Margs." She continued with the team until 1987, competing at three INF Netball World Cups, winning two gold medals (1979, 1987) and one silver (1983).

# In Memoriam, cont.

## **Elaine Hagin, 92, Bowling**

During her 30-year tenure with the Women's International Bowling Congress, she served as seventh vice president, sixth vice president, fourth vice president, second vice president, and first vice president. While president of the Young American Bowling Alliance and USA Bowling, Hagin played an integral role in the sport of bowling's ongoing journey toward Olympic inclusion. Throughout her long career, Hagin was a director for the International Bowling Media Association and was a member of the advisory board for the Women's Sports Foundation. In 1999, she received the Women's Sports Foundation President's Award. Hagin was inducted into the United States Bowling Congress Hall of Fame in 2000.

## **Shirley Fry Irvin, 94, Tennis**

Irvin won her first Grand Slam singles title at the French Open in 1951, when she beat her friend and doubles partner, Doris Hart. She won three consecutive major titles in the 1950s to complete a career Grand Slam. From 1946 to 1956, she finished the year ranked in the top 10 nine times. Irvin also won 13 Grand Slam doubles titles with Hart, taking both the French Open and US Open four times and Wimbledon three times. She is one of 10 women to win singles titles at all four major championships and has a career grand slam in both singles and doubles tennis.

## **Bertha Lucas, 102, Volleyball**

A longtime volleyball player and coach who attended 65 straight USA Volleyball Open National Championships from 1953 to 2018, Lucas competed until the age of 85. Remembered for more than just being a player and coach, she served as a manager, international chaperon, national player representative, National Governing Body member, USA Volleyball Board of Directors member, tournament director, clinician, innovator, and promoter. She has received countless awards, including the USAV Leader in Volleyball Award, Harry E. Wilson Award for community service, Dr. Harold T. Friermood "Frier" Award and All-Time Great Coach Award. In 2018, Lucas was awarded the Mintonette Medallion of Merit at the International Volleyball Hall of Fame.

## **Janet Moreau, 93, Track & Field**

Moreau competed in the 1951 Pan American Games on the gold-medal-winning 4x100-relay team while a senior at Boston University. The following year, she competed in the 4x100 meters race for the United States in the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki, Finland, where she again won the gold medal with her teammates Mae Faggs, Barbara Jones, and Catherine Hardy. Moreau was a national champion in the 50-yard dash, 220-yard dash, and was a five-time national champion of the standing long jump. She was inducted into the Rhode Island Heritage Hall of Fame in 1968.



# In Memoriam, cont.

## **Alegna Osorio, 19, Track & Field**

A Cuban Youth Olympics hammer thrower who tragically died from head injuries sustained in a training accident, Osorio placed fourth in the girls' event at the 2018 Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires and took bronze at the Pan-American under-20 championships in 2019. Her personal best in the event was 63.90m (5kg), and she had aspired to represent Cuba in the 2020 Olympic Games.

## **Julie Ditty Qualls, 42, Tennis**

An All-American tennis player at Vanderbilt University in 2002 and No. 1 singles player in the U.S. at the 14-under and 21-under levels before turning pro, Ditty Qualls played the majority of her career on the USTA Pro Circuit, winning 38 titles. In the best season of her career, she held a 49-25 record on the WTA tour and reached No. 93. The sixth-oldest player to make their top-100 debut in WTA rankings history, doing so at the age of 28, Qualls qualified for the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon main draws in 2009.



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