

My first exposure to sports was playing Pee-Wee league baseball at the age of about 8. I remember sitting in the outfield, picking blades of grass because I was bored while waiting for the ball. That is, until I heard my name being called, more like yelled; there was a fly ball headed my way. The best ending to a story is what happened, I caught the fly ball!! I never played baseball again or softball for that matter but therein started my love for sport and competitive play.

I am a 2002 graduate of Central Michigan University and a 2007 graduate of the University of Tennessee (GO VOLS!!), where I earned my master's in social work. I am currently embedded in athletics at Indiana University as a member of the Sport Psych team and have been since September 2019 as their Athletic Counselor.

Before my current position, I worked with student-athletes at IUPUI, providing mental health support and performance tools. In my past lives, I've had experience in a myriad of settings, including an outdoor wilderness camp, K-12 public education as a therapist and school social worker, and in a community mental health organization throughout my professional career. I coached track & field for 20 years, coaching in Michigan, Tennessee, and Indiana, where I earned accolades for Coach of the Year in 2012.

I am a founding member of this alliance, when it was first called the National Alliance of Social Workers in Sport, and I presented at the inaugural symposium in Denver at Metropolitan State University in 2015.

In recent years, I took a break from serving on the board to pursue graduate-level teaching and my LCSW and CMPC certifications. I am pleased to say I am now an LCSW, CMPC, and have the time and space to re-engage with the Alliance in a more active and participatory way.

I self-nominated for the At-Large seat on the board. As part of the Alliance's Vision, "*to integrate social work practice into all realms of sport*", I have found myself attempting to do that within our athletic department and want to continue participating at a higher level with a national organization that continues to find ways to do it. *Each one teach one.*

One of the ways I hope to add value to the board and the organization is through the work I do daily. And while I recognize every institution is different and not every place does it like Indiana does, being 'in the trenches,' as the saying goes, is useful.

Another way I'd like to add value as a board member is with the 20 years of coaching experience I have, the almost 19 years of being a social worker, and just over six years of working in a Power 4 athletic department. Each of those experiences has created a specific kind of expertise that can provide wisdom, a broad knowledge base, and perspective.

When I was the Communications Director on the Board some years ago, we would consistently receive inquiries about being a Sport Social Worker, what it entailed, and how to get to be one. That is something I continue to experience in my current position, and it brings me great joy to help this field flourish. I'd like to continue mentoring people newer to the field or curious about the work we do. I would also love ASWIS to be a household name of sorts, for people to NOT be surprised that this organization exists or caught off guard that Sport Social Work is even a thing.

At Indiana, I am the Educational & Outreach Liaison on the Mental Health Task Force in Athletics, which puts me in a position of brainstorming and executing initiatives and gathering feedback from student-athletes. It also requires me to work alongside an interdisciplinary team of coaches, athletic trainers, sport administrators, mental health colleagues, sport science experts and academic advisors.

All these experiences make me an exceptional candidate to be the At-Large seat on the Executive Board of ASWIS.