

SPORTS

Move over Drew Rosenhaus. Shyra Johnson has become the youngest sports agent in history

Zach Weinberger Special to The Post

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Drew Rosenhaus is one of the most famous sports agents in the nation and does not like to get beat when it comes to signing players.

But a recent Florida Atlantic University graduate has knocked Rosenhaus off one of his pedestals.

Shyra Johnson passed the 2022 National Basketball Players Association Agent Certification Exam at 21, making her the youngest sports agent in history. The previous record-holder was Rosenhaus, who was 22 when the University of Miami graduate, who counts new Dolphins receiver Tyreek Hill among his clients, was certified as a sports agent.



Shyra Johnson passed the 2022 National Basketball Players Association Agent Certification Exam at 21, making her the youngest sports agent in history. FAU Photo

Johnson, an Ocala native, graduated from FAU last year with her bachelor's in business administration and management. She is currently chasing her graduate degree as a part of FAU's MBA program in sports management.

Sports were always a part of Johnson's life as she played basketball and tennis, ran track and was a cheerleader at Belleview High School.

Her quest to become a sports agent started because of her cousin, Tee Johnson, who just finished her fifth year playing for the University of Delaware women's basketball team. She was considered the "star athlete" in the family and Shyra Johnson said she was watching ESPN's "First Take" with her father when he brought up the idea of being in the sports agent field.



“You know, they always say they want to be a doctor or a lawyer, you kind of pick the ordinary job,” Johnson said. “And my dad presented me with this career path and ever since then, I’ve honestly just never looked back and always just said like ‘Yeah, I wanna be a sports agent,’ I didn’t know about it nor have I ever met one.”

What helped Johnson achieve her career path was FAU granting her a scholarship through the Kelly/Strul Emerging Scholars program.

“The donors that poured into the scholarship financially poured into me. They became mentors and it taught me everything more or less that I know,” Johnson said. “They took me under their wing. I’ve worked with them. Some of them got me an internship with ESPN and so that network is why I was able to be in the space that I’m in.”

The Kelly/Strul program aims to provide a debt-free experience for first-generation college students in low-income families. Keven Allen Jr., the director of First Generation Student Success, said he was once in the shoes of these students when he attended Florida State University under the CARE (Center for Academic Retention and Enhancement) program.

He said his grades were slipping and he was “lost in the sauce” until he met a mentor who helped him, eventually leading to his current position.

Allen and Johnson immediately formed a bond when he was hired during her third year at FAU. Johnson said that she called him every day her senior year.

“If I wasn’t at my office, she called or texted. That’s kind of what got my attention about her,” Allen said. “She definitely took the reins and she wasn’t a student that asks for help. She asked for guidance.

“And I think that is all of the reason why she’s where she is today.”

Big moment for Shyra Johnson: Meeting iconic agent Kelli Masters

A significant moment for Johnson was meeting an idol in the sports agency world, Kelli Masters. She met Masters at the Super Bowl a couple of years ago when it was in Miami during a “women in sports” event and said it was a “life-changing day.”

“She’s now a mentor, like a mom to me, and I just call her up and she has her own agency, a law firm, so she’s done it right and so that’s a blessing in itself,” Johnson said.

Johnson has started her own sports agency - Team Empire Sports - focusing on Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) deals for collegiate athletes. Representing professional athletes is the next step.



Allen said that Johnson “took advantage of every opportunity that was made available to her,” and that she is a model for success for young women and men.

“I think she's going to get bored. I think she's gonna get all the way to the top and realize ‘oh my god, this is it.’ ” Allen said. “And I think that once she arrives, I think she's going to be able to trailblaze and make it her own path to do something unique and this won't be the first time that we will see this young lady being the first at something.”

Johnson is also working in the First Generation office at FAU as a “retention specialist.” She said that it’s an absolutely rewarding experience to give back to the program and to students in her previous position.

“My job here day-to-day is to sit down with first-generation students and it's amazing. I get to pour back into them,” Johnson said. “But to any college student, if you understand the purpose and you have that form of self-motivation and whatever form that is, that will be the key to how you accomplish everything you want to do.”

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