

## 2021 SPEIA Basketball Analytics Summit – Speaker Bios

### Keynote 1 - Applications of Text Analytics on Basketball Scouting Reports

**Frank Silva** - Silva is the technical lead for the SAS for Sports Analytics team. He specializes in the visualization and analytical modeling suite of SAS solutions. Silva has worked with numerous MLS, NFL, NBA, and NHL teams during his time at SAS. Predictive Analytics use cases that he has helped professional sports teams work on include:

- Single Game Revenue Forecast
- Season Ticket Holder Retention Modeling
- Next Best Action Offer/Recommendation Engine
- Single Game and Season Ticket Prospect Model
- Partial Plan Upgrade/Renewal Model
- Game Rating Model
- Survey and Social Media Analysis (Text Analytics)

### Keynote 2 - Effective Tips on Using Player Tracking Data from Video

**Neil Johnson** - Johnson is a Sports Analytics Developer at ESPN. Johnson's work involves developing new player and team performance metrics and tools by manipulating and analyzing large data sets and writing programs to calculate and automate the metrics; specifically obtaining data from databases, doing appropriate quality-control on the data, and processing that data through equations and algorithms. Johnson is also a writer for ESPN Insider and Analytics vertical. Johnson is a 2013 graduate of Ohio State University and obtained his Masters of Business Administration from Franklin University in 2017.

### Keynote 3 - What I Know that You Should Know: Basketball Analytics

**Ben Falk** - Falk is the founder of Cleaning the Glass, a basketball analytics and research website designed to teach smart and interested fans about the game. Falk attended the University of Maryland, during which he interned for the director of quantitative analysis for the Denver Nuggets. Upon graduation, he was hired by the Portland Trail Blazers as their Basketball Analytics Manager. After four years, the General Manager of the Philadelphia 76ers hired Falk in an executive role as Vice President of Basketball Strategy. In 2016, Falk served as a volunteer Assistant Coach at Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy. Just two years later, he became Head Coach for the program, where they won their first Tri-County Independent School League Basketball Championship in 20 years.

### Session 4 - It Really is a Numbers Game

**Ken Pomeroy** - Pomeroy is a college basketball statistician that is most well-known for his revolutionary website, kenpom.com. His passion for basketball is evident in the quantity and specificity of the statistics available on his website. Users can find detailed stats about hundreds of programs dating back to 2002. The types of data range from a team's overall record to the strength of their non-conference schedule to something Pomeroy calls the "Luck rating." His website has garnered attention from NBA teams who regularly consult him on draft related projects. Before dedicating himself full-time to kenpom.com in 2011, he spent a decade working as a meteorologist for the U.S. government.

**Jordan Sperber** - Sperber is the owner and chief operator of Hoop Vision, a college basketball media outlet that aims to educate fans from a tactical and an analytical point-of-view. It aims to present its content as a college basketball coaching staff would, with a data-driven, video-heavy approach that presents insights that

are easily digestible and based in evidence. Prior to founding Hoop Vision, he spent time in the sports media industry as a stats and info intern at ESPN and worked in college basketball for a few seasons. He spent one season as an analytics consultant for New Mexico State, one season as a graduate assistant coach at Nevada, and two seasons as a video coordinator back at New Mexico State. Jordan brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to share with the basketball analytics community.

**Brenden Whitted** – Whitted is a sports media professional from Raleigh, NC. After graduating from Howard University and Tulane Law School in 2012, he began working in sports radio and has continued working in sports media via radio, podcasts, and in his written work. He recently started a podcast network, ThatsBlackMale, and has a continuing relationship with 99.9 The Fan in Raleigh. Whitted has written articles regarding current sports and pop culture events and is a regular guest on the popular show “Adam & Joe” on WRAL sports radio.

**CL Brown** - Brown has spent the past two decades as a writer for various sports reporting outlets. Graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1994, Brown devoted his first 13 years in the media as a writer for the Louisville Courier-Journal. However, Brown would find his niche in college basketball, as he was a national college basketball reporter for ESPN from 2013-2017. Next, he would spend up until 2019 as the senior staff writer for The Athletic, once again focusing primarily on men’s college basketball. Recently, Brown has come back to his roots, writing as the UNC beat writer for The News & Observer, the premier news outlet across the research triangle and more. C.L. Brown is a devoted journalist for all sports involving North Carolina, and even serves on the board of advisors for the journalism school at UNC.

## **Session 5 - Sport Science: Make Your Body Work for You**

**Dr. Claudio Battaglini** – Dr. Battaglini is a Professor of Exercise and Sport Science (Exercise Physiology Specialization) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His research focuses on the effects of acute and chronic exercise on physiological, psychological, and physical functioning in cancer patients. He directs the Exercise Oncology Research Laboratory (EORL) and the Get REAL & HEEL Breast Cancer Rehabilitation Program and. Over the past 10 years, Dr. Battaglini has published over 180 journal articles and scientific abstracts and 5 textbooks chapters related to exercise oncology. Dr. Battaglini was the 2017 recipient of the Lifetime Distinguished Leadership Award in Sports and Health at Dana-Faber/Harvard Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical Center for his research in exercise oncology. His experience and knowledge have expanded to basketball and swimming whereby his unique approach to athlete rehabilitation and development are nationally recognized. He currently trains local area Olympic caliber youth swimmers including his son who is nationally ranked #1 in his class.

**Danyel Jones** - Jones is a trailblazer in the enhancement of human performance through her founding of POWERHANDZ and subsequent work with renowned athletes and celebrities including NFL receiver Antonio Brown, NBA player James Harden, and the late actor, Chadwick Boseman. Danyel became very active in the Dallas sports health scene with her roles with the Dallas Sports Commission and Junior Achievement of Dallas. Her experience finally culminated in the creation of her company POWERHANDZ, which is a global product tech company with a focus on creating products that track and improve performance while aiding in injury prevention. Danyel is an established businesswoman who has the answers to how technology and analytics can provide the answers to any human performance question.

**Dr. Bryan Littlejohn** - Dr. Littlejohn is the owner and physical therapist at PerforMax Physical Therapy and Sports Rehabilitation. PerforMax’s two locations, each of which are located in the Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill (Triangle) area, offer services such as physical therapy, sports rehabilitation, and injury prevention and management, among others. After earning a doctorate degree in physical therapy from Hampton University, Littlejohn began his to act on his vision to have his own company. PerforMax utilizes a wide range of techniques such as trigger point release, joint mobilizations, myofascial release, and deep tissue mobilization. In addition to his physical therapy practice, Bryan has also been committed to educating others.

He has worked as a teaching assistant at Duke University for doctoral students and as an adjunct professor at North Carolina Central University teaching anatomy-related curriculum.

**Dr. Harry Stafford** - Dr. Stafford is the Associate Director of the Duke Sports Science Institute and Director of Sports Performance at Duke. After his undergraduate studies, Dr. Stafford continued his education with UNC-Chapel Hill moving on to complete medical school shortly after his graduation. He has also served as a team physician for numerous sports at North Carolina Central University and the University of North Carolina for more than 10 years. Highly respected, Dr. Stafford has received many awards including being named to Best Doctors in America List (2019-2020), Poets and Quants Best and Brightest Award 2019, and Christ Saves Hearts Humanitarian Award (2019).

## **Session 6 - This is How We Do It: The Simplicity and Complexity of Coaching Analytics**

**Edniesha "Eddie" Curry** – Coach Curry, an analytics guru, completed her first season as an assistant coach with the University of Maine men's basketball team in 2018-19 and is currently one of three women serving as a full-time assistant coach in NCAA Division I men's basketball. Before coming to Maine, Curry was a head basketball coach in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. She developed skills for players from ages 6-18, focusing on rebuilding the sport in Vietnam. A graduate of the University of Oregon in 2002, Curry was drafted by the WNBA's Charlotte Sting with the 41st overall pick in the WNBA draft. She played in the league for the Phoenix Mercury and the Los Angeles Sparks along with teams overseas in Greece, Poland, Israel, and Hungary.

**Brad Frederick** – Frederick is a member of the UNC men's basketball staff and just completed his fourth season as an assistant coach. His responsibilities include scouting, recruiting, bench coaching, working with big men, and coordinating camps. Before his current role as an assistant coach, he served as the director of operations for the basketball team for four years. He began his coaching career at Vanderbilt in 2000 where he remained for 14 years. At the end of his time at Vanderbilt, he was the longest tenured assistant coach in the SEC. He played for UNC, joining the varsity team as a sophomore in Dean Smith's final season and remaining on the team for the next two years. He played in 70 games and was a part of teams that won two ACC Tournament titles and reach two Final Fours.

**Jason Williford** – Williford is in his 13th year with the University of Virginia, starting as an assistant men's basketball coach for his first nine seasons before being promoted to associate head coach after the 2017-18 season. A confidential ranking by 20 ACC coaches named Williford as the #1 assistant coach in the league. In his 12 seasons at UVA, Williford has helped lead the Cavaliers to an NCAA championship, four ACC regular-season championships, two ACC Tournament titles and eight NCAA Tournament appearances. In addition to coaching, Williford played college basketball at UVA graduating in 1995. After graduating, he moved on to the next level seeing great success as a professional in Iceland and South Korea.

**Fran Fraschilla** - Frschilla joined ESPN as a college basketball game and studio analyst in 2003. He serves as an analyst primarily on Big 12 Conference men's basketball games. At ESPN, he worked on NBA Draft coverage, the FIBA World Championships in 2006 and 2010, as well as the NBA and high school basketball. He was also an analyst on ESPN's NCAA Division I Women's Basketball coverage from 2007-2014. Frschilla coached at the collegiate level for 23 years, posting an overall record of 175-100. When he joined ESPN, he ranked as the 34th winningest active coach in men's college basketball. His teams made eight postseason appearances in nine years, including three NCAA Tournaments (1993, 1995 and 1998).

## **Session 7 - Unique Approaches to Hoops Analytics**

**Ben Alamar** - Alamar has been a leader and innovator in the data science and sports analytics space for over 15 years. He has developed cutting edge analytic tools and built analytics teams for numerous organizations including ESPN, the Oklahoma City Thunder, Cleveland Cavaliers, and StubHub. His work includes innovative models that have informed decisions on both the sport and business side of organizations, building high

performing teams that work in partnership with decision makers, and working with top level executives to effectively incorporate data and analytics into the decision-making process - including developing a pioneering workshop for executives at StubHub on data in decision making. He also has a distinguished teaching career that includes courses at Columbia, MIT, University of San Francisco, and Menlo College. He has published numerous research studies in sports analytics and has written on sports analytics for outlets such as ESPN, Analytics Magazine, and the Wall Street Journal. Additionally, he is the founding editor of the Journal of Quantitative Analysis in Sports, the first peer-reviewed academic journal for research in sports analytics.

**Dave Leitao** – Leitao is an established coaching veteran with over 35 years of experience at the college and professional levels. Leitao was recruited by Jim Calhoun to play his college basketball at Northeastern from 1978-1982, transitioning to an Assistant Coach role with the Huskies in 1984. Leitao secured his first head coaching position in 2002 at DePaul, leading them to two trips to the NIT and a bid in the NCAA tournament in a three-year span. In 2005, Leitao was hired as the Head Coach for the University of Virginia, becoming the first Black head coach in the history of the university and earning ACC coach of the year for the 2006-2007 season. He recently stepped down at DePaul University after five years in his second stint there as the Head Coach. Recognized as one of the most authentic and respected leaders of Black coaches and players, Leitao continues to serve as a valuable counsel and scout for friends in the industry.

**Dr. Gus Umer** - Dr. Umer has experience in various domains including analyzing fuel flow in a 13.5L diesel engine, designing a novel bracing system capable of preventing cervical spine injuries in athletes to automating a bio-gas conditioner to optimizing the acquisition and processing of medical imaging methods. His expertise includes a product design using CAD software, model complex systems using MATLAB and Python or setup, capture and analyze data from an IR motion tracking system. His new role as the Principal Data Scientist with Noah Basketball will propel the innovative shooting system company to new heights. The product has been widely used by both NBA and college coaches all over the country to help improve players' shooting percentages.

**Erroll Reese** - Reese's journey started in rural Alabama, growing up to play college football at Alabama A&M University, alma mater of NFL great John Stallworth. After college, he earned an MBA at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, launching a 25-year career in the Raleigh-Durham area as a technology executive. As the co-host of the very popular sports radio show, "The Sports Shop" on Raleigh-Durham's FM Capitol Broadcasting Sports, Reese is able to showcase his fun personality and highlight his many connections in college and professional sports. He is an avid supporter of youth charities and early promoter of the NC Pro Am summer tournament that brings together professional athletes and talented youth for basketball and mentoring.

## **Session 8 - Sport Science: Achieving Results through Analytics**

**Mike Curtis** - Curtis serves as the head strength and conditioning coach for the University of Virginia men's basketball team, a role he has held since May 2009. He also founded and owns Athletic Development and Performance Training (ADAPT), LLC in Charlottesville. After earning a bachelor's degree in sports medicine and a master's in exercise physiology from Virginia, where he played on the basketball team, Curtis served as Director of Strength and Conditioning for Olympic Sports at the University of Dayton and as Strength and Conditioning Coach for the South Carolina men's and women's basketball teams. Since then, he has worked as the Memphis Grizzlies' head strength and conditioning coach and the Director of Strength and Conditioning at the University of Michigan, where he supervised and managed the training of more than 20 division one athletic teams.

**Sam Edgemon** - Edgemon has worked as an analytical consultant for the past 20+ years, solving substantial problems in healthcare, education, manufacturing, sports, utilities, financial and retail industries. He attributes his success to curiosity, creativity, and empathy. His strong technical foundation consists of a "toolbox" of programming languages such as SAS, Python, and R as well as a "bag of tricks" that only experience can provide. Since 2009 he's worked at SAS Institute as a senior consultant.

**Dr. Bryan Littlejohn** - Dr. Littlejohn is the owner and physical therapist at PerforMax Physical Therapy and Sports Rehabilitation. PerforMax's two locations, each of which are located in the Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill (Triangle) area, offer services such as physical therapy, sports rehabilitation, and injury prevention and management, among others. After earning a doctorate degree in physical therapy from Hampton University, Littlejohn began his to act on his vision to have his own company. PerforMax utilizes a wide range of techniques such as trigger point release, joint mobilizations, myofascial release, and deep tissue mobilization. In addition to his physical therapy practice, Bryan has also been committed to educating others. He has worked as a teaching assistant at Duke University for doctoral students and as an adjunct professor at North Carolina Central University teaching anatomy-related curriculum.

**Trina Patterson** - Coach Patterson finished up her fifth year at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). UNCG has won at least 20 games in two of the last four years, including a Division I program best 23 victories in the 2019-20 season, which was the third best Division I turnaround in women's basketball nationally. Overall, during her decorated head coaching career, Patterson has guided numerous players to America East, Colonial Athletic Association (CAA), Pac 12, Conference USA and Southern conference honors, among those a conference player of the year rookie of the year, and members of all-conference, all-rookie, all-defensive, all-academic and all-tournament teams.

## **Session 9 - Entrepreneurial Innovations in Sport**

**Chi Nwogu** - Nwogu is an Entrepreneur-in-Residence at the University of North Carolina's Entrepreneurship Center, currently serving as co-founder and CEO of GameFlo, an indie gaming company building communities by empowering people on their own terms and to their own abilities. After obtaining his B.A. in Economics from Brown University in 2010, he worked at JPMorgan before making the transition to sports technology as the Assistant CFO for Bloomberg Sports (named one of the "Ten Most Innovative Companies in Sports" by Fast Company in 2011). Nwogu is a 2018 MBA graduate of UNC's Kenan-Flagler Business School and was awarded the Alumni Pioneer Award in 2020 for his work within the UNC community and beyond. His work over the past three years to develop the Summit has been invaluable. Nwogu is an avid New York sports fan, bass guitarist and proud uncle of seven!

**Mustafa Abdul-Hamid (Boost)** - Mustafa is a native of St. Louis, MO and has a master's degree from Stanford University. He is the founder of Boost Scouting, a mobile sports training platform for young athletes. The Seattle startup recently raised a \$1.3 million seed round funding. Founded in 2016, the company uses machine learning and artificial intelligence that lets coaches and trainers pull data insights from video footage without having to purchase in-venue camera systems and wearable devices. Mustafa is a graduate of UCLA where he played basketball for the Bruins.

**Jori Davis (WeVolv)** – Davis is an accomplished global professional basketball player. The New Orleans-native has played pro in six countries. She completed a standout career at Indiana University as the 10th all-time leading scorer at the school and was drafted 33rd overall by the Indiana Fever in the 2011 WNBA Draft upon graduation. Jori and Julie are working on creating WeVolv, a members-only; decentralized platform for global elite athletes that will enable them to manage their own careers and lifestyle. She is dedicated to empowering athletes to own their legacy on and off the playing field and gain more control as a collective. In addition to New Orleans, Jori has lived in Texas, England, upstate New York, and Indiana. Currently, in her tenth pro season Jori is playing in Athens, Greece for Olympiacos S.F.P

**Julie Nicole Wojta (WeVolv)** – Wojta is an American basketball player for La Molisana Campobasso in Liga Serie A2. Wojta played college basketball at the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay, where she was a Wade Trophy and Wooden Award finalist, Horizon League tournament MVP, and a second-team All-America pick.

**Justin Macmahan** - Macmahan graduated from the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill in 2018 as a Sport Management major. In his sophomore year he started Daily Fantasy Insider, a company that helps fantasy players and sports bettors have greater success with their wagers. His team has grown to 45+ associates and the DFI app and website hosts over 15,000 users.

## Session 10 - Understanding Basketball Analytics

**Dr. Tim Chartier** - Dr. Chartier works as a professor of mathematics at Davidson University with a focus in computer science. He frequently works with data analytics, specializing in sports analytics, and has worked with the NBA, ESPN's Sports Science, NASCAR race teams, and fantasy sports sites. Chartier currently works with two dozen Davidson student researchers to provide analytics to Davidson's athletic teams. In addition to his research, Chartier wrote *Numerical Methods: Design, Analysis, and Computer Implementation of Algorithms* with Anne Greenbaum and *Math Bytes: Google Bobs, Chocolate-Covered Pi, and Other Cool Bits in Computing*, a book that received the Euler Book Prize from the Mathematical Association of America. He has also received the Beckenbach Book Prize for his *When Life is Linear: From Computer Graphics to Bracketology*, the Daniel Solow Author's Award, and the Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship. With basketball, Chartier teaches students how to create mathematical formulas and models to predict tournament winners, particularly every March with the NCAA Tournament.

**Neil Johnson** - Johnson is a Sports Analytics Developer at ESPN. Johnson's work involves developing new player and team performance metrics and tools by manipulating and analyzing large data sets and writing programs to calculate and automate the metrics; specifically obtaining data from databases, doing appropriate quality-control on the data, and processing that data through equations and algorithms. Johnson is also a writer for ESPN Insider and Analytics vertical. Johnson is a 2013 graduate of Ohio State University and obtained his Masters of Business Administration from Franklin University in 2017.

**John Tobias** - John Tobias is a lecturer at UNC Charlotte in the School of Data Science. He has ten-plus years of experience in sports statistics and analytics. After working in finance, he decided to chase his passion and earned a master's degree in sports management from High Point University. An internship with the NBA's Charlotte Hornets in 2004 proved to be a turning point. With a very deep and broad knowledge of analytics across multiple sports, Tobias was one of the first statisticians in the country to implement analytics in the sports television industry. He took a job as a talent statistician at ESPN in 2013, feeding stats to broadcast teams. He then created scripts for broadcasters to help explain to the viewers about sports analytics for the games they cover.

**Mike Huff** - Coach Huff is currently the Physical Education teacher for Health & PE, Strength Training & Conditioning, and Combination Sports at the Voyager Academy. Formerly the Head Boys Basketball Coach, his team won the 2016 NCHSAA State Championship. He stepped down following the 2017-18 season to spend time with family and pursue other opportunities. His son is Jay Huff, player at the University of Virginia.

## Session 11 - Chatter in the Paint: Pro Basketball Roundtable

**Dr. Dean Oliver** – Oliver, “the father of basketball analytics,” is a pioneer in sports analytics, working in both basketball and football. He is the originator of “Four Factors” and has an established track record of working with decision-makers to identify the right questions and right answers for building a team. As a doctoral student for four years at the University of North Carolina, he served as a collegiate advance scout, for longtime NBA Los Angeles Lakers assistant coach, Bill Bertka. Dean wrote *Basketball on Paper* in 2002 and it was published in 2003. *Basketball on Paper* became the handbook for basketball analytics, and Dean became the first analytics consultant in the NBA. He's worked with Hall of Fame Coach George Karl, star players, management, scouts and is currently in his second season as an Assistant Coach for the Washington Wizards.

**AJ Meyer** - Meyer operates as the coaching analytics coordinator for the San Antonio Spurs. While receiving a bachelors in economics and statistics at the University of Notre Dame, Meyer was a student manager for the men's basketball team for 3 years, and served as the senior manager in his final year. As a manager, Meyer implemented the use of analytics and statistics as a common measure within the Irish program. Meyer was first introduced into the professional basketball sphere with an internship with the Atlanta Hawks. After graduation, Meyer became the basketball analytics quality assurance assistance for the legendary Greg Popovich and the San Antonio Spurs. For the past two years, Meyer has served as the coaching analytic coordinator for the San

Antonio Spurs. Approaching his 10-year mark within the world of basketball analytics, Meyer has already reached a pinnacle within the industry with plenty of years and opportunities ahead of him.

**Chris Zeppenfeld** – Zeppenfeld is in his ninth season with Charlotte Hornets/Hornets Sports & Entertainment, where he serves as the organization's Vice President of Business Intelligence. In this role, he is responsible for six major areas of the business: Analytics, CRM, Data Warehouse, Surveys, Ticket Pricing, Email Marketing, and Revenue Strategy. Chris provides CRM, strategic support, and revenue analysis for all revenue generating departments including Ticket Sales, Partnerships, Hornets Marketing, Arena Marketing, Luxury Sales, Ticket Operations, Retail, and the Hornets Foundation. Prior to joining Hornets Sports & Entertainment, Chris spent four years working for TeamWork Online, an online sports executive recruiting firm. He served as the Senior Manager of Client Services, overseeing 700+ sports teams' recruiting efforts on the site.

**Dr. Tim Chartier** - Dr. Chartier works as a professor of mathematics at Davidson University with a focus in computer science. He frequently works with data analytics, specializing in sports analytics, and has worked with the NBA, ESPN's Sports Science, NASCAR race teams, and fantasy sports sites. Chartier currently works with two dozen Davidson student researchers to provide analytics to Davidson's athletic teams. In addition to his research, Chartier wrote Numerical Methods: Design, Analysis, and Computer Implementation of Algorithms with Anne Greenbaum and Math Bytes: Google Bobs, Chocolate-Covered Pi, and Other Cool Bits in Computing, a book that received the Euler Book Prize from the Mathematical Association of America. He has also received the Beckenbach Book Prize for his When Life is Linear: From Computer Graphics to Bracketology, the Daniel Solow Author's Award, and the Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship. With basketball, Chartier teaches students how to create mathematical formulas and models to predict tournament winners, particularly every March with the NCAA Tournament.

## **Session 12 - Chatter in the Paint: Women's Basketball Roundtable**

**Nikki Fargas** - Fargas is the LSU women's basketball coach and is known as a passionate leader of young women and men. She began her career as a player at the University of Tennessee from 1990 to 1994 before transitioning to a graduate assistant role in 1998. Nikki then took a job as the assistant coach at the UVA for three years before returning to Tennessee from 2002-2008. During Nikki's 14 seasons as a collegiate player and assistant coach, she appeared in the NCAA Tournament each season and won three national championships. Nikki left for her first head coaching job at UCLA in 2008 and turned them into a national powerhouse during her three years before moving to her current position at LSU. Nikki has built an established track record during her over 20 years of college basketball experience and can give you the right answers on how to cultivate a successful team.

**Tammi Reiss** - Reiss is the head women's basketball coach at the University of Rhode Island. With over a decade of coaching experience, she has developed a history of great player development and team success. As a four-year starter at the University of Virginia, Tammi earned many accolades, including All-American honors in 1992 and three ACC titles. She was a first round selection in the first-ever WNBA draft by the Utah Starzz, where she played for two seasons and served as captain. Her coaching journey has included stops at her alma mater Virginia, the Utah Starzz/San Antonio Stars, San Diego State, Cal State Fullerton, and Syracuse, and she has helped develop multiple All-Americans and conference players of the year. This past season, she led Rhode Island to an 11-8 overall record and 11-4 record in Atlantic 10 conference play.

**Jeff Walz** - Walz is the Head Coach of the Louisville Cardinals' women's basketball program. Having completed his 14<sup>th</sup> season at Louisville, Walz has quite an impressive resume including: nine NCAA Sweet 16 appearances, five trips to the Elite Eight, three Final Four appearances, and two trips to the national title game. Since opening the KFC Yum! Center in 2010, the Cardinals have boasted a 152-17 record at home. Walz's prior coaching experience includes Minnesota, Nebraska, Western Kentucky, and Maryland. He started his collegiate career with a basketball scholarship to Northern Kentucky, where he graduated with a bachelor of science in secondary education. Known for his player development and game strategy, the Cardinals were a number two seed in the 2021 NCAA Tournament.

**Debbie Antonelli** - Antonelli is a national basketball analyst averaging 80 college basketball games a season. She is considered an expert on women's game, both collegiate and professional. In addition, her expertise has afforded her broadcast coverage for the Men's March Madness Tournament. With more than 30 years of experience, Antonelli covers college basketball for ESPN, CBS, Raycom and Westwood One. She has broadcasted in the WNBA since its inception in 1996, including the last 21 years with the Indiana Fever and the Charlotte Sting. She spent the first eight years of her career in a college athletic department as the former Director of Marketing at Kentucky and Director of Marketing at The Ohio State.

### **Session 13 - Analytics in the Wild: Advice and Insights from Real World Applications**

**Nathan Frank** - Frank, a former member of the Artificial Intelligence Team at STATSPERFORM, LLC, enjoys mining historical sports data as well as fine-grained, unstructured tracking data to drive novel research applications across a wide range of sports. His mindset is innovative as he seeks to develop new technologies for sports analysis and appreciation. He was a member of the Physics & Astronomy Department at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill where his doctoral research focused on the application of Bayesian statistical models to multidimensional observational data sets using genetic-algorithm based methods. Mid-way through his PhD program Frank became interested in other applications of modeling and statistics. While at UNC, Frank partnered with Drs. Dean Oliver and Deborah Stroman to co-teach the Sports Analytics course for the MBA program.

### **Session 14 - Chatter in the Paint: Tobacco Road Talks Truth**

**Gene Banks** – Banks is a former professional basketball player and assistant coach. Coming out of high school in 1977, he was one of the highest touted players in his recruiting class. He was selected to the first ever McDonald's All-American team and took home MVP honors in the ensuing game. His decision to attend Duke University to play basketball shocked many. Prior to his arrival, their basketball program had been floundering and had just finished a losing season where they finished last in the ACC. Importantly, they had never recruited an elite Black player. Banks immediately turned Duke's fortunes around, helping take them to the national championship game in his first season. He was voted team MVP his next three seasons and graduated as one of Duke's most decorated players ever. He played professionally for 11 seasons and later served as an assistant coach for the Washington Wizards for four seasons. Banks is an entrepreneur and the athletic director at Gaston College in North Carolina.

**Phil Ford** – Ford continues to stay active in service to the community in many ways. He is a highly sought-after public speaker while scouting, mentoring, counseling budding players. Ford engages with many friends and fans – always with a positive spirit. He played basketball at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill from 1974-1978 and was the first freshman under legendary coach Head Coach Dean Smith to start in his first collegiate basketball game. One of the most highly-recognized and appreciated players, Ford repeated as a consensus first-team All-American and was recognized as the National Player of the Year when he won the USBWA, NABC and Sporting News Player of the Year awards, as well as the Wooden Award. He was drafted as the 2nd overall pick in the 1978 NBA Draft and won NBA Rookie of the Year and all NBA second team in 1979. After playing in the NBA for eight seasons for the Kings, Nets, Bucks, and Rockets, he was a coach at UNC, the Pistons, Knicks, and Bobcats (Hornets).

**Dereck Whittenburg** – Whittenburg is the Associate Athletic Director for Community Relations and Student Support at North Carolina State University. His career at NC State began as a guard on the basketball team, where he was second team all-ACC in his junior year. In his final year of collegiate play, he helped the Pack win the 1983 National Championship. Whittenburg worked as an executive producer for the ESPN 30 for 30 documentary "Survive and Advance," which showcased his team's championship run. He was drafted in the third round of the 1983 NBA Draft by the Phoenix Suns, but soon returned to NC State as an assistant. After

years of working at multiple programs, he became head coach of Wagner for four years, followed by six years at Fordham University.

*Note: Session Speakers are subject to change due to unforeseen schedule conflicts.*

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