

Arsht Research on Ethics and Community Grant

The ethical implications of disparate-impact discrimination towards women in high school athletics: A national study of job announcements and job descriptions for interscholastic athletic administrators

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Abstract

Athletic administrators and decision makers within interscholastic athletics are expected to embrace a code of ethics to guide their professional behavior. Three specific tenants of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administration Association's (NIAAA) code of ethics include: a) supporting the principles of due process as well as respecting individual civil and human rights; b) ensuring that honesty and integrity guide the organization's actions; and c) gaining the commitment for all individuals associated with their organizations to maintain high ethical standards in the execution of their duties. Research focused on the organizational structures and hiring activities within interscholastic athletics however, suggests systemic barriers exist which exclude women from serving in leadership roles. Those findings suggest the hegemonic culture within interscholastic athletics which goes unchallenged, allowing women to be excluded from leadership roles, is in direct conflict with the NIAAA's own code of ethics. The purpose of this national study is to determine if two components of the hiring process, job announcements and corresponding job descriptions for interscholastic athletic administrator positions, contain a bias which could lead to disparate-impact discrimination against women. The study will also make an assessment as to the extent the manner in which the job announcement was written may have influenced the sex of the person hired.

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