



OCTOBER 30, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**THE SPORTS IMPACT LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY AAP, HOSTING PANEL CONVERSATION
ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM: THE ROLE ATHLETES & SPORTS PLAY IN CURRENT EVENTS
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 3rd at 2pm**

The Sports Impact Leadership Certificate (SILC) in partnership with Johns Hopkins University Advanced Academic Programs is hosting a timely discussion on the unique platform sports provides to protest, unite and influence. The first in its newly launched “Influencer Speaker Series”, SILC will host a conversation that goes beyond making singular statements on single issues, delving into the many incarnations of “athlete as activist” as well as focusing on action items and tangible ways sports figures and brands can educate and activate.

Influential sports leaders from across the industry are invited to participate in the conversation on **Friday November 3, 2017 from 2:00pm-3:30pm at Johns Hopkins University Krieger School of Arts & Sciences Advanced Academic Programs (1717 Massachusetts Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20036).**

Those in the public eye have always played a role in advocacy and activism, but the lens is magnified that much more for professional athletes and entities in the sports industry. From Muhammed Ali to Billie Jean King and more recently Colin Kaepernick, we have seen first hand how an athlete’s opinion and actions can be a platform for social good, for raising awareness or for sparking conversation about controversial current events.

“A few months ago, we began exploring the idea of hosting a session focused on the role of athletes and sports in advocacy and activism,” said Alisha Greenberg, Co-Director of SILC. “When we initially conceived the concept, it wasn’t the hot topic it has become through current events, but that makes our conversation even more important.”

SILC’s “Influencer Speaker Series, Advocacy & Activism: The role athletes & sports play in current events” will discuss the latest headlines, but also focus beyond just one issue. The conversation will be Moderated by Michelynn Woodard, Co-Founder of the Artemis Agency and panelists include Sherrie Deans, Executive Director of the NBPA Foundation; Mara Gubuan, global sports and human rights advocate and co-founder of Shirzanan; and Wade Davis II, diversity and inclusion consultant and former NFL player.

Individuals interested in attending this event should email **SILC@jhu.edu** to RSVP or for more information.

About Sports Impact Leadership Certificate (SILC)

SILC, an unparalleled online training program at the intersection of sports and philanthropy in partnership with Johns Hopkins University Advanced Academic Program, offers students the opportunity to earn an innovative non-credit certificate with support from a world-class academic institution. To learn more visit www.SILCUpYourGame.com, email SILC@jhu.edu and follow [@SILC_UpYourGame](https://twitter.com/SILC_UpYourGame) on Twitter.

About the Johns Hopkins Advanced Academic Program

A department of the Johns Hopkins University Zanvyl Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, AAP offers part-time graduate degrees and certificate programs for adults seeking professional and personal enrichment. Participation in SILC culminates in a professional certificate from Johns Hopkins University.

About the Moderator & Panelists

Michelynn Woodard, Co-Founder, The Artemis Agency

Michelynn Woodard brings expertise in corporate citizenship, advocacy & messaging, entertainment strategy, employee engagement and digital marketing. Michelynn is a leader who utilizes an extensive network of relationships to develop creative campaigns for high-profile individuals and Fortune 500 corporations connecting them to the issues they support.

Michelynn worked in the corporate sector leading Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability for JCPenney. She also ran philanthropy for the top-rated talk show host Dr. Phil, and his wife Robin McGraw. Michelynn has worked with numerous high profile artists, athletes and organizations including Magic Johnson, Chris Paul, Kanye West and the NBA.

Michelynn started in philanthropy as an executive within the Creative Artists Agency (CAA) foundation division. A graduate of Hampton University's School of Liberal Arts and Education, Michelynn serves on several boards including Circle of Change, Big Sunday and Community Coalition.

Wade Davis, Diversity and inclusion consultant, speaker, educator and former NFL player

Former NFL player Wade Davis is a thought leader, writer, public speaker, and educator on gender, race, and orientation equality. While in the NFL, Davis played for the Tennessee Titans, the Washington Redskins, and the Seattle Seahawks, as well as for two different teams within the NFL Europe league.

In 2012, Davis "invited in" the rest of the world in an interview owning is his sexuality as a gay man. Davis is now the NFL's first LGBT inclusion consultant where he leads training sessions and national engagement initiatives. Numerous professional sports leagues including the NHL, CFL, and MLS rely on Davis to provide guidance on inclusion matters at the intersection of sexism and homophobia.

Most recently, Davis worked as the Special Advisor of Athlete Engagement at RISE, a non-profit organization started by Miami Dolphins owner, Stephen M. Ross. Beyond Davis' work in the sports world, he is currently a senior diversity and inclusion consultant at YSC, a global think tank and leadership-consulting firm. Davis is a frequent guest on MSNBC, BBC, NPR, CNN, ESPN, and BET. His essays and writings have appeared in media outlets including the Los Angeles Times, the Advocate, Huffington Post, the New York Times, Ebony, the Guardian, and the White House Blog.

Sherrie Deans, Executive Director, National Basketball Players Association (NBPA) Foundation

Sherrie Deans currently serves as the Executive Director for the NBPA Foundation. In her role as ED, Sherrie leads the philanthropic efforts of the Union and supports the individual efforts of the 450 NBA players that make up its membership. The work of the Foundation includes preserving the legacy of the players, past and present, and investing in programs, domestically and internationally, that enrich the lives of those in need.

Prior to leading the foundation, she served as the Executive Director of the Admiral Center, an initiative of Living Cities that seeks to engage celebrities in meaningful and catalytic work on behalf of low-income people. She began her career in the financial services sector where she spent over a decade working at several of the largest financial institutions in the world. At AIG Consumer Finance she was responsible for maximizing consumer sales and developing new distribution channels in ten countries throughout Asia, Latin America, and

Eastern Europe. She has also held various senior management positions in the areas of Marketing, Strategies, and Operations at American Express and MBNA America, where her responsibilities ranged from launching and managing a call center staffed with hundreds of employees to developing marketing strategies for co-branded consumer products. She holds a B.A. in economics and political science from Columbia University. Currently, she lives in the Bronx with her husband and two sons.

Mara Gubuan, Global sports and human rights activist

From 2014-2017, she co-founded and ran Shirzanan media and advocacy NGO to advance Muslim women's rights through sports. With athlete ambassador Bilqis Abdul-Qadir, they contributed to the FIBA hijab ban overturn in international basketball.

Mara is currently developing Sports Activist Media NGO while serving on boards and task forces including United Nations Youth for Gender Equality, Mega-Sporting Events Platform for Human Rights and Soomal Women International. She is also an executive producer on two documentary films and has written a screenplay about the Ride for Rights cycling adventure that brought childhood friends from Iowa and elite Muslim athletes together for an unprecedented advocacy campaign in 2015. Previously, she handled the merger between Movements.org and Advancing Human Rights where she was Director of Operations and Development. Prior to human rights work, she was an uninspired accountant and unpublished author.