

# VIEWPOINTS

In this issue of **DyNAMC** we focus on "Sports"

The world of sports affords us the opportunity to gain insight into the sensitive issues of racism, sexism, and classism. Whether it was a conscious stand or unintentional advocacy, athletes and coaches throughout history have used sports to change the racial atmosphere of our society. Some feel without sports we may not experience the level of equality we experience today. Sports organizations, in general, are a billion dollar business, with the Super Bowl getting more viewers than the presidential race.

We believe each individual featured in our sports edition issue embodies what it means to be a **DyNAMC** Leader for a Changing World within the sports arena, and we are proud to share their stories with our readers.

We asked them, "Is it every professional athletes and major league association's moral obligation to act as a leader for equality and racial acceptance??"

We wanted to know, and we thought you would, too.

Be Enlightened!

"I feel like it isn't, technically, their job; but, with so many eyes on them and so many kids watching them, they probably have the best chance to break the stereotypes and move forward. Without sports, it might have taken longer to break the race barrier. You know, Jackie Robinson and people like Warren Moon came up in times when there weren't really many black guys playing. For them to be able to come up and make an impact in their sports is just awesome. Today, they're hiring female coaches and just crazy stuff, but it's good. It's helping to erase those stereotypical thoughts and helping everything to be more diverse, which is always a good thing. Every kid watches sports when they're growing up. So they see stuff like this and it might change their thoughts from whatever they're being taught at home. It might open their minds, so they can say, 'Hey, it's just fine if a girl coaches or is in charge. It's cool to be diverse and embrace our differences.'

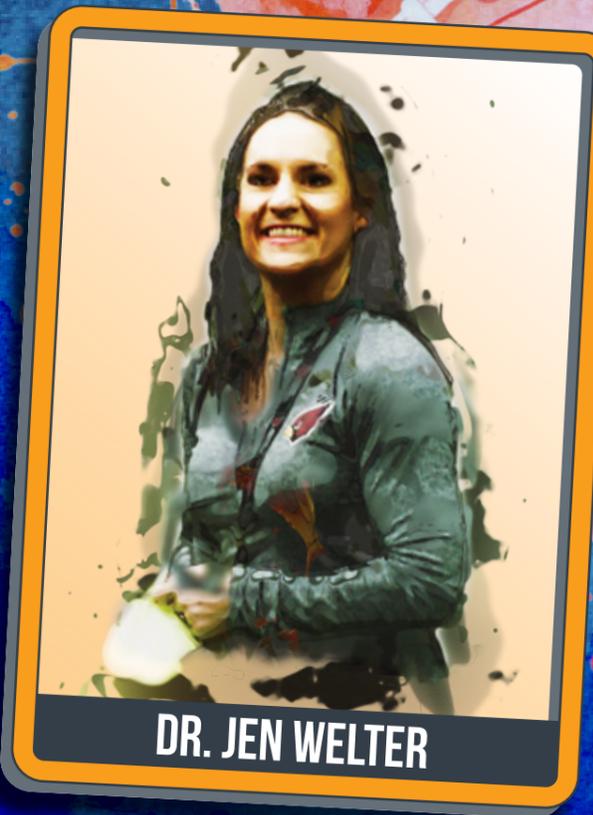
"Take Cam Newton, for example. He's tearing it up on the field and doing all his little dances. As I'm walking around, I see little seven-year-old kids doing that same dance. So, yeah, sports has an impact. If those high-profile superstars are there, embracing diversity and being cool with everything that's going on, I feel like the kids will be cool, as well. Because those athletes are their role models. Those are the people who they're looking up to. That's who they want to be when they grow up."

Rodney Thompson, Age 17  
Junior, St. Augustine High School  
San Diego #1 Quarter Back  
NAMCO Student Member  
**DyNAMC** Future Leader

- Saint Augustine High School in San Diego, CA Class of 2017; 6'-2" 196 pound, Junior Season
- San Diego's #1 Quarter Back for #1 ranked football team the St. Augustine Saints
- 1700 yards passing, 24 TD 6 picks; 700 yards rushing, 7 TD
- All CIF
- All League
- Recipient of the National Academic Athletic Scholar award and the St. Augustine Scholar Recognition for maintaining a GPA above 3.8.
- **DyNAMC** Future Leader



**RODNEY R. THOMPSON JR.**



**DR. JEN WELTER**

- First female to coach in the NFL.
- Served as an intern linebackers coach for the Arizona Cardinals.
- First woman to play running back in a men's professional football season -the Revolution.
- Holds a doctorate degree in Psychology and Master's in Sport Psychology.
- 18 years of experience in fitness, professional athlete and has provided expert advice on a wide range of topics in fitness and sports.
- Member of the 2010 and 2013 gold medal-winning USA Team at the International Federation of American Football's (IFAF) Women's World Championship.



**ARIZONA  
CARDINALS**

"I think that by showing that those things can happen naturally, that you do change things. Football in and of itself requires diversity for success. No football team functions if all 11 people on the field at any one time look the same. And so we've seen that progress, both in terms of racial diversity, and now, in terms of gender diversity. Is it taking a moral stand or is it showing by example? We showed, very clearly, that a female could successfully coach men in the National Football League. We set the gold standard for change and what the definition of what it looks like to be an NFL coach means. And that means that every little girl can look at an NFL sideline and see a place for herself. And every little boy can look at a female coaching men and say, "that's possible." It literally changes how we see ourselves and how we see others and we start to erase those limits.

It's not that you have to say, I'm a woman; you have to let me do this. It's that there's no reason that you can't. And leading by example is the best way to do it. If you set an "us versus them," as a minority, there's always a "them." But if you say it's "us together" and "us as a team," beyond any perceived differences, then you start to see that we're all more alike than we are different.

I think Bruce Arians said it very well, "(The novelty) wore off real fast. Maybe two days. It was like, 'She's a coach, and doing a great job.' I really wish we could (hire her and) all our interns."

Once you change that novelty; and you show that it's not a big deal; it changes things. But it's not about you having to beat your hands on your chest; I didn't bang down the doors of the NFL and say you have to let me in because I'm a woman. I think that through time and through progress and people doing great things, you start to make the argument in and of itself. And once something has been done, it can't be undone, and that's when you create a new normal. And that's what sports has been able to do."

Dr. Jen Welter  
First female NFL Coach  
Arizona Cardinals



**ORIS STUART**

- Senior Vice President, Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer National Basketball Association
- Responsible for overseeing diversity and inclusion strategies for the NBA, WNBA, and NBA Development League.
- 15 years of experience as a business executive in diversity and inclusion issues.
- Former Senior Partner with Korn Ferry, an executive search and talent management firm, where he led its Inclusion and Diversity practice.
- Former Chief Executive Officer for Global Novations, the world's leading provider of diversity and inclusion consulting and training solutions.
- Holds an MBA from Duke University, where he was a Fuqua Scholar and a National Black MBA Scholarship recipient.
- Currently serves on the Board of Directors for the National Black MBA Association.



**CHRIS MOSIER**

- Hall of fame athlete.
- 2015 first transgender man to make Men's U.S. National Team.
- Coach.
- Thought leaders around LGBT inclusion in athletics
- 3x Ironman finisher
- Boston-qualified marathoner.
- 2014, he was named "Best Personal Trainer" in the Northeast.
- Advocate's 40 Under 40 list and the Trans 100 list.
- Founder of TransAthlete.com.
- Executive Director of GO!



"I don't know that I can speak to the question of moral obligation nor can I speak on behalf of all sports leagues and ownerships across all the other businesses, but I can speak for the NBA as an organization. The game of basketball is truly grounded in well established principles of inclusion and mutual respect. One of the things that is very important to us is to build its exposure to our junior NBA and broader community activities to really invite people to experience the joy of the game. Through that experience to build core values of community, confidence, trust, camaraderie and team work all really come to life. That is really important to us to really make the game accessible to as many people as possible...We are very proud of our record in diversity and inclusion among the other leagues, and we will continue to serve as an icon for social change, equality and acceptance. It really is a central platform for our game."

*Oris Stuart  
Senior Vice President, Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer  
National Basketball Association*

"I would say 100% there is a moral obligation on the professional sports industry. And you can run the gamut across any particular sport. So I would agree 100% with that. I think, in particular, the controversies that have happened over the last few years, with the NFL in particular, has definitely brought, not just a light on racial diversity, but a lot of other different issues of how to handle situations. You don't always get it right, but I think the important thing is an effort to show that we are trying to be better is important."

*Andrew Goodwin  
Resident Financial Advisor  
Collegiate Athlete*

"There are people out there who will say I am not a role model I am an athlete but... athletes are thrust into positions where even at high school or college level [they] are on an elevated platform. They are looked to as leaders. They are looked to as the cool kids...they are respected for their athletic participation, and so it is my hope that every person in that leadership opportunity take advantage of that to push forward the message of inclusion, of respect [and] of the values of sportsmanship."

*Chris Mosier  
Hall of Fame Triathlete  
2015 first transgender man to make Men's U.S. National Team*



**ANDREW GOODWIN**

- Native of Denver, CO.
- Financial Advisor
- Hastings College Bachelors in Business Administration athletic scholarship for football and track & field.
- Masters of Arts in Communication Studies at Kansas State University.
- Played for the Denver Titans - a semi-professional team in Denver, CO.
- Recipient of a Key to the City by Mayor Matt Rossen
- Bestowed Hastings College highest honor, The Bronco Award.
- Barbara Jordan Health Policy Fellow at The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation
- Founded a tech start-up company in Richmond, VA in which he helped individuals obtain health insurance through the federal marketplace and worked on various political campaigns.
- Served as a Legislative Assistant for Congresswoman Barbara Lee
- Served as a Health Policy Scholar for Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee.
- Appointed a Board of Trustee for the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth by Governor Terry McAuliffe.



**GALEN GORDON**

- 22-year journalism career.
- Coordinating Producer for ESPN's SportsCenter.
- Currently overseeing the launch of SportsCenter Coast to Coast. The show will be the first daily bi-coastal program emanating from both Los Angeles, CA and Bristol, CT.
- Lead the development and rebranding of several shows on ESPN2 which include Quite Frankly with Stephen A Smith, Mike & Mike in the Morning, Numbers Never Lie (now His & Hers) and First Take, which under his direction became the No. 1 studio show on the network.
- Before joining ESPN in 2006, Galen spent 12 years as a news producer in Tulsa, St. Louis, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and New York City.
- Produced a variety of news programs including Live from CNN and Wolf Blitzer Reports.
- Serves on the Diversity and Inclusion subcommittee for Production at ESPN.
- Vice President of Broadcast for the National Association of Black Journalists Sports Task Force.

"I think it's mandatory".

*Galen Gordon  
ESPN Producer*



**DAVID STEELE**

"If everybody in sports is going to lead in this area, then it really has to be EVERYBODY. It can't just be a chosen player or personality from a specific race, ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation...you know, it really has to be up to everybody. It can't just be left up to one particular group of people to do it. One thing that I know, for absolute sure, after all these years writing about and illuminating the things I want to illuminate...is that sports is really POWERFUL. You can say, 'Oh it's really trivial; there's so many more important things going on out there...', but you just can't DENY the power that sports has. When you see the effect that Jackie Robinson or Joe Louis or Jesse Owens had, all the way up to today, it's really INCREDIBLE. Some people may say, 'Can you really lump Cam Newton in with Jesse Owens and Jackie Robinson?' But something about his presence in the Super Bowl touched a nerve and reached into peoples' souls in a way that Donovan McNab or other players didn't. You can't really define WHY, but it made a big impact."

"But It can't be 'Hey, we're putting it all on you, big famous black guy who we see on the TV all the time', to change a system and mindset that's been in place for 400 years. It has to be, 'You too, white coach, white scout, white superstar player'. Ask white teammates to do the same. Ask the coach of the team. Ask the owner of the team. Ask Tom Brady and Peyton Manning to speak up, TOO. Don't pick and choose who's going to carry that responsibility. You can't run away from the responsibility. Because it's something that affects ALL of us. Take that responsibility to the next step. Be the writer or columnist who SAYS, 'We're not doing enough to include everybody; even if YOU'RE in the group that IS included.' Speak up for the women who don't have voices or who are always being told to 'Shut up'. Speak up for the athletes who are afraid to come out, such as Michael Sam or Martina. If sports is going to do that, take some of the weight off the backs of the people who are on the front lines. Be PART of the CHANGE."

"One of the things that eats away at me is, next month they're having the Jackie Robinson tribute. And among all the fanfare and tributes and retiring his number, they're going to glide past the fact that it was baseball itself that made his journey so difficult. He fought against the entire sport. Everywhere he went, they fought to keep him OUT of the game. Baseball made it so hard for him. And now they're patting themselves on the back; but it actually dodges their responsibility. If I want anyone to do anything now, it's that everyone take on that responsibility. Don't just leave it on us, who are trying to kick down that wall that you keep reinforcing at every opportunity."

David Steele  
NFL Sports Writer

- Professional sports journalist for 30 years, for newspapers that include Newsday, the National Sports Daily, the New York Post and the St. Petersburg Times.
- Writer for Sporting News, the nation's oldest sports periodical.
- Senior writer and columnist at FanHouse, AOL's sports website.
- Sports columnist Baltimore Sun from 2004 to 2009.
- Sports writer San Francisco Chronicle from 1995 to 2004, including five years as a columnist.
- Graduate of the University of Maryland at College Park.
- Recipient of writing awards from the Associated Press Sports Editors, the Maryland-Delaware-D.C. Press Association, the Chesapeake Associated Press, the California News Publishers Association, the Florida Sportswriters Association and the Society of Professional Journalists.
- In 2012, his radio feature on the late Hall of Fame tight end John Mackey won a Salute to Excellence award from the National Association of Black Journalists.
- Co-authored two autobiographies: Silent Gesture: The Autobiography of Tommie Smith, in 2007, and Four Generations of Color, with pioneering sports agent, major-league baseball scout and collegiate coach Dr. Miles McAfee, in 2003.
- Recipient of the Wiley Daniels Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association of Black Media Workers in Baltimore.



**RICHARD E. LAPCHICK**

"I think the world would be a better place if athletes felt freer to be able to take a stand. I think in the last two years we have seen athletes, for the first time in my lifetime, in large numbers take a stand on racism and other social justice issues. to understand that historically

athletes who have done that have been crushed by the sports bureaucracy. Only people of the kind of caliber of Mohammed Ali or Bill Russell, whose talents were so great that they could withstand what otherwise might have been ostracism, as it was for players of a less caliber. I am not in a position to judge if every person would feel that responsibility and would want to act on it, but I m seventy years old and I know what it would take to do that and I am not sure I will see that in my lifetime; but I am encouraged by the number of athletes who are coming out and speaking up in the past several years."

Dr. Richard Lapchick  
Director, Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES)  
Columnist for ESPN.com and the Sports Business

- Regular columnist for ESPN.com and the Sports Business Journal
- 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award for Work in Civil Rights from the Rev. Jesse Jackson
- Inducted into the Sports Hall of Fame of the Commonwealth Nations in the category of Humanitarian along with Arthur Ashe and Nelson Mandela
- Inducted into the Multi-Ethnic Hall of Fame, the Central Florida Hall of Fame, the New York City Basketball Hall of Fame and the Sport in Society Hall of Fame
- Honored by the Basketball Hall of Fame, the National Basketball Retired Players Association, the Black Coaches Association, the Women's Coaches Alliance, the Women's Sports Foundation, the National Association of Black Journalists and the Holocaust Center
- Named one of the 100 Most Powerful People in Sports
- Named as one of the 20 living Americans who has had the biggest impact on fair play in America.
- Named as one of Beyond Sports Inspirational 50 people (living and passed) who used sport to change the world along with Billie Jean King, Muhammad Ali, Nelson Mandela and David Stern.
- Was one of 200 guests personally invited by Nelson Mandela to his inauguration after leading the American sports boycott of South Africa from 1975 until the end of Apartheid.

"As an athlete, whether you like it or not, you are a role model. What the NFL portrays, the NBA portrays, the MLB portrays, holds way more value, believe it or not, than what the president says in a press conference, just because people aren't watching that. The youth isn't watching that. They aren't watching Fox News and the debates on TV. They are watching SportsCenter. So

I believe that the sports world has a whole lot of control in terms of being a good role model and setting the right example because you have so many viewers and so many eyes are on your sport. It is most important that you are setting the right example because you never know who is watching, and whom you could be influencing."

Damarr Aultman  
NFL Wide Receiver  
#37 Miami Dolphins



**DAMARR AULTMAN**

- NFL Miami Dolphins #37 WR
- 5' 11", 208 lbs.
- Born Jan 13, 1992 (Age: 24)
- College University of Maine
- Played wide receiver and defensive back for coach Kyle Madden at Half Hollow Hills West H.S. was a team captain.
- Named All-Long Island, All-Tri-State and All-State at wide receiver
- Lled his team to the All-Long Island football championship.
- Ran track and was named to the all-country team as well as winning a gold medal at the Millrose Games as part of the 4X400 relay team.
- Member of his high school's Honor Roll and a three year member of Athletes Helping Athletes





**ED GOINES**

- General Counsel and Vice President of Government Affairs for the Seattle Seahawks and First & Goal Inc.
- Graduated from Stanford University with a degree in Political Science before heading to UC Berkeley School of Law.
- Served many years as in house counsel in both Los Angeles and San Francisco for a number of Fortune 500 companies.
- Former Assistant Chief Counsel for The Walt Disney Company.
- Served as General Counsel and Vice President of Business Affairs for the San Francisco 49ers from 2001-2007.



*"I think that professional sports has an obligation to reflect the values and the look of its community. We're not just some widget company; we are an asset and there is a community pride about sports teams. Beyond that, I think if you do it and you do it right, it's a competitive advantage because athletes will see your commitment. It makes people want to play harder for you. I think we've got some of that here at the Seahawks. Our players feel invested. Seahawks means character, it means excellence. That bleeds through our entire organization."*

*Ed Goines*

*General Counsel and Vice President of Government Affairs Seattle Seahawks and First & Goal Inc.*

*"I think if there is an injustice and you see it and you don't say anything, you are not doing your job... You are saying it is okay for things to continue the way they are. You have an obligation if something is not right, to stand up and say it is not right. That's your job! Not just because you are in sports or not just because you are on TV, but because you are human... If we don't use our voices to make a difference then we are just as at fault as those doing the crime."*

*Gail Devers, Athlete Sprinter & Hurdlers Olympic Gold Medallist Hall of Fame Inductee*



**GAIL DEVERS**

- Olympic Sports Legend most dominant sprinters and hurdlers of her time.
- Inducted: 2011 USATF and 2012 USOC Hall of Fame.
- 3-time Olympic gold medalist and 13-time World Indoor and Outdoor medalist.
- 10-time USA Outdoor 100m hurdles champion.
- 2-time winner of the ESPY for Women's Track & Field Athlete of the Year.
- Author - GAIL DEVERS MY LIFE IN STORY was released in 2015.
- Entrepreneur -co- owns L-Vital, a cosmetics and nail company, producing line GD, by Gail Devers.
- Creator and executive producer of KICK, a sports reality show, in development.



**KAREEM COPELAND**

*"It's what's right to do; and it's what we should all do. Regardless of whether we're associated with sports, or not. We're talking about these pro organizations and major leagues. As organizations with a diverse workforce and with high visibility, and the power to change, those things should be important. It's the socially responsible thing to do. But at the same time you can't dictate what an individual does. You can't force Michael Jordan to go out and take a strong stand on these individual issues. That's where I get concerned: people get upset with athletes for not taking these hard stances on social issues, when we really don't know have the whole story."*

*What I mean is, there's a lot of athletes that do a lot of social work, there's a lot of people in positions of power that do a lot of social work, behind the scenes. People jump on athletes real quick when something happens and they don't come out immediately with a strong stance. Whether it's Ferguson or Trayvon Martin, and people think that athletes should go out and make a strong statement. But we don't know what*

*these guys are doing behind the scenes. There's a lot of people who donate, time and money, and things behind the scenes, that don't necessarily look for the publicity for it, but they're doing socially responsible things. And so I don't think we should villainize or attack someone because they didn't come out and immediately take a strong stance on a particular subject.*

*Too often people just want our athletes and the sports world to be the leader in so many different things. But this is a social responsibility that we should all be involved in. And I think there are times when we pinpoint, or pick out, an athlete and demonize them for not leading the charge in something when it's not necessarily their responsibility to be leading the charge. But I don't think we should an athlete more responsible than we hold others.*

*It's absolutely important for us all to be socially responsible in these ways. Whether it's racism, sexism, classism, equality for all is important. And when you have a platform, to enact some change, like these leagues do, it should be important to them. And support things like the Rooney Rule in the NFL, and the different things that the leagues do in communities. It's important for the leagues to show that this important. And for the leagues to be diverse and have diversity in positions of leadership. Your workforce is diverse, so it's important for your leadership to be diverse. And as people around the world pay attention to sports and the avenues that athletics opens for everyone, it's important for diversity to be part of it.*

*Diversity is key in everything, whether it's athletics, running a multi-billionaire dollar company, in the newsroom, on campus, wherever. The more experiences and viewpoints and perspectives that you have in the room are only a positive. It's when we don't have different perspectives and viewpoints that things get missed, that things get overlooked. And it makes it even more important when you're talking about leadership situations where decisions are being made."*

*Kareem Copeland Sports Writer Associated Press*

- Sports journalist who has reported on every level of athletics for more than a decade.
- Covered the NFL, NBA, NCAA Super Bowls, the BCS Championships, bowl games and the Indianapolis 500.
- Currently Associated Press Sports Writer covering the Utah Jazz, University of Utah, and BYU.
- Has covered the Packers, Colts, Pacers, Florida State and has written for NFL.com.
- National Association of Black Journalists Sports Task Force.

**AP**



**LORETTA CLAIBORNE**

“I think every athlete who is paid to play a sport has gained an understanding of what sports do for people. I think those athletes should be held to a standard, because sports bring people together. If it weren't for Jackie Robinson, do you think baseball would be what it is today? Our youth look at sports athletes to maintain a certain standard and conduct themselves according to that standard. When I get out on that field it is not the color of my skin or my disability that counts. It is how I run on that track and swim in that water and bring people together.”

*Loretta Claiborne  
Special Olympics athlete  
Board International Special Olympics*

- Special Olympics athlete world-class competitor and one of the most inspirational and remarkable women of our time.
- Competed in more than 26 marathons, finishing with the fastest 25 women runners in the Pittsburgh Marathon and twice with the top-100 runners in the Boston Marathon.
- Won gold medals in the 1991 and 1999 Special Olympics World Games half-marathon.
- Holds honorary doctorates from Villanova University and Quinnipiac College
- Speaks five languages
- Holds a black belt in karate
- Recipient of the Arthur Ashe Courage Award
- Sits on the Special Olympics International Board of Directors.



**QUENTEN SALES**

- Born November 24, 1997.
- Graduating senior of J.O. Johnson High School in Huntsville, AL.
- Recipient of full athletic football scholarship to Central State University in Wilberforce, OH,
- Pursuing an Electrical Engineering Bachelors' degree.
- First generation male to graduate high school and attend college on his paternal side.
- Academically maintains all A's
- Regional, All-City First Team Offensive Lineman, and All-State honorable mention.
- DyNAMC Future Leader



“I think [athletes and coaches] should stand against inequality. I think that we should inspire other athletes to move in the right direction. I think issues of any form of inequality should be heard and dealt with. Kids look up to athletes and I think the athletes put the message out the right way, young people and communities will look up to them and help to steer communities in the right direction.”

*Quenten Sales, 17 yrs. old Johnson High School,  
Huntsville AL  
NAMCO Student Member*

- Founder and President of TS Government Solutions which provides gym equipment maintenance services to the federal government in 14 different states.
- Provides Staffing support for most positions in the fitness industry.
- 27 years in the Health and Fitness Industry.
- Held positions as a Fitness Instructor, Sales Manager, General Manager, District Manager and Area Vice President.



**MARTIN MONTERO**

“It's a tough question to answer because it really depends on the individual and their stance on a particular topic. I believe that if you have the platform to make change and to have an impact, then you should stand for it. Certain platforms, like sports and Superbowl or your particular field. If I, as a minority business owner, can help other minorities become business owners and help open the doors for them, I think it's an opportunity; it's a blessing that you can do that. But I think it's up to the individual. A lot of individuals want to take a stand and make that change and I applaud them for that.

I'm leaning towards yes, if you have the platform and you can make an impact on future generations, then I think you should. There are so many variables to the question, but if you have the platform, you should do something about it. If I ever the opportunity, I want to take it. So that I can help people by sharing my experiences, and what I've accomplished as a minority and an immigrant.”

*Martin Montero  
Founder and President of TS Government Solutions  
NAMCO Member*

- Award-winning multimedia journalist.
- First woman to be awarded Best Television Sports Anchor from the Broadcast Education Association
- Sports broadcaster Comcast SportsNet Chicago as the White Sox reporter.
- Anchor for SportsNet Central.
- Former sports anchor/reporter for CBS affiliates KCBS/KCAL in Los Angeles, CA.
- Hosted KCAL's Sunday night "Sports Central".
- Hosted sports web briefs on CBSLA.com.
- Managed social media/update hosting for "Thursday Night Football" and "March Madness" postgame shows.
- Provided live pre/postgame reports for all area MLB, NBA, and NHL teams.

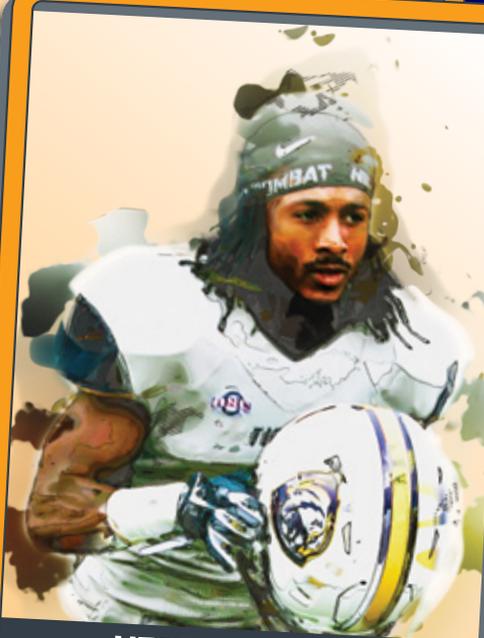


**SIERA SANTOS**

“Yes, and I think sports already does such a good job of that. Sports reflects what's going on in our society as a whole. This year, Major League Baseball is mandating that every team have an interpreter in the clubhouse before and after games for Spanish-speaking players. That's huge because it gives guys who normally wouldn't have a voice the chance to say what's on their minds.”

*Siera Santos  
Sports Broadcaster  
Comcast SportsNet Chicago*

- East Texas Baptist University
- HT. 5-8, WT. 175, CLASS Jr.
- POS. CB team the ETBU Tigers
- DyNAMC Future Leader
- HOMETOWN San Diego, CA
- TFL: none
- Forced Fumbles: none
- Fumbles Recovered: none



**VERRY JACKSON**

“Definitely. Nowadays, sports are not as diverse as it should be, but it is extremely diverse. Just the way it is now, athletes can show that it’s not just one race that can be a leader. All races can be leaders. All races are different. Each human has their own unique struggle and story that someone can learn from. If an organization were to cut off and make it to where they had only one race, I believe that the other races would not be able to benefit from someone who shared the same struggles as them. I believe that, at that level, each organization should give their voice to diversity because that’s what it is in these sports today. There is definitely diversity and different outcomes and different stories in every single sport. So if you eliminate that or keep it to yourself, it’s not going to reach the community or the people outside of the sport. It’s like having a story that can impact someone and encourage and inspire someone who may be struggling. But they don’t have that person who just went through it and experienced it and got through it in certain ways and they don’t even have that encouragement. So I think that’s important. I think the people who have made it to the higher levels should definitely be able to lead and give advice to all cultures...not just one.”

*Verry Jackson  
Student and Corner Back ETBU Tigers  
East Texas Baptist University*

“I think as professional athletes of any kind you are given a great talent and you have a huge stage that you can stand up for the rights of people... I think it is our responsibility to do the right thing and to always say the right things and stand up for your beliefs, and to try to gain equality not only in sports but in society also. We are role models and we need to live our lives in a positive way that can try to make this world a better place for everybody. We as professional athletes are in a great position to set an example of accepting people for who they are and ending discrimination and ending racism. Athletes have a huge voice and people look up to us and will listen. The best thing is to lead by example!”

*Vonda Ward, retired WBC Heavy Weight Champion  
record of 24 and 1, with 17 knockouts  
Champion (International Boxing Association)  
Heavyweight Title  
Bronze Medalist*

- 2010 Retired from boxing as the WBC Heavy Weight Champion, with a record of 24 and 1, with 17 knockouts.
- 2007, Winner WBC Heavy Weight title.
- 2005, Winner IBA Cruiser Weight title.
- 2002 Winner IBA (International Boxing Association) Heavyweight title.
- 1999 winner Tough Woman contest.
- 1993 Bronze medalist on the Basketball Junior National Team in Taipei, Taiwan.
- 2-time winner of Ohio’s Ms. Basketball award.



**VONDA WARD**