

2014 AASP Southwest Region Student Conference Final Report

The University of Denver hosted the 2014 AASP Southwest Region Student Conference April 4-5. The conference had 77 people registered for the conference and 10 additional attendees (e.g., keynote speakers, faculty, panel members). The conference included 14 student presentations, two keynote speakers, two panel discussions, and a conference-ending think-tank (see attached 2014 AASP Southwest Regional Student Conference Schedule). The 2014 AASP conference was promoted five times throughout the conference, as well as the AASP website.

The theme of the conference was performance psychology, and the keynote speakers reflected the theme. The keynote speakers for the conference were Dr. Michael Asken and Dr. Angus Mugford. Dr. Asken is the psychologist for the Pennsylvania State Police, and has written the book *Mindsighting*. Dr. Mugford is the director of personal and organizational performance for IMG Academy, which provides mental conditioning for the US Military Special Services.

The two panels for the conference were an early career professionals' panel and a coaches' panel. The early career professionals' panel discussed several areas of advice for students in graduate school, as well as when entering the workforce. The early career professionals' panel included five professionals who have earned their doctorate in the field and one doctoral candidate. The coaches' panel discussed their perspectives on successful sport psychology service delivery, which included areas such as: (a) gaining entry with a team, (b) individual and team sessions, (c) communication with the coach, and (d) gaining entry with an athletic department, among others. The coaches' panel included two coaches who had worked with mental performance consultants, one coach who has worked with a mental performance consultant and has a MA in sport and performance psychology, and one current MA student in sport and performance psychology who is also a former NCAA coach.

Survey Monkey feedback from the conference suggested that the central highlights from the conference were the keynote speakers and the professional development panels. The keynote speakers were able to show how sport psychology principles could be taught to high-risk populations given the proper education and training. They were also able to provide an educational and entertaining look into aspects of performance psychology. The professional development panels were able to provide insight for graduate students who are currently practicing mental performance consulting, or who will be practicing upon completion of a degree.