

2016 AASP-HBCU Southeast Regional Conference Final Report

Submitted by:

Ms. Skyla Fore & Dr. Rennae Stowe, Conference Chairs

On Friday April 1st and Saturday April 2nd Johnson C. Smith University (JCSU) in Charlotte, NC hosted the inaugural 2016 AASP-HBCU Southeast Regional Conference. There were 46 attendees at the conference (27 students and 19 professionals). The theme for the conference was "Sport Psychology Matters". The theme reflected the growing need for diversity and cultural competency within applied sport and exercise psychology research and practice.

The conference kicked off on Friday evening with an interactive town hall meeting where those in attendance discussed the question, "What do you hope to get out of the conference?" Responses included: more networking opportunities, learn more about the field, understand the role of psychology in sport and exercise, meet new people, gain new perspectives, learn new mental skills techniques, understand multicultural (sport) psychology, and develop new research interests.

We were pleased to host Dr. Diane Gill and Dr. Kensa Gunter as our keynote speakers. On Friday Dr. Gunter spoke on the interesting and insightful topic "Navigating the Field: My Journey as a Black Woman in Sport & Exercise Psychology". On Saturday morning Dr. Gill gave an informative talk regarding "Culture and Diversity in Sport Psychology- Past, Present, Future". Friday evening ended with a reception and social where students were able to network.

On Saturday we had a group of three presentations of original research by graduate students under the theme "Professional Development and Research Issues". We had another group of three presentations of original research by one graduate and two undergraduate students under the theme "Sports Coaching" and the final group of presentations of research by graduate students and one undergraduate student under the theme "Exercise and Physical Activity". Between presentations we had two very engaging and interactive workshops- the first consisted of a group of faculty and graduate students from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro focusing on "Teaching Mental Skills in Diverse Group Settings", and in the other professionals from FOCUS Unlimited showed attendees how to "Use Experiential Learning to Train Mental Skills".

We were also fortunate to have a professional panel consisting of Sport Psychologists: Dr. Desaree Festa, a director at Southeast Psych the Mind over Body Division; Dr. Shaun Tyrance, the President of Shaun Tyrance Consulting; and Dr. Brooke Thompson, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Gardner-Webb University. Panelists discussed their journey in the sport psychology field as well as rewards and challenges along the way. They also shared some insights and suggestions to students on how to find their own niche in the sport and exercise psychology field. The audience was also given the opportunity to ask questions.

Overall the conference was a huge success and met most of the goals mentioned in the town hall meeting that attendees wanted to get out of the conference. Attendees were asked to complete a short evaluation through survey monkey at the end of the conference. The feedback was positive overall with such comments as: "I thought that the variety of content in the presentations was wonderful, especially

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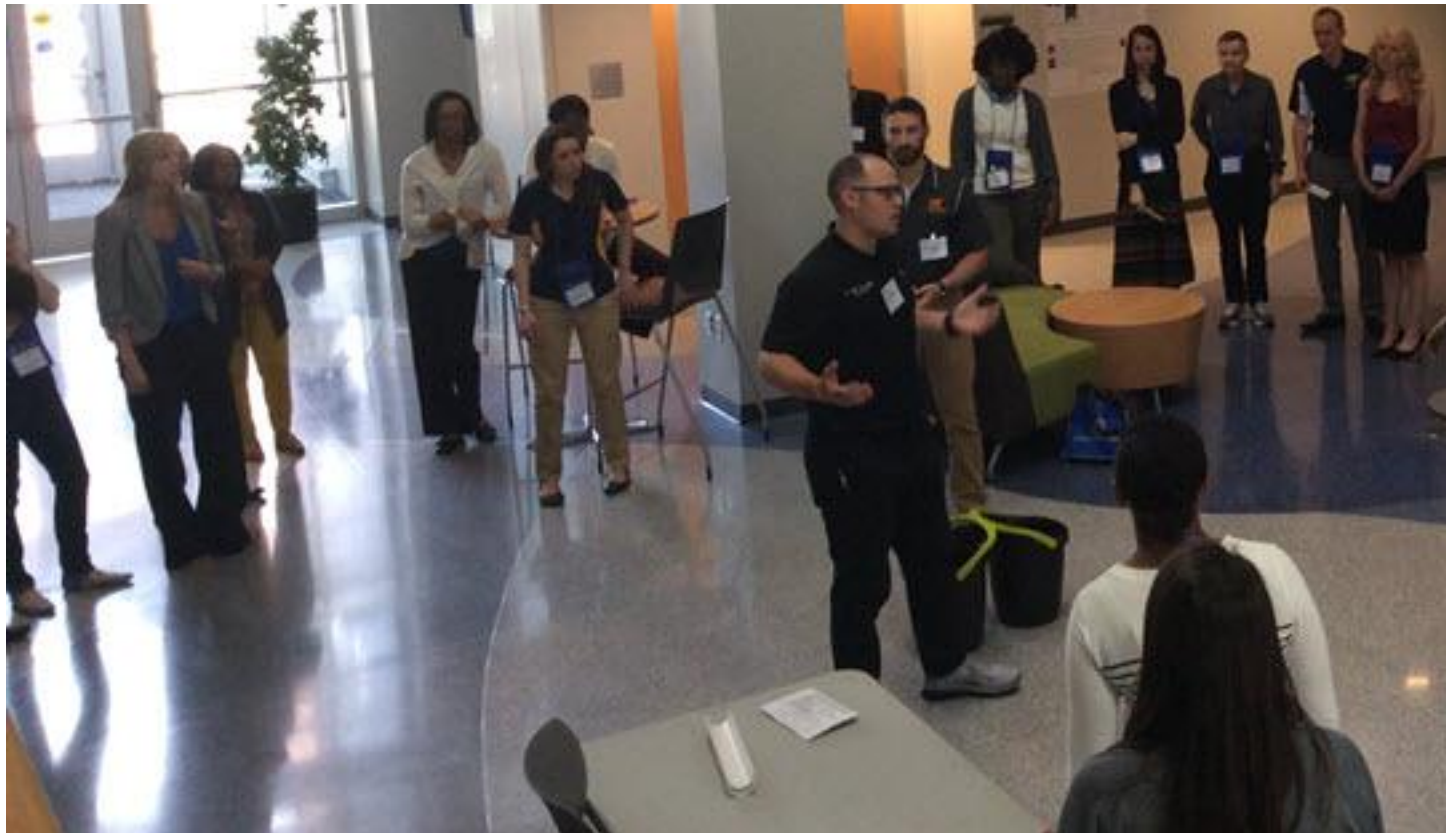
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for undergraduate students who were having their first exposure to sport and exercise psychology”; “The panels were great!”; “I appreciated both workshops-- lots of great practical and usable ideas for activities.”; and “I think this conference was great for opening the door to diversity in SEP, but there is always more than can be done. Continuous awareness and education are key.”

It is our hope that the AASP-HBCU regional conference continues annually at a different HBCU each year. The faculty and student coordinators at Johnson C. Smith University were proud to be the hosting site for this inaugural event.



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