



## 2018-2019 AASP Midwest Regional Conference Final Report

To Whom It May Concern:

The AASP Midwest Regional Conference was held at Minnesota State University, Mankato on March 22-23, 2019. This event was organized and hosted by the graduate students in the Sport & Exercise Psychology Program. Attendees were welcomed by Dr. Kristine Retherford, Dean of the College of Allied Health and Nursing.

Total number of attendees: 82

Undergraduate: 38 students from 7 universities

Graduate – Master's: 32 from 3 different universities

Graduate – Doctoral: 1 from one university

Professionals: 11 from seven different universities or private practice

Total number of universities represented: 12

The conference included two keynotes, one keynote panel, one workshop, and 15 poster presentations, 5 panel discussions, 8 lectures, and 5 symposiums.

Keynote titles were:

Muna Mohamed, *The what, how, and why of community-based participatory research for empowering physical activity for all: A tale of two social justice projects*

Adrian Ferrera, Ph.D., *Be anxious for nothing...it's a small world after all*

Jenna Halvorson, Ken Ildefonso, Jr., Jana Fogaça, and Muna Mohamed, *Navigating the SEP field as a young professional*

Summary of keynotes:

On Friday, Muna Mohamed spoke about her participation in the Girls Involvement in Recreation and Leisurely Sports (G.I.R.L.S) initiative, which works closely with adolescent girls and families of East African descent in the Minneapolis area. She shared about community-based, participatory action research and offered suggestions for implementing this approach in varied professional enterprises (e.g., coaching, consulting). On Saturday, Dr. Adrian Ferrera shared his story from student to Director of Counseling and Sport Psychology at Auburn University. He spoke about overcoming challenges, networking well, and doing good work to achieve your goals. The panel discussion included Ken Ildefonso, Jr. (Ph.D. Student), Dr. Jana Fogaça, (Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin, Green Bay), Jenna Halvorson (Mental Performance Consultant) and Muna Mohamed (Girls on the Run). This diverse panel shared their insights into navigating as a young professional in the sport and exercise psychology field.

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Networking opportunities:

There was a social gathering on Friday that provided a relaxed atmosphere in which attendees could learn more about one another. Students and professionals also connected during and between sessions. Local businesses were also in attendance promoting their brands and providing information about other professions related to the field. Profile by Sanford was extremely popular as they provided information about their new sites opening and the opportunities these would provide for graduate students to work with exercisers.

The post-conference survey indicated that attendees:

- Found the keynotes by Dr. Ferrera and Muna Mohamed very relevant and inspiring to their learning and professional development.
- Appreciated the early career panel discussion.
- Liked the option to choose which breakout session attend.
- Enjoyed learning about the research presented in the poster sessions and would like more research presented in the breakout sessions.
- Found networking easier in a small environment.

The funding from AASP provided financial support to cover the cost of food at the conference (morning or afternoon tea/coffee and lunch). The total cost for food through the university was \$473. The additional 27 dollars of AASP funding went to purchasing snacks for Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. These items included fruit, bananas, granola bars, chips, popcorn, and candy.

Thank you for your support of this conference. It brought together a range of students and professionals in our region. It was great to connect, learn from each other, and develop a stronger collaboration within the region.

Sincerely,

Ashley Raulli, Jared Richardson, Ciana Ní Churraoin, and Sam Crowley  
Conference Committee  
Minnesota State University, Mankato