

PRINCIPAL DSC CONTACTS

Marcus Manning

Durham Sports Commission, Executive Director

With over 18 years of intercollegiate athletics leadership experience, Marcus Manning was recruited for the top position at the DSC in October 2020. His innovative approaches, contagious enthusiasm, and commitment to the benefits of sport have already made a significant impact for the nonprofit as he leads Durham's efforts to attract, support, and promote youth, amateur, and professional sporting, and recreational events.

Manning assumed the role at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Wasting no time, he set out to forge new partnerships, deepen relationships and create new storytelling opportunities, finding ways to keep the DSC relevant and present as the community navigated unprecedented circumstances. He established a comprehensive sports tourism plan and related committee, launched the organization's first-ever fundraising plan, and finalized a plan to build more of an eSports presence in Durham – all in his first few months on the job. Looking ahead, Manning's work to spearhead the rollout of a feasibility study developed in partnership with the Sports Facilities Advisory has the potential to be transformational for the economic development and sports culture of Durham for many years to come.

Manning was most recently the director of athletics and recreation at Centenary College of Louisiana, leading 17 varsity programs, 26 staff members and over 250 student-athletes. During his tenure, he served as the lead administrator

for lacrosse, soccer, and softball capital projects. He was honored for his service on campus and within the community as the 2020 David Womack Leadership Award and 2019 Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission Pride Award winners. Prior to Centenary, Manning served as Maryville University's director of athletics and vice president for athletics and recreation. There, he managed the Saints' operating, recruiting, scholarship, and fundraising budgets, helped design and implement two three-year strategic plans, and established the Saints Booster Club. He also assisted in the design, budgeting, and construction of four major athletic facility upgrades. Under Manning's leadership, Maryville saw academic and athletic success, winning the NCAA President's Award for Academic Success five times in six years and earning NCAA DII tournament bids in women's basketball, men's soccer, softball, and men's wrestling.

Preceding those accomplishments, Manning functioned as the director of membership and legislative services at the NAIA. During his years working in Kansas City, he coordinated NAIA membership applications and support to affiliated conferences in their efforts to recruit and retain member institutions. He was critical in his work assisting the development of educational and resource materials, as well as materials related to rules education and accountability for member institutions and conferences as he served as a



liaison to the Appalachian Athletic, American Midwest, Dakota, and Frontier conferences.

Manning has served on several national boards, committees, and councils during his career, including the NAIA National Administrative Council, NAIA Conduct and Ethics Committee, NAIA Conduct in Competition Committee, National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) Executive Committee and NACDA Learfield Director's Cup Committee. Manning currently serves on the Minority Opportunities Athletic Association (MOAA) Board and co-chairs the Awards Committee.

Manning graduated with a B.A. from Quincy University in business administration as well as an M.S. in sports management from Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville. His family is what is most important to him, with his parents Frank and Gina Manning serving as his role models and as the proud husband of Sarah Manning. He is also a proud member of Steeler Nation, a die-hard fan for the Pittsburgh Steelers, and a dog dad of two golden retrievers, Hines and Bettis.

PRINCIPAL DSC CONTACTS

Kaila'Shea Menendez

Durham Sports Commission, Deputy Director

The newest team member to the DSC, Kaila'Shea A. Menendez has immediately excelled as the deputy director for the Durham Sports Commission. In a newly created position, Menendez drives the nonprofit's mission to create social and economic impact through sports and leads the management of strategic initiatives and special projects.

Additionally, Menendez spearheads the work of the DSC's Advisory and Sports Tourism Committees, already having proactively built dynamic, productive relationships with key stakeholders. She has readily stepped in and owned her position as the point of contact for various national governing bodies in sports as well as other external rights holders and local event owners. While those are the responsibilities she is formally charged with, Menendez's keen eye for forecasting event owners' needs, multifaceted skillsets honed by years of leadership experience, and innate thoughtfulness permeate across all the organization accomplishes.

Menendez was previously the senior director of leadership programming and events at Women Leaders in College Sports, the premier leadership organization that develops, connects, and advances women working in college sports and beyond. She oversaw the Women Leaders in College Sports National Convention and was responsible for the execution of all leadership programming and events, including the Women's Leadership Symposium, Institute for Administrative

Advancement, Leadership Enhancement Institute, Executive Institute, and DI NEXT. She managed initiatives dedicated to furthering and supporting women of color in sports and remains an advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Before assuming her senior director role, Menendez held positions at Women Leaders in College Sports as an events coordinator and director of leadership programming. The experience gained over those years allows her to be a steady hand in all aspects of the sports commission's work.

Prior to joining Women Leaders in College Sports, she served as coordinator of strategic initiatives, events & community engagement at the University of California San Diego, before serving as the internal operations assistant. There she developed strategies to promote and enhance athletic involvement on campus and throughout the La Jolla community. Menendez also previously held the Junior Triton Club director position and was empowered to cultivate relationships with local organizations and community members to generate revenue and partnership opportunities.

Before transitioning into intercollegiate athletics, Menendez was the recreation center manager at Camp Pendleton, one of the largest Marine Corps bases in the United States, where she was responsible for overall facility operations and recreational programming and events for over



3,000 U.S. Marines. The start of her career was propelled by lessons learned as a varsity high school basketball coach as well as a staff member for various parks and recreation centers and YMCAs across the country. Serving those communities through sports and recreation then sharpened her approach and expedited her impact in the Durham community today.

A former basketball student-athlete, coach, and native of Raleigh, North Carolina, Menendez graduated from Western Carolina University with a B.A. in Psychology and Health & Physical Education. She also received her M.A. in Physical Education and Exercise Science & Sports Administration from the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. Menendez enjoys leisure travel around the world and has visited several countries in Asia, Europe, South America, and Australia. Her fondest memory was time spent in Sikituru Village providing resources, hope, and inspiration to young school children in Fiji. In addition to traveling, her hobbies include playing basketball, coaching recreational sports, and swimming.

PRINCIPAL DSC CONTACTS

India Johnson

Durham Sports Commission, Assistant Director

India Johnson has hit the ground running as the newly appointed Assistant Director for the Durham Sports Commission. She is the primary facilitator and service provider for local and external event owners, and spearheads all of the DSC's owned and operated events. She also served as tournament director for the DSC's inaugural high school basketball invitational, the Champion Durham Classic.

Before the DSC, Johnson was most recently a customer relations manager at the NAIA Eligibility Center, working full time to ensure member institutions, administrators, and student-athletes, as well as their parents, coaches, and high school counselors were provided the best experience and superior service. Reflecting the NAIA's focus on the development of student-athletes to their full potential, Johnson channeled her passion for personal and professional transformation by committing to the role. She supplied a high degree of professionalism as she maintained complete and accurate information related to the next steps in the eligibility process, supported the team lead in managing the seasonal workforce as well as in the management of workloads. She offered cross-team

support as needed and often jumped in on marketing and social media initiatives.

Prior to her time with the NAIA, Johnson served as a customer support associate at Teamworks, the leading athlete engagement software empowering thousands of teams around the world to better connect and collaborate. At Teamworks, she developed a level of expertise in athletic operations management to effectively collect, organize, and distribute data to customers, cohorts, and collaborate across departments. She managed the customer service support phone line and email account by providing high quality assistance through concise communication resulting in increased customer satisfaction scores at a time when the company was accelerating its rapid growth.

Johnson graduated with a B.A. in business administration from the University of Missouri-Kansas City while competing on the hardwood as a Division I student-athlete. As a combo guard known for her fearless attacking style, Johnson tallied 398 points, 125 rebounds and 124 assists on the court in just two seasons. With



the confidence of her coaches and teammates behind her, Johnson's most memorable moment happened in a conference road game at CSU Bakersfield when she pulled down an offensive rebound, knocked down a shot to tie the game late, before finding herself sealing the win with a floater off the glass as time expired. Immediately continuing her education, she earned an M.A. in higher education administration with an emphasis in sports administration and exercise science from UMKC. Johnson takes the lessons of focus and hard work she learned through basketball as she continues to be a great teammate at the DSC.

About the Durham Sports Commission

The Durham Sports Commission is a 501(c)(3) whose mission is to create economic and social impact by leading the community's efforts to attract, support, and promote youth, amateur, collegiate, and professional sporting and recreational events. Our team at the Durham Sports Commission is constantly asking, "How can we help?" We encourage you to schedule a meeting with our staff to talk through all the ways we can assist you in planning your event.

Learn more: www.durhamncsports.com

