Published on Sports Management Resources

What Others Say

SMR consultants have worked with numerous athletic departments, conferences, associations and other sports-related non-profit organizations. Read about what some of these organizational leaders have to say...

Saint Joseph's University

"We were most fortunate to have Donna Lopiano and SMR to work with us on our 2011-2015 Strategic Plan. Donna is second to none when it comes to understanding the world of collegiate athletics and engaging a client: she jumped into the underbelly of our operation (even got to know it better than some of our staff!); was passionate about her work; meticulous with detail, and challenged us like we haven't been challenged before. Her personality and style lent to working with our staff without reservation. Donna's previous leadership positions and experience on a college campus were critical and essential to her grasping the nuances of all that we do or intend to do. She left us with creative ideas as well as a road map for the future. Her vision for 'what counts' in intercollegiate athletics is superb. I have never been so confident in a report as I am with our Plan as it was 'right on' for our institution. Her presentation to our Board on Athletics Policy was professional, delivered with confidence and passion and left a wonderful impression with our faculty, staff and alumni. This relationship was well worth our time and resources and I would recommend SMR and Donna to any institution!" --Don DiJulia, Director of Athletics

University of Missouri - Columbia

"The University of Missouri engaged Sports Management Resources to assist us with implementation of our diversity plan and to provide us with recommendations designed to ensure MU provides a welcoming environment for all of our constituents. SMR did a phenomenal job of assessing our current climate and staff/student-athlete composition. SMR's subsequent comprehensive review included the hiring process for new staff, student-athlete recruitment methods and professional development opportunities for both groups. These recommendations will be critical to our efforts in building an athletics department which reflects and embraces the cultural differences in our society. SMR's experience and expertise in so many areas that affect intercollegiate athletics was invaluable." -- Mike Alden, Director of Athletics

Cleveland State University

"As Cleveland State prepares for our 10-year NCAA accreditation, having SMR survey our coaches and athletes and then prepare a gender equity and diversity report is proving to be invaluable. While we learned some specific areas where we need to make improvements, we also learned that some concerns are due more to perception than reality. In these cases we need to improve the internal communication of policies already in place. SMR helped us sort out the differences so that we can concentrate our efforts in the areas that will really make a difference for our student-athletes." -- John Parry, Director of Athletics

ASPIRE Academy for Sports Excellence

"We engaged SMR in September of 2008 to conduct and deliver an ambitious Change Management project that aimed to reassess and re-examine the Academy's programs so they are fully aligned with its purpose, vision and mandate in support of our future growth aspirations. Donna Lopiano stands absolutely unique in her consulting approach among all other consultants I have ever worked with for the last 15 years. She is incredibly dedicated to her client's expectations, tremendously insightful and deeply knowledgeable in providing workable solutions to solve the growth challenges of our unique organization. Her exceptional spectrum of expertise in both management and sport was of a significant value to the project and we have greatly benefited from that. Donna's ability to understand the organizational environment and the surrounding cultural factors were of great value to the project success. I have been personally and professionally privileged and fortunate to work with SMR and particularly Donna Lopiano!" -- Mushtaq Al Waeily, Executive Director, Liaison, Office of the President - Aspire Zone, Former Chief Operating Officer, ASPIRE Academy for Sports Excellence, Doha, Qatar

Youngstown State University

"Working with Sports Management Resources, and specifically Donna Lopiano, was a very rewarding and educational experience. The wealth of knowledge provided by this highly respected team was invaluable in our development of a quality, compliant gender equity plan. Their process included an extremely thorough analysis of all relative equity factors at our university and sought input from both the administration and the coaches. Ms. Lopiano's professionalism, expertise, and helpful demeanor made this an enjoyable process. SMR provides expert advice at an affordable cost and we recommend their services without any reservations." -- Elaine Jacobs, Associate Director of Athletics/SWA

Sports Commission, Turks and Caicos Islands

"Sports Management Resources has provided consulting services to the Turks and Caicos Islands Sports Commission for the purpose of enhancing our governing authority ordinance, developing bylaws that define the operating responsibilities and procedures to be followed by the Sports Commission and national sport governing organizations and developing an overall national sports policy. SMR will continue to provide assistance in the development of a strategic plan which will guide sports development on TCI for the next three to five years. I have found their work to be outstanding. They seek to understand all factors that have an impact on sport delivery systems and are extremely attentive to detail. They work hand-in-hand with me, respecting my time and seeking my opinion and advice on all elements. I highly recommend their work and look forward to continuing our relationship." -- Alvin Parker, Director, Sports Commission, Turks and Caicos Islands

Wright Risk Management Company, LLC

"We are pleased to include Dr. Lopiano and SMR as sports consultants to our educational risk financing programs. Donna has served as a speaker, consultant, technical resource as well as a contributor to our client-based risk management newsletter – At Issue. Besides her expertise with Title IX issues, Donna also has a depth of knowledge concerning sports-related risk management topics. At our request, Donna has helped us develop our program website with material covering sports-related risk control topics that include sample policies and risk control techniques. Dr. Lopiano rates at the top of my list of professional in the sports field." -- Robert Bambino, Senior Vice President – Risk Management

Occidental College

"Occidental College has benefited a great deal in the short time of collaborating with the professionals at SMR. We saw this as a unique opportunity to get "coaching" from some of the best and most experienced minds in the business. SMR not only provided a user friendly tool to measure our current structure but the consultant was also readily available and the feedback was thorough and timely. Our work over three months will serve as a guideline in planning for the next several years." -- Jaime Hoffman, Director of Athletics, Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA

PowerPlay NYC

"PowerPlay NYC's Board jumped at the opportunity to have a strategic session with SMR. Having Donna Lopiano, SMR President, facilitate a strategic session for our organization was one of the most successful strategic moves we have ever made! The day was a huge success. She is extremely insightful, efficient, targeted and knowledgeable about sport, about organizations, and about the nonprofit arena and how to create a gameplan to move forward. She was well-prepared and thorough in her materials and facilitation, engaging us to think in new ways and keeping our eyes on the prize, to fulfill our mission. Many times I have seen strategic sessions that get bogged down in the SWOT analysis and never get to the meat of developing goals and action steps. Donna was very clear about where we were going, and what we would have at the end of the day. It was a highly productive and engaging session, and really inspired our Board to step up in a bigger way this year." -- Ellen Markowitz, Founder, PowerPlay NYC

Wellesley College

"Dr. Connee Zotos was an engaging, vibrant and energetic presenter with a keen ability to impart a great deal of knowledge about effective teaching and coaching in a meaningful way. She engaged our teacher-coaches with hands-on examples of how and why teaching/coaching assessment is so important to each person, their students and for the viability of our profession. I knew her presentation was a success when at the end of our time, our faculty/staff did not want to leave!" --Bridget Belgiovine, Director of Athletics/Chair, Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA

State University of New York @ Geneseo

"Connie Zotos is a very engaging and inspiring speaker. My staff was able to relate to the concepts she presented and implement them as tools for measuring performance. I would strongly recommend

Connie to my fellow colleagues as an individual who can relate to the needs of coaches and their desire to be successful…" --Marilyn Moore, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics and Recreation, SUNY Geneseo, Geneseo, NY

New England Women's Fund

“Donna Lopiano rates at the top of my list of professionals in the sports and non-profit management fields. Her vision for seeing the possibilities in an organization and then assisting the management team in gaining insight into their primary business and focus to achieve that vision is tremendous. Donna led the NEWFund Board of Directors through a strategic planning process at a time when we needed not only to bring the organization to a new level but also needed to re-energize the staff and board members on the importance of the work we were doing to better the lives of girls through sports. Donna’s knowledge, passion and experience in the sports and non-profit world coupled with her ability to think outside the box, ask critical questions and truly engage the entire board in the planning process was what made the planning process highly efficient, rewarding and very successful. Donna captivated the board with her professionalism, friendliness and performance." --Linda Driscoll, Past President, New England Women’s Fund Board of Directors

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