



2022 NSCA *NATIONAL* CONFERENCE

July 6-9, 2022 | New Orleans & Online
#NSCACon22

› *KNOWLEDGE*
› *ADVANCEMENT*
› *COMMUNITY*

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

I have no actual or potential conflict of interest
in relation to this presentation.

Corliss Fingers

Stop Holding Them Back! How Can we Better Prepare our Staff and Athletes?

QUICK ACTIVITY

Briefly write your WORKPLACE...

- **Philosophy**
- **Values**
- **Vision**

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Stop Holding Them Back! How Can we Better Prepare our Staff and Athletes?

Stop Holding Them Back!



How Can We Better Prepare our Staff and Athletes for Tremendous Success?

Corliss Fingers

Stop Holding Them Back! How Can we Better Prepare our Staff and Athlets?

This morning we will:

- Examine the value you add to your staff and athletes.
 - What is your contribution to their development?
 - How do you help them grow?
- Explore how our values impact the student, client and staff experience
 - Values in Ink or Values in Action
- Generate strategies to serve diverse populations.
 - One size DOES NOT fit all!

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WHO AM I?

- **Wife** – of Dr. Earnie Fingers – CEO – The Fingers Touch - PEG
- **Mother** – of Lenny – Straight 'A' student, Taekwondo Champion, avid golfer, all around amazing Son
- **MSCC - Master Strength & Conditioning Coach (CSCCa) *Board Member**
 - **Director** – Bethune-Cookman University, Daytona Beach, FL
 - Head Strength & Conditioning Coach – Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA
 - Assistant Strength & Conditioning Coach – University of Maryland, College Park, MD
 - Assistant Strength & Conditioning Coach – University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC
 - Instructor/Trainer– Spa Health Clubs, Chapel Hill/Durham, NC
 - Former Athlete – University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill - Track & Field

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WHO AM I?



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In the BEGINNING



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In the BEGINNING

As the Director of Performance & Head Strength Coach of a University, you should always be looking at cutting edge things to bring into your program. Corliss and I met and discussed foot quickness and high intensity dance exercises, core training and advanced movement prep work for our lineman. **She designed a program that was efficient, quick moving with rapid results.** She brought energy and the ability to have direct conversations with people not too much younger than herself. Student-athletes need to be able to **connect with someone on your strength staff** to help with their **total experience and mental health.**

Jeff 'Maddog' Madden
Legendary Hall of Fame Coach

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HANDSHAKE HIRE



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HANDSHAKE HIRE

During my 27 years at the University of Maryland, I was extremely blessed to work alongside Corliss Fingers in the physical preparation of our student-athletes. Coach Fingers was **one of four very qualified finalists** for Maryland's open Assistant Strength position for football in 1995, and at the completion of the interview, **it was obvious to all that she was superior to her 3 male co-interviewees**. Corliss assisted with football throughout our 15 years together, while also supervising the training of 5 other sports. When she arrived at Maryland, women working with football was typically not occurring, and her **confidence, toughness, knowledge, and professionalism** not only earned her tremendous respect from the entire program, but also paved the way for other females to work with male sports. While I am so proud of what Corliss Fingers has achieved as a strength coach, I am equally proud of the impact she has had as a **trailblazing woman in a male dominated profession**.

Dwight Galt III

Former Assistant Athletic Director-Performance Enhancement
Penn State University

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BUT YOUR RESUME!?!?!?

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Values in Ink or Values in Action

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QUICK ACTIVITY

MY...

Philosophy

Values

PASSION

SERVICE

FAMILY

DIVERSITY

Vision

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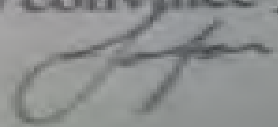
I worked with Corliss when I was at Maryland. She **pushed me more than any other Coach I've had during my entire career**. She gave me **tough love** which helped keep me from being complacent. Her expectations for me were so high! I could see the difference when I followed her lead. It didn't bother me that she was a woman training football players because she was **very knowledgeable and earned her respect** just like any other coach. She demanded respect when she led but it never felt forced. It was natural. We could all see that **she was comfortable in her own skin**. She wanted what was best for us and we could feel it. I'm a better athlete because I was trained by her.

Torrey Smith
Super Bowl Champion
Former Baltimore Raven and Carolina Panthers Wide Receiver
University of Maryland (All Conference)

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Stop Holding Them Back! How Can we Better Prepare our Staff and Athlets?

Dear, Corliss

I am writing you this letter to ask for your assistance in helping me reach my most desirable goals. The talk we had the other day really opened my eyes to the things I need to improve in order to reach my goals. First I want to thank you for all the advice and honesty that you have always given me, even though at times I didn't like it. I do admit that at times I am an extremely emotional person, and do let my emotions hinder me in not allowing myself in reaching my full potential. But I do know that if I want to become the athlete that I can become, I will have to put that aside. The thing that hurts me the most is that people view me as a negative person and not a hard worker, when I really am not that type of person. But I guess I can't see myself and see how I am viewed by others. So I thank you for letting me know that. So with all of that said I am asking you to do whatever you feel is necessary for me to reach my full potential. I know that this will be hard for me to accomplish that's why I am asking the person who I most respect (even though I might not show it) and feel really cares about me as a person. I understand that this is something that I will have to want for myself, but I would much appreciate it if you could assist me in this journey. This is something that is really hard for me to do because I have a lot of pride when it comes to asking for assistance. So I hope this brief letter is enough to convince you that I am really serious about this and would like your help. THANKS.



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“Being at Southern University during several coaching changes left me having two different strength coaches in two years. On year three comes a female strength coach and I just gave up hope. But Coach Fingers pushed me and my teammates to limits we thought we could NEVER reach and for that I’m truly grateful.”

▪ Jaleel Richardson

Former Southern University Student Athlete

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Africka Smith - B-CU Tennis

“It’s one thing to be a black woman trying to own her own space. But to be a black woman trying to own her own space while seeing another black woman doing it, is another thing entirely. The world hasn’t always encouraged us to be unapologetically ourselves, so to see a strong woman who looks like me in a position of authority has made me feel comfortable to reach for the same goals without feeling the need to dilute who I am”.

Corliss Fingers

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Dear Coach Fingers,

I know its cliché to write you a letter but I don't know how else to show my gratitude because sky writing is pretty expensive. So, you're just going to have to accept my cheap ass and this well thought out letter. First of all, I want to say THANK YOU! For everything, for taking the time with me during my soccer seasons and pushing me to my limits. I know that I wouldn't have been able to reach my potential if I didn't have you laying down the facts and giving me some tough love. I appreciate you 'bein da realest and always keeping it one hunna' because you didn't put up with any of my excuses and made me get the job done.

Your advice and guidance has filtered through to my life outside of sport. You've taught me that as a woman being in a male orientated profession and often seen as incapable of doing certain jobs, that it is very possible to achieve anything I set out to do. You've given me so much self-confidence and the belief that I will succeed in life.

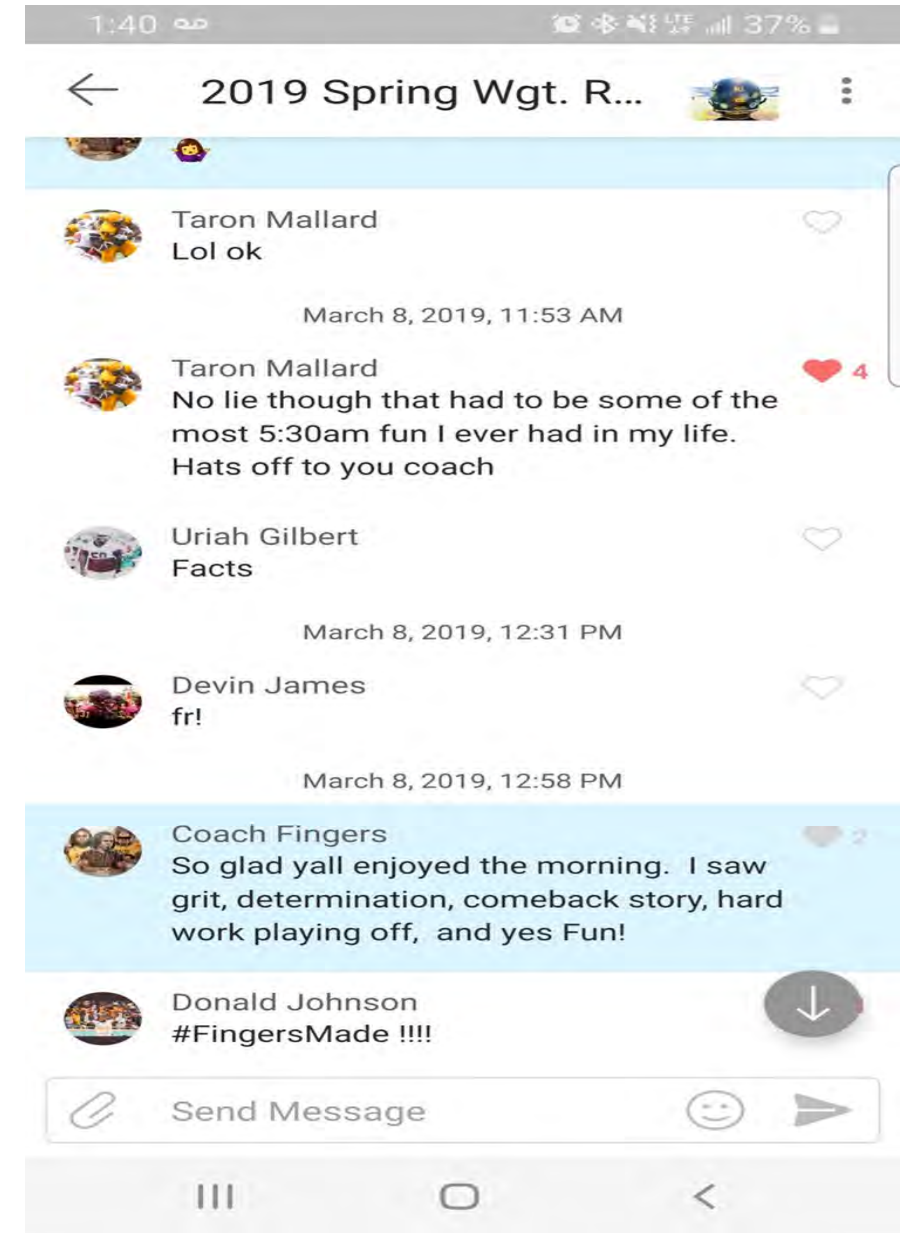
I want to thank you for allowing me to work beside you in the weight-room. I have learnt so much about the strength and conditioning profession so far and am excited to continue learning, even though you're going to be livin' it up at your new school don't think for a second I won't be calling you all the time! Guuuuuuuuuurlll who am I gonna talk smack with? Who am I gonna complain to about the poo ass café? or these janky ass washing machines? WHAT ABOUT OUR SASSY DANCING OR BERNIE-ING!?!? Honest to goodness I will be lost without you! All jokes aside, watching you work and balance your home life, being a mother and wife and a boss has impressed and inspired me beyond measure. You've done so much for the entire Southern athletic department and you still manage to go home and cook a bomb ass roast and be back at 5:30am to do it all again. You seriously are the bomb.com

So, to wrap this up (I don't wanna start crying because lord knows I have been!) I wish you and the family all the best in your next endeavors. I know that the next bunch of athletes are going to have the best and your new interns are going to have the experience of a life time. Learning under such an inspirational and intelligent coach. Once and, thank you, I am forever grateful for the life lessons you've gifted me and it is my sincerest hope that I am reach even a fraction of your caliber.

All the best,

Ya fav aussie

Simone 'Sha-mone' Arthur



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VALUES IN ACTION



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SEAT AT THE TABLE

- Empowering
- Investing
- Nurturing
- Having a voice and Using it.
- Different perspective



BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD

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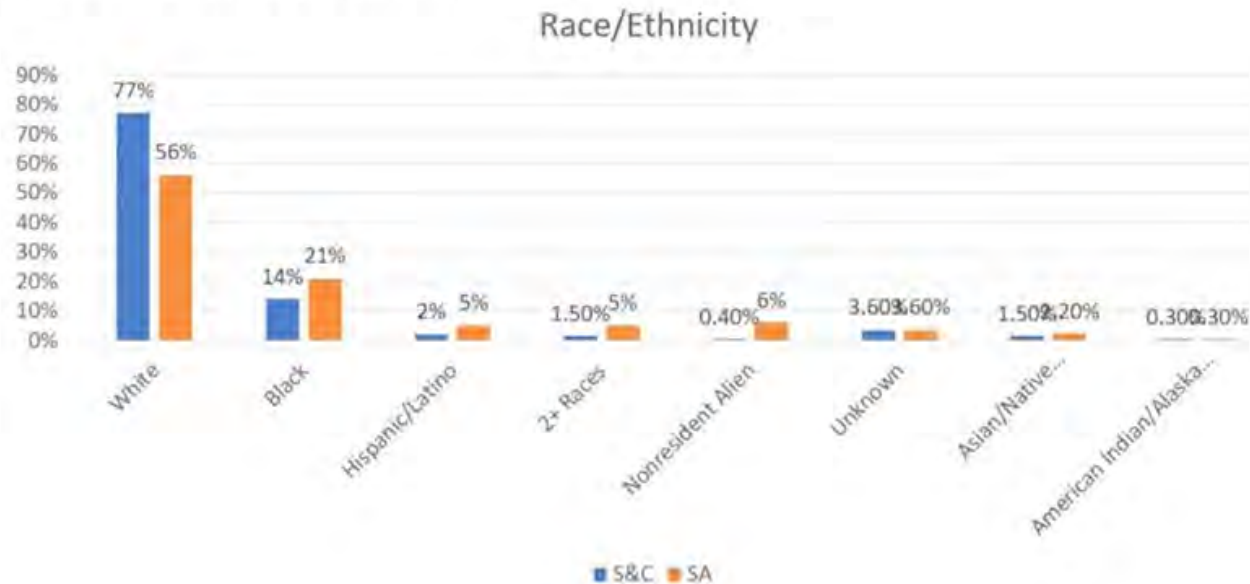
**YOU DO KNOW IT'S
AN HBCU - RIGHT?!**

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What is the Current Landscape – Race/Ethnicity

- 2019 NCAA statistics (all divisions)

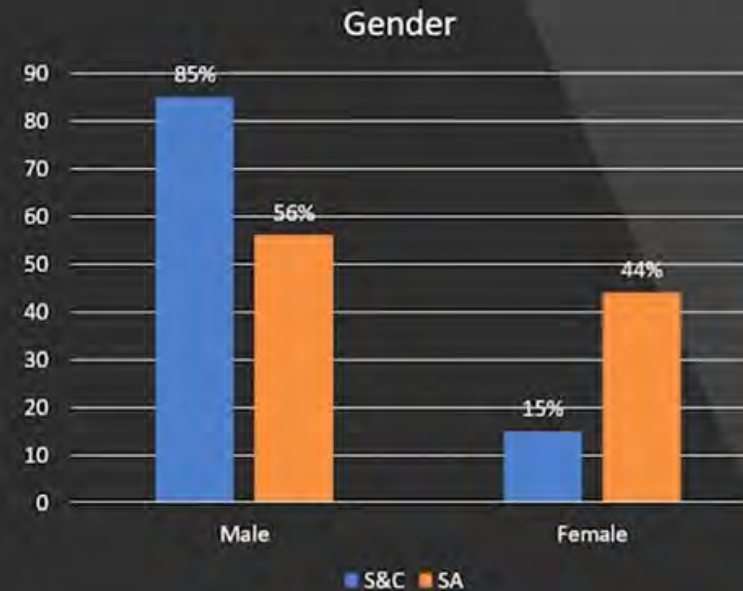


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What is the Current Landscape - Gender

- 2019 NCAA statistics (all divisions)



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DEMOGRAPHICS BY GENDER

Select a Title Coaching Staff: Strength Coach	Select a Division All	Select a Subdivision All	Select HBCU Status All	Female Male
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Coaching Staff: Strength Coach

Division: All
Subdivision: All

2021	84%	16%
2020	86%	14%
2019	85%	15%
2018	85%	15%
2017	85%	15%
2016	85%	15%
2015	85%	15%
2014	86%	14%
2013	86%	14%
2012	86%	14%

Students: Student-Athletes

Division: All
Subdivision: All

56%	44%
56%	44%
56%	44%
56%	44%
56%	44%
56%	44%
56%	44%
56%	44%
56%	44%
57%	43%

	Male	Female	Total
2021	2,287	424	2,711
2020	2,350	397	2,747
2019	2,218	379	2,597
2018	2,150	382	2,532
2017	2,076	373	2,449
2016	1,888	337	2,225
2015	1,774	302	2,076
2014	1,696	281	1,977
2013	1,609	257	1,866
2012	1,473	240	1,713

Male	Female	Total
275,175	218,122	493,297
281,699	223,012	504,711
279,244	219,496	498,740
276,066	216,775	492,841
272,681	214,217	486,898
270,630	210,345	480,975
267,613	207,983	475,596
262,657	203,640	466,297
255,615	198,512	454,127
251,237	192,972	444,209

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Samuel S. Lackey, MS CSCS SCCC

Director of Football Sports Performance
Fresno State University
(903) 312-0046
Twitter/Instagram: @StrengthSam40

I wouldn't be the coach I am today had I never met Corliss. I was fortunate enough to learn from her when I got my first internship in the spring of 2011. In the 10 years I've been in the field, I don't think there has been a career move I've made yet without asking for her approval.

When I was a wide-eyed intern, that had no idea what I had just gotten myself into she was there to help guide me and develop me into the coach I was supposed to be, not the coach that others wanted me to be. That has been one of the things that has resonated with me over the years. I'm in a position now where I can mentor and develop young coaches in the infancy of their careers, and I try to help them in the same way she helped me. She allowed me to grow, make mistakes, correct them, and move on. The way she would interact with athletes and staff members, and their admiration of her is something I believe every coach wants to be able to create within their workplace.

Her ability to establish connections, not only to be a great coach but an even better person is something that carries far beyond the weight room. It made a lasting impact on her athletes, and for sure made an impact on me. It is something I couldn't grasp early on in my career, I think most young coaches get caught up in trying to make it and where the next move is, as opposed to being 10 toes down and "making it" where you're at.

I came across this quote not too long ago; "As a coach, you have no idea who the diamonds could be. It is our responsibility to polish them all." I think that exemplifies Corliss with how she develops her athletes, staff, and interns. Thank you for polishing me.

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Brittany Collins MS, ESed, LPC, NCC
Mental Health Counselor,
University of Cincinnati Sports Medicine

Black student-athletes as well as International student-athletes endure added stressors and pressure which affect Mental Health and Well-Being such as:

- Racism
- Discrimination
- Negative Stereotypes
- Bias-motivated incidents
- Language Barriers

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QUICK ACTIVITY

YOUR...

Philosophy

Values

Vision

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VALUES

- **What is your story** and/or perspective?
 - What's *REALLY* going on?
- Impacting the student-athlete experience
 - Comfort level
 - Approach
 - Style
 - Music

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VALUES

What is your thought process when you add a name to the roster?

What are you targeting?

Student-Athlete

Staff

Client

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What Did We Gain?

1. What are your strategies to better serve a diverse world? A diverse body of athletes?
2. What is YOUR impactful experience goal?
“I want my athletes/clients to gain...” WHAT?
They will walk away from our time together...

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STRATEGIES

- WE must be aware of our own unconscious (and unintended) bias?
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity
 - Culture

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REFERENCES

Diversity in Strength & Conditioning (Indiana Strength presentation):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=__ESvdIbAVps - Jeanne Rankin, MS, SCCC, CSCS, AOLC

NCAA Demographics Database: <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2018/12/13/ncaa-demographics-database.aspx>

Cares and Concerns of the Female S&C Coach (2020 CSCCa virtual conference presentation):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odL5O9A15JQ> - Jeanne Rankin, MS, SCCC, CSCS, AOLC

Student-Athlete Mental Health & Well-Being (June 10, 2020 - 3rd Annual Olympic Sports Performance Virtual Women's Clinic) - Brittany L. Collins MS, MSED, LPC, NCC

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THANK YOU!!



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