After retiring in 1998, I continued speaking about both Title IX and the history of women in sport for a number of years. However, when I turned 80, my pledge was to stop giving speeches. When Amy called to invite me to be a participant at this forum, I reneged on that pledge and here I am........ eager to share these two topics with you. Amy continues to do such a wonderful job as Director of Inclusion, saying no to her was not an option!

My greatest challenge in preparing my remarks was selecting what to include from among many significant events which you should know about. I strongly believe in what President Harry Truman said....” The only thing new is the history you do not know.”

A chronological approach seems to be the best way to highlight key occurrences related to Title IX and Gender Equity. Let’s start in the 1970’s and go through the 80’s and 90’s. You have been a part of and know the history following these three decades.

I have given each decade a name:

1970’s The Best of Times
1980’s The Worst of Times (the decadent decade)
1990’s The Renaissance

Later we may want to talk about appropriate names for the 2000-2009 decade and the 2010 to date decade.

The 70’s (The Best of Times)

So many wonderful things happened in the 70’s which benefitted girls and women in sport. It was truly a perfect storm! I still get energized reflecting on the progress.

In 1971 AIAW (the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women) was born and the next year, 1972, Title IX was passed. These two events changed women’s sports forever.

CIAW (the Commission for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women) had been appointed in 1966 to respond to the surging need to provide, promote and proctor high level athletic contests for women. It was clear such a task could not be managed by the small group of women on the commission.

A governance organization was desperately needed.

Three representatives for the CIAW traveled to Kansas City to meet with NCAA personnel to see if they were interested in conducting national championships for women. They were not!

The women were informed that the NCAA was an organization run by men for men!

The CIAW through its parent organization sent invitations to all accredited institutions of higher learning inviting them to be a
part of a new governance organization for women in sport, i.e. the AIAW.

The 278 Charter members who responded quickly developed their own bylaws and operational procedures. There is power in a group committed to an ideal and that group did, indeed, become powerful. It reminds me of a quote by Helen Keller who pronounced “alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” Camaraderie within AIAW was amazing as the members shared a common goal------the advancement of women in sport.

The organization was run by a massive volunteer work force. Progress made by these volunteers who were predominantly women was remarkable. Initially the paid help for AIAW consisted of one secretary!

The sports governance model developed by the AIAW was educationally and fiscally sound. Welfare of the student athlete was the primary focus of the AIAW, and students were represented on all committees and on the Executive Board......with voice and vote!

As noted earlier, just after AIAW was organized, Title IX was enacted. As soon as the law was passed and it was understood that it would, in fact, apply to athletics, a flurry of efforts to dismantle the Title IX legislation occurred. Many of these efforts were made by the NCAA as their executive director alarmed the athletic establishment that the law if implemented would be the end of men’s athletics!
Amendments were proposed to exclude all men’s revenue producing sports. John Tower, senator from Texas, proposed that football be excluded. Thankfully, such types of amendments were defeated.

Who do you suppose worked hard to defeat such amendments? AIAW members were informed about each dangerous amendment and lobbied vigorously against passage of any efforts to weaken Title IX. Many of us believe that Title IX would not have survived the 70’s had it not been for AIAW.

Later I will talk about the loss of Title IX and the demise of AIAW. I believe it was no accident that these setbacks occurred once again close in time.

Following the passage of Title IX, regulations had to be drafted specifying conditions surrounding the law. During the forthcoming 3-year period, some selected members of AIAW were invited by HEW to have a welcomed opportunity to provide input. Christine and I were happy to propose what, exactly, should be included in the regulations as they were being developed.

A draft of the final regulations was widely circulated and hearings were held in 10 principle cities so all parties could react to the proposed regulations. The hearings provided the opportunity for heated debates.
The Title IX regulations were published in 1975 and it is amazing to me that they are still in effect today—evidence of the care and skill with which they were written. Institutions of Higher Education were told that they had 3 years to comply. As you know, most institutions are now 39 years overdue!!!!!!!

The mid-70’s were truly exciting! Positive changes were being made with sports being added and budgets being increased. Progress was evident!

The public was beginning to witness the results of Title IX and the AIAW championship program—thanks in part to AIAW’s million-dollar contract with NBC.

The history-making Billie Jean King vs. Bobbie Riggs “Battle of the Sexes” occurred in 1973. The following year the Women’s Sports Foundation was formed. So much progress was occurring.

In 1975 I was asked to run for the AIAW office of Commissioner of National Championships. I soon found myself director of all championships which was more than a full-time job----but, on a volunteer basis, of course.


Skill levels were soaring in all sports when women were finally given a chance. Swimming is a good example to use because times are so objective. In swimming women began to match the men’s gold medal times set just two Olympiads earlier.
1975 was also the year of the first sell out of the national women’s basketball championship.

Despite periodic incursions by the NCAA now wanting to assume control of women’s sports, spirits were high and progress continued. By 1980 the AIAW membership had expanded from 278 to 973 and was continuing to grow---eventually becoming a larger organization than the NCAA.

The Association was offering 41 championships in 19 different sports…. quite a feat from the original 7 championships.

AIAW was a very democratic organization with one vote per institution. Much of the success of the association was dependent on its numerous committees; therefore, who served on these committees was likewise vital to the success of the association.

By an overwhelming vote, the 1981 Delegate Assembly approved a motion to achieve 20% minority representation on all AIAW committees. I had the privilege of contacting many minority women and inviting them to serve. It was a joyous task and one I will always treasure as they were thrilled to now be an integral part of AIAW operations.

Today such a practice is all but routine but 36 years ago it was a fresh, welcomed step forward and a demonstration of the association’s effort to be inclusive. This action marked the first time in history that a national collegiate governing body instituted an affirmative action policy.
In 1979 as the decade was coming to a close, Title IX Policy Interpretations were published. These interpretations did not change the regulations but simply clarified areas where questions existed. The interpretations exist today and are still a force of law.

The 80’s (The Decadent Decade)
The 80’s were certainly not the best of times for women in sport which explains my label...... the Decadent Decade.

Efforts by the NCAA to assume governance of women’s sports were overt.

Joint committees to resolve the governance issue were not successful. At the last AIAW Delegate Assembly in 1983, 85% of the members indicated they wanted to maintain AIAW leadership for women in collegiate sport. They were disappointed in the 30% representation on committees the NCAA was offering. The NCAA responded that this percentage would increase dramatically as women became immersed in the system.

The NCAA membership which was predominantly male voted to start women’s championships and scheduled several in direct conflict with the already-scheduled AIAW Championships. NCAA proposed that they were simply providing another option but when unlike AIAW they were able to pay team expenses, it was truly not a viable option for most institutions.
AIAW filed an anti-trust suit rightfully claiming that the NCAA was using their men’s basketball television revenue to buy out the women’s market.

Surprisingly AIAW lost the case.

It was a chaotic time and in the best interest of women athletes, AIAW closed its doors.

Another set-back for women was the loss of Title IX in 1984 as a result of the Grove City case. Many athletics directors who were almost all male were elated and not only stopped moving toward gender equity but actually regressed. Forced mergers which were commonplace in the 70’s approached 100% and many women athletic administrators lost their jobs.

A lesson to be learned from the Grove City case is that no assurance exists that we will always have Title IX. In fact, we almost lost Title IX again in 2002. All of us need to be forever vigilant in protecting the law.

A couple of bright spots did occur in the 80’s. One was the formation of NACWAA now named Women Leaders in College Sport. This organization provided an avenue for women to meet and determine how to influence the NCAA in a positive way. How I wish I had the time to tell you how we went about this! Before the women became a part of the NCAA, no due process or appeal system for individual athletes existed. Leave it to say that the women have truly made the NCAA a kinder and more gentle organization.
Another positive occurrence was the passage of the Civil Rights Restoration Act in 1988 giving back Title IX, which had been lost four years earlier.

Back to the decadence....... Perhaps one of the saddest occurrences in the 80’s was the successful effort by a small group of commissioners to do away with the one vote per institution in Division I and move to a representative form of governance giving the Division I football powers even more power and control of athletics. Walter Byers, the executive director of the NCAA, predicted that this move would eventually lead to the demise of college sports.

The 90’s (The Renaissance)

NACWAA members bemoaned the losses of the 1980’s and believed if appropriate data were available, it would show how progress had been stymied and how much work needed to be done to achieve equity. Utilizing the communication, networking and negotiating skills learned in AIAW, members successfully urged the NCAA to conduct a gender equity study. The results of this study in 1991 provided invaluable baseline data for years to come. This type of data can now be accessed annually through the Equity in Athletic Disclosure Act.

The gender equity study was the impetus for the appointment of the Gender Equity Task Force which was formed the following year.
The Task Force constituency was as diverse in their endorsement of Title IX as it could possibly be. During the early meetings, I wondered if it would ever be possible to reach consensus on any recommendations. Thanks to the superb leadership of the NCAA president, Judy Sweet, the Task Force issued numerous recommendations almost all of which were strongly endorsed by the association. The definition of gender equity endorsed by the NCAA membership was developed by the task force. Scholarship limits were increased for many women sports. Emerging sports were identified and pathways for adding them created. A decade after ensuring women 30% representation, the actual number was only slightly over 30%. After you hear Christine’s presentation, you will understand why I keep reporting this figure. The Task Force proposed an increase to 40% and that motion passed but; shortly thereafter, it was amended and reduced to 35%.

After the representative form of governance was put into place, this 35% rule was tested. Conferences selected their representatives to serve on the Management Council but while the council thankfully met its minority goal, it failed to meet its gender goal citing that not enough qualified women were available. Thanks to the presidents who said the goal must be met or the Council could not meet! A qualified woman was immediately found!

In 1993 the NCAA executive director, Dick Schultz, laid the groundwork for institutional certification. A massive amount of
work went into the development of a certification program which was supported by the President’s Commission, the NCAA Council and the Knight Commission.

I felt great remorse when this program ceased because as a member of the NCAA Certification Committee for years, I evaluated numerous institutional reports. The progress I witnessed in attention to meeting academic goals but predominantly gender equity goals was amazing. The rate of progress took me back to the early 70’s! When the certification program was “canned” so was much of the gender equity progress. The academic progress continued under alternate efforts.

It is clear why I call the 90’s the renaissance. Progress in attending to Title IX and achieving gender equity was heartwarming. In an earlier law suit (Franklin and Gwinnette, 1992), the Supreme Court verified that Title IX plaintiffs could seek compensatory damages. A proliferation of lawsuits ensued with an extremely high success rate by the Title IX complainants.

Before leaving the 90’s, let me address a downside which continues today and that is the decline in the number of women coaching women’s teams. I suspect you are aware that in all of college coaching, women hold less than 18% of the positions. That is not a fair proportion by anyone’s standards!

The number of minorities in coaching and administration is likewise not an appropriate or fair proportion.
Like the Rooney rule in football, we need a Judy Sweet rule AND an Alfreeda Goff rule to require member institutions to consider at least one minority and at least one woman in all of their searches for coaches and administrators.

As indicated in my opening remarks, I retired in 1998 so after the turn of the century I rarely participated in the developing history of Title IX or gender equity. Future progress and initiatives are up to you as you are the architects of the future.

I challenge you to make the history that you will someday recall a proud history.

I would like to close with another quote from Helen Keller. I continue to be amazed at how someone who could not see and could not hear could be so wise and so articulate.

Helen Keller said, “true happiness is not attained through self-gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.” My chosen purpose has been equity for women in sport. My efforts in that arena have provided me with a lifetime of true happiness.

Whether your worthy purpose is equity for minorities in sport, for the LGBTQ community in sport or for some other disadvantaged group, I wish you much success and that you too have true happiness through your fidelity to that worthy purpose.