

2022

Telling her-story: recovering lost history of Linfield women's athletics: searching NCWSA archives

Laura Kenow
Linfield University

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Recommended Citation

Kenow, Laura, "Telling her-story: recovering lost history of Linfield women's athletics: searching NCWSA archives" (2022). *Post-Grant Reports*. Report. Submission 219.
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Faculty Development Post-Grant Report

Submitted by: Dr. Laura Kenow, Dept of HHPA

Project Title: Telling Her-Story: Recovering Lost History of Linfield Women's Athletics: Searching NCWSA Archives

Dates of Project: Jan 2022-May 2022

Abstract:

This project was part of a larger sabbatical project to reconstruct the missing history of Linfield women's athletics. Specifically, this grant funded travel to Washington State University to review the archived special collection on the Northwest College Women's Sports Association (NCWSA), the regional structure in which Linfield women's athletics competed from 1967-83. The grant also funded travel to Lewis and Clark College to review the archived special collection on the Northwest Conference (NWC) in hopes of locating archived documents on the Women's Conference of Independent Colleges (WCIC). The WCIC was the conference in which Linfield women's athletics competed from 1964-85. Although there was minimal WCIC documentation contained in the NWC collection, what was there along with the NCWSA documentation helped reconstruct portions of regional tournaments and results, coaching tenures, participant lists, budgets, administrative structures and policies, and post-season honors relative to Linfield women's athletics. This information helps create a more accurate representation of the history of Linfield women's athletics. The information also adds to materials and activities used in the teaching of HHPA 410 – Gender Issues in Education and Sport and provides direction for future faculty-student collaborative projects to gather narrative histories that will be housed in the Linfield archives.

Report:

This project was part of my larger sabbatical project to reconstruct the missing history of Linfield women's athletics. Specifically, this grant funded travel to Washington State University to review the archived special collection on the Northwest College Women's Sports Association (NCWSA), the regional structure in which Linfield women's athletics competed from 1967-83. In its later years, 1975-83, the NCWSA would become Region 9 of the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (IAAW). I spent 5 days at the Washington State University Library in Pullman, WA reviewing 22 document boxes (10 linear feet) of archived materials. The NCWSA collection contained meeting minutes and agendas, correspondence, policies and rules governing student athletes and individual sports, and results and programs for NCWSA sanctioned tournaments. The information therein helped reconstruct portions of regional tournaments and results, coaching tenures, sport participant lists, budgets, administrative structures and policies, and post-season honors relative to Linfield women's athletics.

With some grant funds remaining after my trip to WSU, I then traveled to Lewis and Clark College to review the archived special collection on the Northwest Conference (NWC) in hopes

of locating archived documents on the Women's Conference of Independent Colleges (WCIC). The WCIC was the conference in which Linfield women's athletics competed from 1964-85. In 1985, the WCIC merged with the men's intercollegiate athletic conference, the Northwest Conference, and several sources had informed me that documentation from the WCIC was housed in the NWC collection. Unfortunately, there was minimal WCIC documentation in the NWC collection; however, after reviewing seven of the 13 containers (12 cubic feet of documents), I did find information that helped reconstruct administrative structures and discussions relative to the merging of the WCIC and NWC, identify Linfield all-conference award recipients in the WCIC, and verify a Linfield co-ed intercollegiate tennis roster from 1928.

Overall, the information from both archival collections helped create a more accurate representation of the history of Linfield women's athletics. Going forward this information will be used in several ways: (1) It will add to materials and activities used in my teaching of HHPA 410 – Gender Issues in Education and Sport, (2) it will be incorporated into the current information recording the history of Linfield athletics on publicly accessible websites, and (3) it adds to my list of individuals from whom I will gather narrative histories that will be housed in the Linfield archives. I intend to engage students in gathering these narrative histories as part of future faculty-student collaborative research projects.