



SPEAKER BIOS

Youth Sports Safety Summit

Preventing Sudden Death in Youth Sports

Marjorie J. Albohm, MS, ATC

President, National Athletic Trainers' Association;
Director of Clinical Research and Fellowships, Ossur Americas

Marjorie Albohm travels internationally as director of Clinical Research and Fellowships for Ossur Americas and as president of the National Athletic Trainers' Association. She also serves on the board of directors for the Datalys Sports Injury Surveillance Center in Indianapolis. She is a highly regarded speaker, lecturing on a range of athletic training and sports medicine-related topics.

Jon Almquist, ATC, VATL

Administrator, Fairfax County Public Schools Athletic Training Program

Jon Almquist is the athletic training program administrator for Fairfax County Public Schools, the largest school division in Virginia with 25 high schools with full athletic programs. Almquist provides administrative oversight to the staff of over 50 certified athletic trainers who collectively provide comprehensive athletic health care for more than 25,000 student athletes annually. Almquist is the former chair of the NATA Secondary School Athletic Trainers' Committee and the Appropriate Medical Care for Secondary School Age Athlete Task Force and writing team. He has served on the Inter-Association Task Force and subsequent writing team for the Spine Injured Athlete, and on the Task Force for Exertional Heat Illness and Task Force for Sudden Cardiac Arrest.

Douglas J. Casa, PhD, ATC, FACSM, FNATA

University of Connecticut Neag School of Education: Director, Athletic Training Education; Professor, Department of Kinesiology; Chief Operating Officer, Korey Stringer Institute

For Dr. Douglas Casa, the opportunity to prevent sudden death in sport is the culmination of a life-long path; his passion for the study of exertional heat stroke started in 1985 when he suffered an exertional heat stroke while running a 10K race. This experience motivated what has become his life's cause: the study of exertional heat stroke, heat illnesses, hydration and preventing sudden death in sport – his ultimate goal is to find ways to prevent needless tragedy during sport and physical activity. In April 2010 he was asked to develop and run the Korey Stringer Institute (KSI) at the University of Connecticut. Korey was an All-Pro offensive tackle for the Minnesota Vikings who died from exertional heat stroke in August 2001. The KSI serves the public to work toward preventing sudden death in sport by education, advocacy, public policy, research, media outreach and publications. Additionally, Casa is the editor of a new book, "Preventing Sudden Death in Sport and Physical Activity."

Yvette L. Coursey, DPA

Chief Executive Officer, Sickle Cell Foundation of Palm Beach County and Treasure Coast, Inc.

With advanced degrees in social work and public administration, Dr. Yvette Coursey has utilized her expertise in the areas of social work and health/human services. She has more than 30 years of experience working at the federal, state and county levels of government and the nonprofit arena in administrative and managerial positions. She has worked on behalf of such diverse client populations as the economically disadvantaged, elderly, mentally ill, chemically dependent and persons with various medical conditions. Her experiences also include work with the developmentally disabled, hereditary blood disorders and prevention programs for youth.

Chris Draft

Founder, Chris Draft Family Foundation and Former NFL Linebacker

Chris Draft's mission is focused on making a positive difference in the lives of youth and in the community as he leads by example both on and off the field. Draft, who suffers from asthma, is the national spokesman for the National Lieutenant Governor's Association's "Winning with Asthma" program and is involved in national campaigns with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the American Lung Association and the NFL Players Association. In 2006, he established his Atlanta-based foundation with the vision of empowering families to live healthy lifestyles.

E. Randy Eichner, MD

Professor Emeritus of Medicine at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

Dr. Randy Eichner is professor emeritus of medicine at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Recently retired, he served as team internist for the university's Sooner football team and other varsity athletes. He is a fellow and former trustee of the American College of Sports Medicine (emeritus) and co-founder of the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine. Eichner served as co-chair of the Inter-Association Task Force on Sickle Cell Trait and the Athlete and the resulting consensus statement.

Rhonda Fincher

Co-Founder and Executive Director, Kendrick Fincher Hydration Foundation

Rhonda Fincher is co-founder and executive director of the Kendrick Fincher Hydration Foundation, named in honor of her son Kendrick who died from heat stroke. The foundation began in 1996 with a mission to promote proper hydration and prevent heat illness through education and supporting activities. The foundation's values are: children should have adequate access to water throughout the school day to maintain proper hydration; athletes should have frequent water/sports drink breaks; athletes should be able to get a drink at any time during practices; coaches should be trained in heat illness prevention and emergency procedures; and parents should understand their child's hydration needs and encourage proper hydration.

Laura Friend

Program Coordinator, Project ADAM Texas at Cook Children's Medical Center

Laura Friend is the program coordinator for Project ADAM Texas (Automated Defibrillators in Adam's Memory) at Cook Children's Medical Center, an initiative aimed towards education and implementation of school AED cardiac emergency programs in the state of Texas. Since the death of her 12-year-old daughter Sarah in July 2004, Friend has made enormous strides to prevent sudden cardiac death in adolescents and young adults. She created a Texas nonprofit, the Sarah Friend Heart Foundation, which has donated 59 life-saving defibrillators in Texas and trained hundreds of youth and adults in CPR/AED use. She helped form and spearhead Parent Heart Watch, a national nonprofit organization that now has over 300 advocates in the U.S. and seven countries.

Lisa Gfeller

Vice President and Treasurer, Matthew Gfeller Foundation

The Matthew Alan Gfeller Foundation was established in Lisa Gfeller's son Matthew's memory to positively impact the lives of other young people. The foundation supports the positive role athletics can play, but wants kids to "play it safe" and believe that head injuries can be minimized through better equipment, training, diagnosis and treatment. The foundation's community service and fundraising efforts focus on the prevention, treatment and research of sports related traumatic brain injuries. In 2010, the Matthew Alan Gfeller Sports Related Traumatic Brain Injury Research Center opened on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Kevin Guskiewicz, PhD, ATC

Kenan Distinguished Professor and Founding Director of the Matthew Gfeller Sport-Related Traumatic Brain Injury Research Center and the Center for the Study of Retired Athletes, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Dr. Kevin Guskiewicz is the Kenan Distinguished Professor and founding director of the Matthew Gfeller Sport-Related Traumatic Brain Injury Research Center and the Center for the Study of Retired Athletes at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He also serves as chair of Exercise and Sport Science and holds joint appointments in the Department of Orthopaedics, UNC Injury Prevention Research Center and Doctoral Program in Human Movement Science at UNC-Chapel Hill. For the past 17 years, Guskiewicz's clinical research program has focused on sport-related concussion.

Amy Elizabeth Valasek, MD

Clinical Associate, Johns Hopkins Pediatric Emergency Department;
Assistant Professor, Johns Hopkins Orthopedics, Pediatric Division

Dr. Amy Valasek is an assistant professor in the Department of Orthopedic Surgery, Division of Pediatrics, and a clinical associate in the Pediatric Emergency Room at Johns Hopkins. She had previously been at Towson Orthopaedics Associates practicing primary care sports medicine. She is an active member of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Maryland Chapter Executive Committee for Nutrition and Fitness; American Academy of Pediatrics, Council of Sports Medicine and Fitness; and American Medical Society for Sports Medicine.

Victoria L. Vetter, MD

Attending Staff Physician, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Division of Pediatric Cardiology

Dr. Victoria L. Vetter is an attending staff physician at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia in the Division of Pediatric Cardiology. She is a professor of pediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and was the director of Electrophysiology at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the chief of the Division of Pediatric Cardiology, having served in this capacity for over 14 years. She was the principal investigator of the NIH/NHLBI supported Pediatric Heart Disease Clinical Research Network (at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia) for the past 10 years — a collaboration of eight national clinical sites that conduct research studies in children with congenital or acquired heart disease. She teaches in the Public Health program at Penn.