

**Sportswomanship:** The annual National Girls & Women in Sports Day is held every February. NGWSD is jointly organized by the National Girls and Women in Sports Coalition composed of the seven premiere girls- and women-serving organizations in the United States: American Association of University Women, Girl Scouts of the USA, Girls Incorporated, National Association for Girls and Women in Sport, National Women's Law Center, Women's Sports Foundation, and the YWCA USA. Collectively, these organizations have been in existence for over 432 years and have a membership reach of 5.5 million girls and women.

NGWSD is celebrated in all 50 states. Thousands of sports educators, coaches, athletic directors, recreation directors, association members, sponsors, students, and parents across the country will show their support of this year's theme, "More Than A Game." Your support of the Day will increase visibility for female athletes and advance their struggle for equality in sports which, in addition to athletics, provides access to sports' scholarships for girls.

Male athletes receive \$133 million more sports scholarships annually than do female athletes. Donna de Varona, winner of two 1964 Olympic gold medals in swimming, was not able to obtain a college swimming scholarship: None existed...for women. **On May 21, 1973, Lynn Genesko, a swimmer, received the first athletic scholarship awarded to a woman.**

In 1972, U.S. Rep. (D-Hawaii) Patsy Mink, an AAUW member, co-authored Title IX with U.S. Rep. Edith Green (D-Oregon). Title IX's preamble reads:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Sports is not mentioned in this legislation. The legal language of Title IX is not about sports, however, sports is the arena where Title IX has received an exponential amount of scrutiny and publicity. Sports also is the arena which embodies an exponential gender disparity.

Title IX "is" about revenues collected from tax dollars of both genders and the gender discriminatory judicial manner in which those tax dollars are allocated in public educational programs for both genders. Without gender equitable funding allocation, girls' and women's tax dollars fund the exact sports' programs that keep them off the playing field. Reversing this gender injustice is not the intent of Title IX. The intent of this law is gender justice of allocated federal funds, nothing more.

Before Title IX, 1 in 27 high school girls participated in athletics. Now, 1 in 3 girls participate. No Title IX law needed to be legislated on behalf of men and boys to play sports in federally funded schools. Men and boys just did it, and they did it for 155 years prior to Title IX, since 1817, when sports first appeared in the American educational system at the male U.S. Military Academy.

In 1949, Mink had applied to 13 law schools, only one accepted women. Today, women make up 24 percent of the nation's lawyers compared to 3 percent in 1971. The total number of female physicians has more than quadrupled from 9.1 percent in 1975 to 25.2 percent in 2002. These statistics are reflective in all professions where higher education is a must. As Mitzie Witchger, a national authority on Title IX, professes and

to which Martha Burk eluded at Augusta National Golf Club, “Sports are about so much more than the score.”

NGWSD began in 1987 to remember Olympic silver medal volleyball player Flo Hyman who died of Marfan's Syndrome playing in a tournament in Japan. On NGWSD each year wear, and encourage all girls, boys, women, and men to wear, a T-shirt or jersey that identifies a “her” in sports. T’s from T-ball to youth soccer to figure skating to hockey to basketball to softball to lacrosse, etc. Celebrate the participation and accomplishments of female athletes, and...Ladies, Play Ball!

Sources: <http://www.northnet.org/stlawrenceaauw/sportday.htm>

<http://www.gendercenter.org/executives.htm>

Ronald Kotulak, *Chicago Tribune*, 1:14; 1/12/05