



DC Professional Sports Teams Announce Creation of Washington Coalition of Women's Professional Sports



Washington, D.C., (03/25/2022) - In association with Leveling the Playing Field, the Washington Mystics, Washington Spirit, DC Divas and DC Shadow have formed a coalition aimed at connecting and supporting the DMV region's women's sports teams, the teams announced today.

The Washington Coalition of Women's Professional Sports (WCWPS) will serve as a supportive organization for all women's sports programs and professional clubs in the greater Washington, D.C. region. Driven by a mission to purposefully and significantly impact the Greater Washington community by connecting the region's women's professional sports teams through service-focused collaboration, the coalition is the first joint effort across these select teams. The Washington Coalition of Women's

Professional Sports seeks to kick off the next 50 years of Title IX with the intention of creating a prosperous future for women's sports in the DMV.

"On behalf of the entire Leveling the Playing Field team, we are beyond thrilled to play a role in building this coalition of phenomenal women's professional sports teams here in the DMV region," said Kaitlin Brennan, Director of Operations at LPF.

"The District of Champions loves our women's sports teams, and now we also look forward to celebrating and uplifting this coalition," said DC Mayor Muriel Bowser. "We know that when women lead, our communities succeed. And when women come together to lead, we become a powerful driving force for impact, equity, and access."

Rich Daniel, Owner and Team President of DC Divas said: "I can't imagine a better time for us to team up for the greater good. As we approach the 50th anniversary of Title IX, the coalition can now begin its work on leveling the playing field for generations to come."

"We are so excited about what we are building together through this coalition," said Zoe Wulff, Community Relations Manager for the Washington Spirit. "We all have a shared interest in further elevating the local community here in DC, and furthering the positive impact women's sports have within the region and the industry as a whole."

"DC Shadow is thrilled to partner with other local women's professional sports teams to support and bring focus to women's sports, as well as collaborate on important community initiatives," said DC Shadow head coach Sam Broaddus. "The teams have already begun working together to support Leveling the Playing Field and their incredible mission of increasing kids' access to sports by getting sports equipment to groups and communities that need them most. We look forward to working within the coalition to support one another and have a positive impact on the DC community."

“We’re honored to partner alongside our fellow women’s sports teams here in Washington, DC and to rally together for such an important cause,” said Alycen McAuley, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the Washington Mystics. “If we can remove just one of the many barriers that stop girls from continuing their sport participation, we can foster more of the women leaders of tomorrow.”

This year, the WCWPS will set the foundation for service initiatives that provide resources to the wider women’s sports community in the region. The coalition’s first initiative will be in partnership with Level the Playing Field and focus on a sports bra collection drive with the goal of collecting 5,000 donated bras.

“With nearly a decade of experience in working throughout the youth sports realm, we have seen firsthand the additional barriers that girls from under-resourced communities face simply to have the opportunity to play sports. This coalition is already helping to remove some of those barriers through collecting new sports bras for local girls in need, as well as providing additional visibility for women in sports,” said Brennan. At the conclusion of the drive, WCWPS will be donating the sports bras to girls and women across the DMV region as a first step in ensuring that all girls and women playing sports have access to the necessary equipment.

Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser and representatives from the Washington Coalition of Women’s Professional Sports will be available to the media at a press conference prior to the Washington Spirit’s home match on Wednesday, March 30 at Audi Field. Vice President of Communications for the Washington Spirit Jonna Humphries-Valente, Senior Vice President and Team Chief Operating Officer for the Washington Mystics Alycen McAuley, DC Shadow Head Coach Sam Broaddus, DC Divas Vice President Lois Cook and Leveling the Playing Field Director of Operations Kaitlin Brennan will be available for questions. Registration for the press conference is available [here](#).

About Leveling the Playing Field

Leveling the Playing Field was founded in 2013 in response to the growing inequity between those that can afford to play sports and those that cannot, and the prominent role the cost of sporting goods has played in that gap. Leveling the Playing Field's core mission is to redistribute equipment to expand access and equity within youth sports and recreation programs in under-resourced communities. With locations in Washington, DC, Baltimore and Philadelphia, Leveling the Playing Field has collected and redistributed over \$8.3 million worth of sports equipment to over 1,250 unique schools, sports leagues, and other programs serving kids in need.

About Washington Mystics

The Washington Mystics is a professional women's basketball team based in Washington, DC that competes in the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA). Chartered in 1997, the Mystics was one of the first WNBA expansion franchises to be established and the longest-tenured women's professional sports team in Washington, DC. The Mystics moved to the brand new Entertainment and Sports Arena in southeast Washington, DC prior to the 2019 season, the same year the club won its first WNBA championship. Mike Thibault currently serves as the team's head coach.

About Washington Spirit

The Washington Spirit is the professional women's soccer team based at Segra Field in Leesburg, Va and Audi Field in Washington, DC. Launched in 2012, the Spirit play in the National Women's Soccer League, the premier women's soccer competition in North America. For more information about the Spirit, visit www.WashingtonSpirit.com.

About DC Divas

DC Divas is a professional women's American football team based in Alexandria, Virginia that competes in the Women's Football Alliance. Founded in 2000, the club is entering its 22nd season of competition and 12th as a part of the WFA. The club is managed by owner Rich Daniel and plays its home games at The St. James Sports Complex in Springfield. In the club's 22-year history, it has claimed three national championships, one in 2006 as a member of the National Women's Football Association and back-to-back titles in 2015 and 2016 as a part of the WFA.

About DC Shadow

DC Shadow is a women's professional ultimate frisbee team based in Washington, DC that competes in the Premier Ultimate League. Founded as a part of the league's 2020 expansion, the team heads into its second season with new head coach Sam Broaddus and assistant coaches John Agan and Geoff Horsfield.