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Staying in the Game: A Discussion with Leaders in the Sports and Entertainment Industry

Black Law Students Association

Notre Dame Law School

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Staying in the Game: A Discussion with Leaders in the Sports and Entertainment Industry

September 16, 2022

Location: DeBartolo Performing Art Center

Introduction: G. Marcus Cole, Joseph A. Matson Dean and Professor of Law and Moncia Bell, Past President, BLSA and third-year Notre Dame law student.

Panelists: Raghiv "Rocket" Ismail '94 B.A., former NFL wide receiver; Ndidi Opia Massay '93 J.D., Vice President of Workplace Culture & Diversity Initiatives, CBS Sports; Max Siegel '86, '92 J.D., Chief Executive Officer, USA Track & Field; Mickey Carter '92 J.D., Executive Vice President, U.S. Networks Distribution, Paramount Global; Jonathan Beane, Senior Vice President and Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer, National Football League; and Jackie Wilson '07 J.D., Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, BSE Global

"Staying in the Game" is a panel discussion with leaders in the sports and entertainment industry, presented by the Black Law Students Association.

English (auto-generated)

0:02

welcome everyone welcome to Notre Dame and to the Notre Dame law school sports

0:08

law panel on staying in the game My name is Marcus Cole I'm the dean of Notre

0:13

Dame law school and I'm delighted that you can join us tonight for a panel put on by the Black Law Students Association

0:20

at Notre Dame law school the Black Law Students Association at Notre Dame is one of our oldest student organizations

0:26

and it's celebrating its 50th year this year and today we're delighted that we

0:32

could have sponsors like faculty Drinker the Mendoza College of Business

0:38

and the department of Athletics here at the University of day of Notre Dame and without further ado I'd like to welcome

0:44

our immediate past president of the Notre Dame Black Law Students Association Monica Bell
0:51

[Applause]

1:00

good evening this evening I have the distinct pleasure of introducing you to our

1:05

amazing group of sports and entertainment panelists as former president of the Notre Dame

1:10

Black Law Students Association I can tell you that organizing this event took more than a year
and so to see this

1:16

group of All-Stars sitting together now is a dream come true for me as well as the rest of the
organization

1:22

to give you a little background on who these impressive panelists are starting on the far end of
the stage we

1:28

have our moderator Jackie Wilson

1:37

Jackie is the current chief diversity equity and inclusion officer at BSC

1:42

Global leading Dei and social justice initiatives for the Barclay Center the Brooklyn Nets the
Long Island Nets Nets

1:49

GC and the New York Liberty Jackie began his career as a litigator but his love for sports led him
to

1:55

become the general counsel for all pro sports and entertainment Inc a new york-based sports
agency

2:01

Jackie is also the founder and CEO of Nova fitness Innovation and focuses on promoting Dei
within the company

2:07

our first panelist is Max Siegel Max has been the CEO of USA Track and Field for over 10 years
and in his time

2:14

there he has led the organization to financial growth programmatic Evolution and inclusive
representation

2:21

Mr Siegel also owns rev racing the NASCAR supported the NASCAR supported team charged
with developing female and

2:27

minority drivers and pit crew members he serves as a board member for the Ross initiative in
sports for equality

2:34

Mr Siegel made history as the highest ranking African-American executive in NASCAR when he became president of

2:39

global operations at Dale Earnhardt Incorporated before that at Sony BMG he was on the

2:46

executive team that managed the careers of Britney Spears Justin Timberlake and Usher and was the president of Zomba

2:51

gospel Mr Siegel was also the first African-American to graduate with honors from Notre Dame law school

3:01

thank you our next panelist is Mickey Carter

3:07

Mickey Carter has worked in a variety of capacities in the media industry representing corporate interests as well

3:13

as individual Talent currently Mr Carter serves as the executive vice president of U.S Network's distribution at Paramount

3:19

Global representing the company's portfolio of networks and streaming products on a variety of platforms

3:26

before joining the CBS team in 2013 Mr Carter served as the vice president of national accounts at Fox News

3:33

prior to his career in cable television Mr Carter worked as an attorney and business executive in the music and

3:39

sports Industries in professional sports he served as an attorney and player agent for several

3:44

athletes including Baseball Hall of Famer Tony Gwynn and NFL legend Reggie White

3:51

[Applause]

3:56

our next panelist is indeedi mase indeed he currently serves as the vice president of workplace culture and

4:01

diversity initiatives for CBS Sports indeedi joined CBS Sports after running her own Consulting business where she

4:08

provided diversity equity and inclusion and corporate social responsibility Council services and training corporate

4:14

entities National governing governing bodies and Collegiate athletic departments she also served as the

4:19

commissioner of the New York State athletic commission for five years helped launch the rash initiative Ross Initiative for sports for equality and

4:26

worked as a Dei consultant for the NFL indeed is a member of the USA Wrestling

4:32

diversity and inclusion committee and Big Ten Conference equality coalition masse has served on numerous boards

4:38

including the National Association of black journalists sports section rise and Beat the Streets of New York

4:45

she is also a member of the Black Entertainment and sports Lawyers Association and women in sports and events

4:51

[Applause]

4:57

our next panelist is Notre Dame's very own raghib rocket Ishmael rocket is a retired American and Canadian football

5:03

player a wide receiver and kick returner he played football for our own Notre

5:09

Dame where he was a consensus All-American and the Walter Walter Camp Award winner before entering the

5:14

Canadian football league and subsequently the National Football League rocket played for the Oakland Raiders

5:19

the Carolina Panthers and the Dallas Cowboys from 93 to 2002.

5:25

[Applause]

5:31

our final panelist is Jonathan Bean Jonathan is the current senior vice president and chief diversity and

5:37

inclusion officer of the National Football League he spearheads the League's diversity equity and inclusion strategy strategies and collaborates

5:44

with senior leadership to drive actionable change throughout the league prior to taking on this role Jonathan

5:49

held senior diversity roles at the Rock 21st Century Fox and Time Warner

6:00

thank you for coming tonight and enjoy the panel [Applause]

6:07

good evening Notre Dame so before we get started to let you know there's a QR code if you scan the QR

6:14

code you can send in questions and so we'll be reading those questions uh later on in the presentation

6:21

um so when I first found out you know who was going to be on this panel I was extremely excited and the first thing I

6:28

thought about was what was the most professional way for me to get selfies with all the people that are up here and

6:37

then Max and Jakeem asked me to moderate and I said oh I'm gonna get all the photos I see all the cameras out here

6:42

now so this is this is perfect so I'm excited excited to be here and so

6:48

um here on behalf of Indy law school and in Boston so I want to start by by

6:53

speaking to our Balsa Alum that are here Notre Dame feels and looks totally

7:01

different um than it did at least when I graduated 15 years ago and I mean yes we have new

7:08

buildings but I mean Notre Dame looks totally different

7:13

um than the school that I that I graduated from and so indeed I'll start with you talk to us a little bit about

7:20

your experience as a black law student here what were some of the the challenges what were some of the the

7:25

wins that you experienced then and how do you see that changing uh with the way the campus is set up now

7:31

yeah well first of all thanks for having me here it's always great to come back it feels like home hopefully it will

7:38

feel like a home for forever um I love that it looks different I mean

7:43

it brings me incredible Joy because it wasn't so easy when I was here

7:48

um I I was able to go to school with with these two gentlemen here and they were a year ahead of me and really sort

7:54

of put their arms around me and helped me but there were so few of us so if we didn't do that we would have been really

8:00

lost um but listen my job and my passion is dni and representation matters

8:06

opportunities matter access matters and I think the only way you do that is with intention I mean we have you know well

8:14

black Dean I mean amazing um and just sitting and talking to some students a little earlier today just it

8:21

really gives me inspiration and hope and um you know listen I was supported here our numbers were small but we were

8:28

supported we were definitely family we helped each other I mean it's crazy I

8:33

we're a little older than 15 years because a little farther back I'm not going to give the number but um we're

8:39

still friends we still support each other and um and I think that that's something that I would encourage all of you to do

8:45

is you never know you never know you know what people's future careers will look like stay in touch be supportive

8:53

and I'm happy I mean I guess at the end of the day I'm I'm inspired and I'm

8:58

thrilled that our that the law school looks different and it's it's better listen representation matters diversity

9:04

there's data that shows that diversity produces better product and it's how it should be so I'm happy

9:12

nice Mickey you know I'm overwhelmed when I come back it really feels like that I'm in a

9:19

different place in terms of not having the same ability to get from point A to

9:24

point B uh and that's cool because it's beautiful and it's wonderful and it and

9:30

it shows progress I really have to Echo some of indeedy's comments we were small

9:35

but we did feel at least I felt supported both by my fellow students

9:41

because I think that's what having small numbers hopefully does for you and it

9:46

certainly did that for us but also by the school you know I was telling the story

9:53

um to uh to a few people earlier we were really small and it was noticeable and

9:58

we knew it and then the school knew it and so we you know spoke with the administration about that issue and we

10:05

wanted to understand since we didn't handle admissions what they thought were some of the issues and they were honest

10:11

with us about what they thought some of the issues were and then we were honest with them about what we thought some of

10:17

the issues might be and we developed a plan for how we could work together to try to attract more more

10:24

uh African-American students and we did and we literally did that and I mean I

10:30

was I was amazed to hear that you know Balsa is the largest membership that

10:35

it's ever had currently um that's super encouraging I can also say that over the years we've had

10:43

classes that have been in excess of 15 African-American students and things

10:48

kind of can go up and down right there a cycle so I also I'm very cognizant of

10:54

the fact that once you get to a certain point you know we you slash we haven't made it because just as easily uh that

11:02

you climb that mountain you can go right back down again and so it's something that that hopefully there's a sense of

11:07

Pride over having accomplished a certain level of change diversity and hopefully

11:13

there's a a sense that there's a diligence needed in order to be able to maintain that so uh but I'm I'm thrilled

11:20

it's always great to talk with current students and to hear about what the experience is like now makes it feel

11:26

loyal uh but you know that's just that's just one of those things I would rather be getting older than the alternative so

11:34

you know it's interesting both of you talked about having small numbers but feeling supported and and being

11:41

close-knit um judge Briscoe Clark who's in here now like we talked about this before

11:48

um you know when we were here the numbers were so small that Boston also also like we're all the same group like

11:55

we just had different different agendas so Tuesday was Boston Wednesday was hospital but it was the same 20 people

12:01

going going back back and forth and we were a close-knit group and so what what

12:06

I like is with the numbers being bigger the group still feels close-knit it

12:11

still feels like family it still feels like support and you know Max like you

12:17

you liked it so much you did this twice so you're you're a double Domer so I'd like to hear about your experience you

12:23

know coming from you know as an indie undergrad and then how that experience either differed or or what's the same uh

12:30

when you came to law school yeah so so in all honesty I struggled as an undergraduate so and I left here not really knowing

12:37

what I wanted to do and I took some time off uh and so when I came back to law school you know three years out of Notre

12:43

Dame all the things I probably hated about the school were the things that kind of guided me as I started my career

12:49

and all the values that I learned it's funny we were standing backstage and I have a a picture of Rocket indeedy

12:56

Mickey and myself and Kevin Warren at his house when we were students and we're all still friends here today and I

13:02

think that you know the bond that you form when you're here the values that you learn when you're here are things

13:08

that stick with you your entire life so when I came back to law school it was with a purpose and I think that I

13:13

remember Dean link saying us our first uh our first meeting that we build Maseratis that everyone has the unique

13:20

ability to make a contribution to society if you work together and understand what your value was and I was

13:26

halfway skeptical about that but I find that to be entirely true that if you go

13:31

about your work and you try to impact your organization or your industry and other ultimately culture you know you

13:37

get a lot of reward out of your job what I will say is you know Notre Dame forms

13:42

a different kind of lawyer and I think one with substance and credibility and and I have to say for me I'm incredibly

13:49

proud that Dean Cole is here not only it does representation matter but we have

13:54

someone who is an incredible scholar who has credibility and is transforming to law school right in front of our eyes

14:00

and so for me my law school experience was incredible and as I tell a lot of

14:05

people who come here the network that you form and the support that you got here it continues on professionally and

14:11

I don't care what I'm doing if a resume comes across my desk and someone has a Notre Dame affiliation I'm going to stop

14:17

and take a look at it so law school was tremendous for me and I'm glad to see that we're continuing to grow and

14:23

diversify Now Rocket your experience was a little a little bit different you were you know

14:30

modern day Superman um talk to us a little bit about your experience at Notre Dame and being being

14:36

an athlete student athlete on campus well for me I have to give you context

14:42

so that when you hear what you hear after you understand

14:48

the divine intervention that took place so my father died when I was 10 my

14:55

brothers and I it was my mother now she's three jobs humping it trying to make ends of meat and my 77 year old

15:01

grandmother decides to say hey come send the boys to live with me so we leave

15:07

Newark New Jersey to go to Wilkes-Barre Pennsylvania and unbeknownst to us we

15:14

left like right on time because as I would later find out there was like a

15:19

plot straight out of the bowels of hell that was about to release this drug called crack cocaine in the city of

15:28

Newark and what was a tough place and you know you had to be robust in your

15:33

confidence or even faking like you had confidence or you'd be preyed upon it became aim like exponentially worse so I

15:43

am my mother from time to time would send money so that we could call Long

15:48

Distance back home and I remember 1983 called back to the phone booth that was

15:54

in front of our house we lived in like a new version of the projects it was called Georgia King Village and there

15:59

was a phone booth that was directly in front of our townhouse and and when I say townhouse don't think townhouse like

16:06

Brownstone is like townhouse with the all the the trappings of whatever a

16:11

project would typically have so call the phone booth and I think somebody picked

16:18

it up he's like yo it's Rocky bin Cadre and uh they're like yo it's rocking so

16:23

they just started giving us what was happening in Newark and I couldn't

16:28

believe my ears because they were like we see people getting killed so-and-so

16:33

with the jail he got raped so-and-so uh was sleeping with the guy that sells

16:38

crack but then when she got wore out she let her she she said he didn't want her anymore so she brought her daughter to

16:44

him and now and like I was like like it was like my mind couldn't grasp a hold of all these like I was just hearing

16:51

things that sounded like I was like what kind of evil is this and I remember

16:57

I said a prayer in my heart and the prayer was like wow like in two

17:05

parts it was yo how did we get out of that and man what

17:12

what a blessing that we're not in that environment right now because my father is not around we we probably would be

17:18

praying and I remember when I asked that question like how did

17:24

we get out of that boom I'm instantly and what my grandmother would later tell me was a vision and in the vision I'm in

17:32

this imagine maybe two football fields long two football fields wide and it's a

17:39

field and it has just been tilled like it was ready to have seeds planted in it and it's surrounded by these massive

17:48

evergreen trees like there were centuries guarding what was on the field and I remember looking at the sky and

17:55

the sky was the most brilliant crystal blue that had ever seen and mind you I'm

18:01

on the phone listening to what is happening and this is happening at the same simultaneously it's like I'm in

18:06

another realm and I look around and I'm like what is happening and I look down

18:11

and I see this old black woman and she's in a posture of prayer on her knees and

18:17

as she's there I didn't hear anything she said but I

18:23

instantly knew everything about her and I knew she was a slave and I knew that

18:30

in spite of what had been presented to her as the representation of divinity in

18:35

the slave quarters she tapped into a level of divine inheritance that

18:42

provoked her to lift up her progeny that would inhabit this land

18:48

coming out of her loins and Beyond and said a prayer that

18:55

I was in the midst of anything from as

19:00

far as the answer and it was like I was out of it and now you talk about my

19:05

Notre Dame experience so everything that was necessary anything that we needed

19:14

from getting to a 76 my grandmother was 77 years old and it's like I didn't

19:21

appreciate how old 77 was and 77 raising three pre-teen grandsons and until I got

19:30

older I was like man you need energy to raise children this ain't no joke this children boy you got us man and his

19:36

hopes of his two of you like hey you need to go ahead and take let me get this power nap and so it was like from a

19:42

77 year old grandmother having strength and vision to a community like we were

19:48

from 99 matter of fact I didn't even see any light-skinned people in Newark when we were younger bro we were like literally there were a couple of Puerto

19:54

Rico because down the street over here but like when we and and then when we moved to to uh Wilkes-Barre it was

20:02

like the it flipped it was like maybe two black people my brother and I and then everybody else was white but that

20:09

Community galvanized together and then it was like they had the capacity to see the light in us and then people would be

20:15

sent and they would Speak Life to us and one of the people that were sent that spoke life to us happened to be a Notre

20:22

Dame fan and I was in seventh grade and I'm sleeping over his son's house and I

20:27

mean his house and we're in the basement we're playing coleco Vision or something we ended up falling asleep I have this

20:33

dream I'm in a field of aromatic flowers and all of a sudden I hear this Interruption I wake up and Mr Dwyer is

20:41

sitting in that the Lazy Boy smoking a pipe and I'm disoriented I look around

20:47

and he puts on a band album of the Notre Dame marching band they played a fight

20:52

song and he's looking over there and said you hear that lady Buck that's the finest band in the land

20:58

get over here let me tell you about the Fighting Irish I like the Fighting Irish what the heck all of a sudden the

21:05

indoctrination was on full blast yo he had and I'm not exaggerating he

21:11

had a television on a stand about this big and it was a beta it was like the VHS and beta was still battling to see

21:17

who's going to be in the marketplace dominance he took a video he put it in it was called Wake Up The Echoes I'm telling

21:25

you it was like watching The Lord of the Rings and The Chronicles of Narnia all in once and like a football version of

21:32

it and I was like mesmerized and from that down he was like you're gonna go

21:38

there you're going to be dominant there you're going to be legendary there you're going to do all and mind you I

21:44

didn't weigh 100 pounds until like the end of my junior year in high school I would there was nothing about me

21:49

physically I mean I was fast but it wasn't like like blowing you away fast

21:55

and so all of a sudden people are being sent that are speaking life people are being sent that are necessary hey no go

22:01

this way going there people are I'm having relationships with with people who are in the city influential so now

22:09

when people see me hey that's the wrong way rocket don't do that do this getting prepared so all of that I'm

22:15

ushered I get on campus and that same Grace which I understand it to be now that same Grace it would just flowing my

22:22

way every I remember one day and just to show you the the grace was so abundant

22:28

we got the the lavish uh high-level modern dorms Grace Hall and Flint I was
22:35
in Grace we had the air conditioning man we had the high level food uh service
22:40
place in the bottom man my roommate lived in Gary Indiana his parents would
22:45
come up like uh twice a month and bring us a bag of groceries chop break us off 20 20 man we
go downstairs eat it all up
22:52
in one day but it was still like it was lavish so all these things happen then I
22:59
get on the football field and it's like as soon as I get here coach holds we did one little drill
coach I was like oh
23:06
yeah sure she's going to be a star here let's go and it was like all I'm just
23:11
saying all these things and then it was like the the relationships that were developed with
23:17
the student body uh it flowed seamlessly nothing was nothing
23:23
was difficult for me and I know that's not everybody's experience but I know that because of
my ancestor preying on
23:31
my behalf and the most high God hearing that prayer I was a beneficiary of it
23:37
and even to this day even when things go hard I mean answers remedy solutions they come to
the fore so that in a
23:44
nutshell is what my Notre Dame experience was like and and to this day
23:49
it's still like and I doubt with the cliff notes version there's more to the story but I'm just saying
that you might
23:55
that might have sounded like it was long but I was short [Applause]
24:01
so our lady touched down Jesus first down Moses divine intervention was your
24:07
experience all day
24:15
all right some switch gears a little bit and indeedy and John I want to talk to you
24:22
guys about about Dei um in sports we are all operating
24:28
um in a relatively new fate uh term that that has been that is being used and it

24:34

means a lot of different things at at different places and so Jonathan I'll start with you because you were doing

24:41

Dei back before it was Dei back when it was just like some some don't feel right some some don't feel right so how like

24:50

let's talk a little bit about about your journey like how did you get into the the Dei space and what does that now

24:56

look like at the NFL yeah that's a um can you all hear me okay uh thanks for that question I I

25:04

love that because it is it has changed it has changed quite a lot

25:09

uh when I started and I started in the 2000s

25:15

and I think it's fair to say that Dei was not a priority

25:21

it was not considered a priority in the corporate environment it was not considered a priority in government it

25:27

was not considered a priority and philanthropy it was not considered priority of nonprofits

25:33

much of it was EEOC driven it was compliance oriented

25:39

for me I kind of fell into it based off of my

25:45

passion I've always been someone that had a strong belief and in the equality of all human beings

25:53

and that came from my parents um and so with that I also wanted to have a

26:01

career that I felt was impactful so initially I went to law school I was doing legal work being a consultant at

26:09

PWC but I just wasn't being fulfilled through that kind of work long story

26:15

short I ended up being the head of strategic planning a company called Johnson Controls and um and then my wife

26:22

told me that we were moving from Michigan to back to New York and so that

26:27

provided an opportunity to look at things a little bit different this was after 9 11 really started reevaluating

26:34

and I said um I know that this space is not one

26:39

that gets a lot of attention but it's something that I cared about and so I was started the first ERG at my

26:46

company I was part of the culture campaign and I said I don't know what it is but I just want to go into it I

26:53

wanted to see what opportunity was and so I um when I when we moved back to New

27:00

York I started looking around I got a transfer but I really wanted to try something different

27:05

and I started reaching out to different people and and then again my wife comes

27:13

back and she says she knows somebody who knows somebody and then that somebody is somebody named

27:20

Lisa Garcia kids who unfortunately has passed away but she was the head of

27:25

philanthropy diversity Foundation a bunch of other things at Time Warner at the time and this was she was doing

27:31

groundbreaking stuff so the stuff that people are focusing on now she was focusing on that in the early 2000s

27:38

and she wanted somebody with a business background and I wanted to get away from just the

27:45

business thing and wanted to focus on how I could help people and make an impact and we found each other in in

27:51

like five or six interviews later and and memos and whatever else she put me

27:56

through she eventually uh she did call and she said all right I got good news

28:01

bad news um bad news you didn't get the job good

28:06

news I'm going to create a job for you so yeah so you you didn't get the diversity job but I'm going to give you

28:12

philanthropy job I said well let me I wasn't really thinking about that but um

28:17

so long story short uh I applied for that I ended up getting that job three months later the person that got the

28:24

diversity job gets let go it wasn't working out just said guess what you get both jobs

28:30

so so this is I think in in life you know following your passion and all that

28:36

but also a little bit of luck along the way and this and then around this time

28:42

is around the crash of 07 so it was very difficult here so I was like am I going to get let go because again this was not

28:49

prioritized I did not we were able to build up Dei from scratch Time Warner

28:54

was doing things that I think a lot of other organizations aren't doing today if you look at Discovery Warner media I

29:00

think that's what it's called now uh they've got around 50 people on that team it just goes to the commitment and

29:07

I'm proud to say that hey when when there was like one person uh me and Lisa

29:12

we were able to get to the place where the company felt it was that important and uh fell in love with the work fell

29:19

in love with the work I like working with people I'm a strategist by Nature

29:26

I always think there is a solution to a problem and doing the work and and showing

29:35

leaders that this is something that's important and that can lead to Optimal

29:40

Performance I always say diversity and inclusion leads to CI CIO creativity

29:45

Innovation and Optimal Performance with that said I ended up having a wonderful

29:51

eight years there and I've been doing it doing it ever since and in the meantime

29:57

it went from compliance to then a big focus on diversity and really drilling

30:03

down on what diversity is and trying to really push that but there's certain there was no inclusion there was no

30:10

equity there was no belonging there were no other words it was just diversity and

30:16

you look at it today right and there's a lot of things that led to it of course we can talk about the period of Floyd

30:22

but there is a lot going on way before that so it's evolved people have become much more educated and aware and they

30:29

see that there's the value a lot of research that has occurred that really tells you the true benefits of diversity

30:36

equity and inclusion and and people are bought into it not only within the United States but also globally I've

30:41

worked for Global organizations as well there's a sense of urgency behind this but I temper this so it's it's

30:49

wonderful it's it the platform is at a different place now people like indeedly

30:55

are being hired at a very senior level to actually be able to make a difference to be empowered to have resources to

31:00

actually do something and to be engaged with the senior leaders at the company but let's not be comfortable because

31:07

this sense of urgency needs to continue just as quickly as as we're getting this it could be taken away so let's make

31:14

sure every day that we're focused on it but you know to me that's that's where we're at

31:20

I mean that's a well thank you for that that answer first of all that's that's very insightful and one of the things

31:26

that that you said that I want to hold on to for a second was that they wanted someone with a business background

31:32

a lot of times when we talk about diversity equity and inclusion people automatically think of it as an HR role

31:39

and some of some of what we do touches on on HR but that is not really what

31:46

that is and so indeedly and I were talking about you know having a business background and people coming from

31:51

corporate coming over to to Dei indeed can you tell us a little bit about about your journey and and how does it look at

31:58

CBS Sports yeah sure um so my journey I think really starts

32:03

my background I'm not gonna I'm not going to tell stories like you did I can't tell stories like he does but um

32:11

so I I was an athlete in college I played softball at Northwestern I grew

32:17

up as an athlete I grew up playing with boys which made me good um and girls and

32:23

I knew I wanted a career in sports and so I always had this Burning burning

32:28

desire and um question and fight on how come I

32:35

don't get an opportunity to play in the NFL like why not me because I'm a woman because my sport is you know there's no

32:42

professional there's softball now I mean it doesn't really pay but

32:47

I have a fire like like rugged has a fire and I was always mad like I want

32:53

that opportunity I want that opportunity I'm the odd person out um when I'm in law school you see you

32:58

know I was with Mickey and Max and Kevin Warren I wanted to be in sports law on business just like them but I never saw

33:04

people like me there were not women doing this let alone black women and then on top of

33:11

it I mix I have a white mom and a black dad and and I'm caught between races and genders and saying like I just want to

33:18

be in sports and I want to fight for those who don't have opportunities so just naturally the whole diversity thing

33:24

whether it's women whether it's people of color whether it's lgbtq plus disability was always sort of in my mind

33:31

as there are a lot of us who don't fit in a box for whatever reason and we deserve the opportunity that everyone

33:36

else does and quite frankly I think it's one of my superpowers I think it makes you unique it makes you stand out so to

33:43

me I'm like I want to own it but I need others to see that I need others to give me opportunities to to allow me to have

33:50

a voice at the table so that's sort of like the burn inside of me um how it happened was I was working at

33:56

ESPN and and I was um I sort of oversaw our high school I was the number two in

34:02

the growth of our high school the high school business at ESPN and we were able to um

34:07

I didn't really want this this project but I oversaw um we had this sort of high school

34:13

Olympic Jamboree if you if you call that I like the ESPN Wide World of Sports and

34:19

part of that was the Under Armor All-American football game and so you know if ESPN did their job right and

34:26

truly identified the best high school football players in the country then those should be the top college football

34:31

players in the country and those should then you know have opportunity of the NFL so when I was um working with our

34:37

team on programming I thought well let's do some life skills and let's do some Community stuff and let's talk to these young men and I called the counter or

34:45

not a counterpart but a friend of the NCAA in front of the NFL brought them in and we created some

34:50

really great programming and so it was kind of life skills kind of community engagement kind of dni before it was you

34:56

know dni and um it was fantastic we really schooled these young men and at

35:03

the end of the day I left ESPN simply because they moved my position from New York to Bristol Connecticut my husband

35:08

told me I could go to Bristol and that he and our sons would stay in

35:14

New York so clearly I left ESPN and when I left

35:19

ESPN I took some time off to think like what do I really want to do and my two colleagues

35:27

um and one is still at the NFL and the gentleman with the NCAA is no longer there basically called me and said you

35:33

should go into dni and I was like Dean I was like come on and they're like no when you did this you lit up when you

35:41

worked with us and these high school kids you lit up you already have relationships you know you're at ESPN you have relationships with the NFL with

35:46

the NCAA and essentially both of them handed me projects they said come work

35:53

with us and learn from our dni experts like you got to learn and um and again I

35:59

went to them and I was like deny me and they looked at me they're like black woman Sports you're always the only one

36:05

in the room you are de and I um but again you know sort of the law

36:11

school in me and the education to me is I'm not dni and I think this is one of the problems you can't just put a person

36:16

of color in the position expecting to succeed it's it's a trade you got to learn it right so I went and did some Consulting

36:24

at the NFL and did some Consulting of NCAA and I learned and I learned and I learned and I learned

36:29

um and then you know I actually had to go back and get a real job for a while um so I did some I also was a lawyer at

36:36

um ABC News negotiating deals but I then I got an opportunity with this organization called rise which is the

36:43

Ross initiative in sports for equality Steve Ross who owns the Dolphins was look was looking to create this

36:49

non-profit to very specifically use a sport as as a vehicle to advance race

36:54

relations and he was looking for a leader and Steve's pretty picky as most

37:00

owners are and he was looking and looking and looking he was interviewing he interviewed Corporate America he

37:05

interviewed non-profit he interviewed for like six months didn't like anyone and my particular colleague at the NFL

37:12

called me and he said you should meet with Steve Ross and I

37:18

said yeah okay multi-billionaire owner of course I'll meet with Steve Ross right so we literally had dinner and the

37:25

next morning he hired me to create this non-profit for him um so the not I mean it was my first

37:32

time to jump into dni full-time with um someone behind me who was at a very

37:38

high level who had the money who had the power who had the connections um probably one of my my biggest

37:45

accomplishments and most difficult tasks was to create this board and Steve Thinks Big Steve was like I

37:52

want the commissioner of the NFL the commissioner of MLB the commissioner of NHL go make it happen you know the

37:58

president of ESPN the president of CBS Sports and wow it it was it was a chore

38:04

and I made it happen so all of those Commissioners are on the board now I pulled in my friend Max on the board

38:14

um and again he fit it obviously president of USA Track and Field um pulled in a friend of mine from

38:21

Northwestern who was the chair of the board of the United States tennis Association as well because we can't

38:26

have a dni board with all white men right I mean that's not not happening um and and quite frankly they deserve to

38:33

be there right they're there with the Commissioners and we're we're thinking large scale on dni so that's really

38:39

that's really my uh my experience in a nutshell and I was able I'm lucky enough and blessed enough to be able to roll in

38:46

this experience this passion into my new role which is a year and a half at CBS

38:51

Sports and and I'll just say that I was a journalism major undergrad so

38:57

it's really for me you know it's where I I should be um right now and instead of the business

39:03

background at CBS they loved that I was a lawyer they were like and you're a lawyer like bonus
bonus bonus how

39:11

do you understand diversity Equity inclusion without being a lawyer without having some
understanding of of legal

39:18

and legal background so again I I'm super blessed to be in this role and and

39:23

I agree with you Jonathan we need we need to keep it going um obviously there was a big you
know

39:29

burst after the murder of George Floyd but we need to keep this moving forward and and I
think that I'm also love my

39:38

job because I'm positioned correctly I report directly to our chairman so I have a dni lens in
every single part of

39:43

our business so I'm not in HR HR is my partner um and I have resources because I think

39:49

that's the key how you're positioned and if you have resources if you don't have those it's
pretty difficult

39:57

please quickly I love everything that they've said and obviously they are very accomplished in
40:02

De and I professionals but I was sitting here thinking about the fact that you know part of the
reality is that they

40:10

are they're you know they have a lot of experience in in the Deni space and do a

40:16

fantastic job trying to help move organizations forward but really all of us hopefully work in

40:25

De and I every day right I mean you know from the point that you leave Law School

40:31

you know while you're in law school at the point certainly that you leave law school and you go
into your first job I

40:37

mean hopefully this isn't your experience you know it was certainly mine I know it was many of
ours 150

40:44

years ago back when we were in the States but you all were in where we were you know
walking into settings whether

40:49

it's as summer Associates or our first law firm jobs or organizations we were

40:55

at where we were the only right and so while you don't have power to make policy changes at that point you

41:02

aren't hiring you are in a leadership position just your presence there is

41:08

helping to advance and to forward a dni agenda based upon

41:13

just how quickly that you find your own voice by your actions every day how you

41:19

do your work uh you were setting an example and you're and you're helping to

41:24

uh you know change people's minds and to really help people gain understanding

41:30

that they may not have so much of the of the problem uh problems that I've seen

41:37

in the space over many years work in Corporate America is just ignorance and so you start there

41:45

and then you move into higher positions where you do have an ability uh to make

41:51

some choices make some decisions find a voice to have dialogue about issues that

41:57

then starts to make some changes it's not systemic changes necessarily at your

42:03

company level that I know that these guys do but you know if you have enough

42:08

people within an organization who are doing de and I work every day then

42:13

that's what helps move the organization forward and it can't just be people of color doing that right

42:21

yes so um a couple things so so Mickey and I

42:27

were in academic advising for student athletes when we were here and Rocket was our student and he hasn't changed a

42:32

bit same stories so so he was amazing then Storyteller still is now

42:38

um and then Dede was angry in law school um I just I'm gonna attest to that and

42:44

that hasn't changed even no but you know it's interesting listening to this and one of the things that has frustrated me

42:50

about the conversation so I have two roles so so I run the national governing body for Olympic sports and track and

42:56

field and then I own a NASCAR team and I got involved in NASCAR when Mickey and I originally we represented Reggie White

43:02

in the NFL Reggie was one of my best friends he retired got down to Charlotte North Carolina and he said max there are

43:08

so many opportunities for women and people of color NASCAR I'm like you're calling a black dude with a Jewish name tell them to be in NASCAR there are no

43:15

opportunities for women and people of color NASCAR uh so we so Reggie Ronnie

43:20

lot Eddie DeBarge love myself we went out to buy a team we found one we were

43:26

going to make the announcement it's going to be the first majority minority-owned race team and then Reggie passed away so we let that go I was on

43:34

the global management team at Sony in New York and then a year later you know we had met all these owners Teresa

43:39

Earnhardt called me and she was the only female owner in the sport there's no way she would ever hire

43:45

a black guy to be the president of global operations for her race team I flew down there much like indeed she

43:51

had interviewed 72 people and offered me the job on the spot and her motivation at the time was she was Innovative she

43:58

wanted someone in entertainment she loved licensing and I was scared to

44:03

death and so I actually called Tony Dungy who's a mentor of mine I said

44:09

listen coach I said look I have this opportunity I can stay at Sony I can go down to NASCAR and he said tell me

44:15

what's going on and it literally was a year they won the Super Bowl I called him on Friday night I'm like you might

44:20

be a little busy right now but if you can call me back it'd be great he called me they played the Patriots and he said

44:26

listen Max there's it's rare that you get an opportunity to impact an organization in industry and culture and

44:33

when you do I think that God is using you to make a difference so I went down there not there were no no people of

44:40

color ever ever in the history of that organization at work there's 600 employees 200 million dollars a year for

44:46

a race team and we had such an incredible connection around things that they were passionate about

44:52

winning going fast and you know and it was a platform for me when you find

44:58

something that you're passionate about you get to talk about things that you may not do in everyday life the other

45:03

thing that I picked up you know we started having success on the track we started you know generating more revenue

45:09

and when those things have a positive impact on people's lives they listen to you in a matter that's a little bit

45:14

different so for me it was all about having credibility and making an impact which gave me the permission to have the

45:20

conversation and then what I said was if I ever gotten an opportunity where I could hire then I had to lead by example

45:26

so we've held on to this race team for 14 years you know all the George Floyd stuff happened but Bubba Wallace and

45:33

Kyle Larson and Daniel Suarez Al drove for me when they were 14 years old and we you know we stayed the course to make

45:39

sure that in Industry now that realizes that diversity is good for the business is it you know is is an important

45:46

priority now we brought those same things I brought those same principles when I came to USA Track and Field 10

45:52

years ago we hadn't had a new sponsor in 11 years we had the worst Olympic performance in in uh in in Beijing it

46:02

was terrible there were two people of color and the entire organization with the most diverse sport in the Olympic

46:08

movement right now there's there's my CEO and I are the only two black c-suite

46:14

Executives in the entire Olympic movement right now but we were intentional to hire the best

46:20

people and have a diverse staff and that means diversity of thought diversity of life experience and we just recently

46:26

over the last few years the best athletic success in the history of the organization a half a billion dollar deal with Nike the most success that

46:33

we've had as an organization and I give it all to having a diverse team that

46:39

help you solve problems that really help you think about things in a very different manner so so the one

46:44

message I'm going to say to everyone you do have a difference to impact the way that people think but as you become

46:49

successful and you move up in your career and as Mickey say you have influence I think you know you should

46:55

take it seriously it's important to create those opportunities because I knew when I started the race team if I

47:01

didn't own the race team the chances of a black or minority or woman driver getting in a car that didn't have the

47:08

access or the resource to do it were slim the none and so for me you know I appreciate the work that everybody up

47:14

here does because it is important but the one thing I say as I look through across the panel consistently is you

47:20

have people who are quality Executives it's not because they're female it's not because we're minority Executives you

47:27

know the people up here on the stage impact their organization in a positive way and so um you know I'm just thrilled

47:34

and honored to be up here with my panelists because I know what they do every day but I just like to encourage anyone that if you have the opportunity

47:41

to make a difference please do it grab the mic right quick because I was there for a lot of that stuff and max is

47:48

being a little bit modest I will say that one of the things that I've always admired and one of the ways that my big

47:54

big brother here is always had a strong influence upon me is that this is a

47:59

person who has always sought out uh big challenges not just little ones with

48:06

most of his career choices he's made he's had the courage to bet on himself

48:12

and to take on big challenges uh when he went to NASCAR he said he was nervous

48:18

and if anybody would be it was a it was a huge job it was a controversial job

48:24

but I'll tell you I was working at Time Warner at the time and my boss knew you

48:31

know knew about Max and I and about my background and our association that was

48:36

that was kind of my first foray coming out of our business and going you know going into Corporate America

48:43

and um and I told him about Max and NASCAR and he said to me he's a white

48:50

guy and he said oh my gosh he's like how does Max feel about going into NASCAR

48:56

that's like rednecks and it's nothing but you know southern white people

49:01

and I said you know this is this may surprise you but you've looked at it the

49:09

exact wrong way I said max is very used to being around uh a whole bunch of

49:15

people that aren't like him and he's very used to being the only person in the room who looks like him the real

49:21

question is how is NASCAR going to feel about Max that was the real question and so you

49:28

know while he can talk about his trepidation going in I can tell you uh that uh this man has you know and you've

49:36

heard just a little bit and you're probably thinking wow think what are all these jobs that this guy's done in all

49:42

these areas it's because he's had the confidence to always bet on himself uh and when you do that

49:49

um I I think you'll be shocked at what you can accomplish uh and certainly I

49:55

haven't been shocked at what he's been able to accomplish or indeedly either uh and you know just the two people that

50:01

I've been closest to over the years so that's that's that's just what I wanted to add about his journey yeah and I

50:07

think we could talk about dni listen for hours but I just wanted to add one more thing if you guys don't mind is um

50:13

he talked a little bit I think Nikki about minds and and I'll tell you my philosophy is I'm not worried about

50:19

changing anyone's mind I'm really not children different different story I'm

50:24

worried about people's behaviors people's actions and execution because I think ultimately that changes minds and

50:32

when we think about things that Max has done that's exactly what he's done right and it's all intentional it's

50:38

intentionally reaching back it's executing it's it's excellent product

50:43

you can't argue that and and when you're the first you know black CEO of a NASCAR

50:49

team and and you kill it you can't deny the next one so I think the win when we're in these roles and we're in these

50:55

positions number one you got to be excellent and you gotta execute and I

51:00

just think it's about action for me much more than it is about people's minds

51:07

I really appreciate you saying that um you know one of the things uh that I

51:12

loved about about this conversation is not one person has talked about Dei as like being the right thing to do like if

51:20

we have to have a conversation about this is the right thing to do then we we're not ready for for what's next you

51:27

talked about how Dei drives business how it how it is the right thing for the

51:33

business it's the right thing for Innovation it's the right thing for for driving Revenue so I appreciate

51:39

um you all um sharing that and so I'm going to switch gears a little bit and kick it back over to to rocket here

51:46

because you know when I came on Notre Dame's campus in 2004 Tyrone Willingham

51:52

was was the head coach um and he is to my recollection the only

51:58

Notre Dame head coach not to have been given his full first contract he was let go after after three years and so I was

52:05

here during the the campus demonstrations and conversations and uh

52:10

real uncomfortable times um now fast forward we have Coach

52:15

Friedman um which I can honestly say I never thought that that was something that was

52:21

going going to happen again and so I want to you know get your perspective on on what it's like to to now have Coach

52:28

Freeman you know in the fold how how did you feel when he was was hired um and

52:33

and how do you feel having that representation now well one thing that I've

52:40

I've learned to do and I'm learning how to to continue to do it is to

52:47

on topics that can be triggering in some instances whether it's me or people who

52:54

are in the particular environment is to be quick to listen and slow to speak

53:01

and slowed it to get emotional one way or the other and so

53:07

when coach Kelly ended up going down to LSU I was like

53:12

stunned I was like okay wait a minute and it was just like I just got quiet and then I remembered when coach Kelly

53:19

hired Marcus from Cincinnati one which it seemed strange at the time

53:25

but he was like you know I just hired the next head coach of Notre Dame University and it was the young up and

53:32

coming defensive coordinator out of Cincinnati and I was just like huh

53:38

okay that perhaps was it turned out to be prophetic and so with that

53:44

understanding and then when he was hired it was just like okay Lord this this how

53:50

I look at things I'll take try to take a different view of it than what a lot of times the media does because I've

53:56

learned the hard way that when I take the perspective that the media has on topics in our culture then I tend to

54:04

have the emotional responses that aren't beneficial for me in my piece so that

54:12

was the initial perspective but then once the season started and they had us

54:19

ranked number five I was like okay these cats are trying to set us up because in

54:24

my mind after you know meeting the coaching staff and watching the actual the team

54:31

and just seeing what was set up just from a football pure football perspective

54:38

I was like we might be that the highest I would

54:43

rank us at like 15. like that was just how I was like 15 is right where we're

54:48

probably we're out in our wheelhouse right there anything higher than that is

54:54

a setup anything lower than that is disrespectful so yeah the that that so

55:00

that so my expectations about that were were I was I'm smooth I was like okay

55:05

the first year look you need a Star Quarterback you need some I mean in this the type of game that we have now if

55:12

your quarterback's not a star or close to a star or can at least get out of trouble and run like a star then it's

55:19

going to be tough hauling and then the only reason I said top 15 because I felt like okay our front seven just the

55:27

interior lineman linebackers our front seven is solid and I felt like with a

55:33

solid group and with with above average coaching they can be a

55:40

problem for people so I was like okay I didn't expect Marshall to happen but when I looked at why not

55:48

but when I say this I look at it like this I'm like there's we're not a good enough team to beat ourselves which is

55:55

turnovers and the other team at the same time now if we had a couple of other factors

56:01

on the field I'm like oh yeah we can we can overcome that but right now you just make that's like an insurmountable

56:08

uh task at the moment so I am Pleasant in my demeanor I want us to win

56:15

every game I know that's not something that is probably going to happen and I

56:22

just I just look for the improvement over time and it was interesting when you talked about Tyrone Willingham

56:28

because I remember we had just finished the ESPN shoot and it was Utah and BYU and I flew in from

56:37

Utah did an appearance here locally in town and I came over and just just was shooting the breeze with the coach and

56:44

so we were talking and so we had a plan as we started talking he's like hey man I want you to come in this summer and I

56:50

want you to help the receivers and this that another I was like yeah man this this that other whatever so we had this plan together and that was like uh

56:57

Sunday and I fly home and then I guess the next day

57:02

they they fired them and then I was like oh it like it shocked my system and I was like Wow and then but I was very

57:10

angry and I was like my first response was man they why they do this to the

57:15

brother they ain't let other people have a chance the same as they should give in the same chance they gave everybody else

57:21

and I was just like ah because I was still young and the

57:27

next show we were in Atlanta and I couldn't I could control my motion

57:33

I didn't want to control my emotions and we were on the set and they asked the question and they were just like um

57:41

so for me my grandmother told me when you do something wrong or if someone does something wrong

57:47

the next step is to repent you just you're doing wrong the

57:53

repentance in action just turn and go the other way and so when they asked me

57:58

on the set bro I got biblical on them cats I was like hey hey I don't know about the next coach or

58:03

whatever but it's like what does Notre Dame need to do right now man Notre Dame needs to repent this is wrong

58:09

somebody help me so so so it was like those are my two perspectives and I'm a

58:17

little uh I'm a little more seasoned now so um with Marcus uh I'm pleasantly

58:23

surprised but now I'm also not the guy that just because somebody's black that

58:28

they need to be the coach because I know what it's like man when you don't if

58:33

somebody isn't doesn't have the um the Acumen if if they don't have the the

58:40

skill set but they look the part man that's almost worse so I don't like that

58:45

either so I'm just saying I feel like we're good and I feel like he and I for

58:51

me this one of the smartest moves was the fact because he looked shook that dog on ball game man he was on the

58:58

sidelines this cat boy this is Fish Out of Water time but I love that he went out and got

59:04

another head coach he went out and got Al golden who just came off the Super Bowl uh run with the Bengals who was a

59:11

former head coach in college and is at or so I was like all right yes you guys to have somebody on the staff who could

59:16

come in and he's older and so you can come in and say okay look this is how we look at it's how we do it this is how we handle this it's how we go forth just

59:23

being in that position before you need a mentor somebody that been there before you know so I think all the ingredients

59:29

are in place everything is set perfectly for him to be able to succeed and just pump the brakes if anybody's

59:36

out here is panicking or like oh he's gotta he's not he's going to be here much longer no just relax everything's gonna be fine everything's gonna be fine

59:45

I'm going to give you a parent's perspective because my son just graduated it played here and uh I'm

59:51

going to tell you what's interesting when you look at Rocket's era and you had coach house there was a culture that

59:57

was built a culture of excellence and there was a culture where people's lives were transformed while they were playing

1:00:03

so I don't think that you should ever sacrifice Excellence but I remember when my son got the news that he was going to

1:00:09

be the head coach and I found that it's hard sometimes to transition from being an assistant or position coach to being

1:00:16

a head coach at the same institution because you have a different kind of relationship with your players but I can

1:00:22

tell you that all the offensive alignment they were all ecstatic and so for me I'm looking at what is College

1:00:28

athletics really stand for yeah you want to win championships which is critical to keep your job but at the same time do

1:00:34

you come out of a program a much better person for the rest of your life than when you went into it and I struggle

1:00:39

with that and I have a daughter that plays Division One volleyball so so you know so what I think about the coach

1:00:45

right now is we got to give him enough time to build his culture to put his team together and and make this to place

1:00:52

I mean he's proven that he can recruit you know and I think that we'll have the talent here but I just ask people to

1:00:58

have some Grace uh in giving him an opportunity to establish what his football program should look like

1:01:07

that's the point um and so you know when we were you know I had a prep call for this this panel

1:01:13

with Jakeem and Max and I will say that we spent 90 of the conversation talking about

1:01:20

what I want to talk to you about right now Jonathan is that that Rooney Rule and so this this transitions really

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nicely you know into that and so one I want you to just explain what the Rooney

1:01:31

Rule is for those who who may not know uh but but my real question the real

1:01:36

question that we were debating was does it work yeah again another good question I I would

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say just for the the Rooney Rule and for those that um don't don't know what it

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is uh the Rooney Rule is was initiated and it was created in 2002 as initiated

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into 2003 season the reason why was there were two coaches at the time that

1:02:04

were let go even though their uh team had a good record and also when you

1:02:12

looked at overall the number of black head coaches in the league it was really low and so at the time you had Johnny

1:02:19

Cochran and Myra siry I think my uh Cyrus Cyrus

1:02:26

Cyrus Cyrus Mary Cyrus Mary sorry they had

1:02:31

threatened legal action and so what happened was they actually got together

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with um with League officials and the commissioner to actually talk about this

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as a result um uh Dan Rooney

1:02:48

was the real initiator of what we call the Rooney Rule and at that time what it

1:02:54

said was that whenever there is a head coach opening that there was the
1:03:00
requirement that at Leach at least one person that was going to be considered be a black
candidate and what do we call
1:03:09
that today but if you look at it broader it simply is a diverse slate and so now
1:03:15
when you look at diverse lates which are initiated in in academic institutions uh
1:03:21
corporations around the world non-profit organization we talk I mean
1:03:26
it's right we it's the idea of ensuring that you provide access and opportunity
1:03:32
for roles uh by basically requiring that you have
1:03:39
people from a variety of different backgrounds of course now it's more inclusive it's not just
black men but
1:03:47
for in the in the corporate world and for the larger World it includes women and it includes
other diverse
1:03:53
individuals as well it's about providing access and opportunity let's go back to where we are
today we've now evolved the
1:04:01
Rooney Rule to make it better and what we've done is instead of for coordinator
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positions head coach and GM we require at least two external minority
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candidates and that could be a woman and or a person of color to be in that diverse
1:04:20
late when there's a head coach GM our coordinator opening we also have now
1:04:25
included QB coach to be a part of that the idea behind the Rooney Rule is not
1:04:32
about the results the actual decision what the Rooney Rule does is it provides
1:04:38
that again an access and opportunity to compete for position to ensure that we
1:04:46
all broaden the realm of candidates that
1:04:51
you will consider to ensure that you're not just digging in your own hole to
1:04:57
find the person that might be good for that role uh I am a believer that the
1:05:03

Rooney Rule is extremely helpful not only at the National Football League but

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every other organization that chooses to do a diverse late I am also a believer that it's not enough

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we have to do way more than the Rooney Rule and that's unfortunately what happens is people have this thought that

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the Rooney Rule has it equals ensures that a person of color gets

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hired for the role that's not what it's built for it's built to make sure that you are

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allowed to get into room to show the person that's making the decision that you're fantastic and you're the right

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person for the role it does not stop bias it does not stop uh side

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connections of saying oh my gosh I had a great golfing outing with this person I just love this person it doesn't stop

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all that other thing all the other things which prevent equity what it does is provide access and

1:05:59

opportunity so then what are the other things we need to do we need to make sure that we provide opportunities for

1:06:05

people to get to know each other as human beings that's what we had we have what we call an accelerator program which we did for the first time we had

1:06:12

some of the strongest candidates and and front office and head coach meeting with

1:06:17

all the primary owners first time we've ever done that in the National Football League bring the humanness to Opportunities so

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then they're saying oh my gosh I know Eric the enemy I know his philosophy I

1:06:32

know his personality this is someone I can connect with because I've met him in

1:06:37

a non-formal way which is really you really don't get to know someone if

1:06:44

you're if you're interviewing them for the first time we try to come up with other ways of slowing down the hiring

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cycle hurry hurry hurry get that coach we want to we want to make that slower

1:06:56

so you have to come up with other creative ways that's best for your industry

1:07:01

and so for us we we have the frustration because I do believe I think it's

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absolutely fantastic that you have a black head coach here and I think that means everything because you know how

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many we do unfortunately don't have that in many major schools today

1:07:19

um so that there that is important but let the coach has to perform

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but we also have to give black coaches and diverse coaches the same leeway that

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other coaches have been given historically and we and and we also have to give that Grace and let the let him

1:07:39

build his team and just as we would if we were in that position allow him to create that

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philosophy and CR and get the right the players that he wants to then create the

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results that Notre Dame is is used to so for me there are many and we've had

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we've had many players and we've had many coaches and we've had others that have been very critical of the Rooney

1:08:02

Rule but I think what that is about is not fully understanding what the what

1:08:09

the Rooney Rule can do or what a diverse slate can do it does not go at the end

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of the day we still have to work on the decision maker and that is training bias

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training that's the human human Connection getting to know people before the opportunity is even available and

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other creative ways to ensure that there is equity in the process for everybody

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if I could just comment quickly that you know and you know I agree with everything he said

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John you know it's uh you know I think that

1:08:46

um the Rooney Rule has never been the problem right obviously not right I

1:08:51

think that if you want to look at sports like football or basketball and you draw

1:08:56

a comparison with corporate America what I've learned at least at the

1:09:03

companies that I have that I've been at is that just telling leaders in

1:09:09

positions that they need to have a diverse slate um is is sometimes kind of a trapdoor

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for them because there are lots of roles where they're not where people literally don't know how to find people from

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diverse backgrounds who can do those jobs right I mean I I'm on the global

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diversity council at our company and I've you know and that's made up of a bunch of the leaders uh and the division

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heads of our company and it's kind of a safe space where we can talk about issues and it's and it's diverse

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Executives and it's white Executives and it's you know female Executives and we

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get in a space where you know people feel comfortable saying listen I'm gonna be honest with you I want to hire more a

1:10:00

diverse candidate I don't know where to find them you know I'm in I'm in you

1:10:05

know I make movies and I need certain kind of camera operators I don't know where to find diverse candidates to fill

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a slate right and so you know we have to work on figuring out how to solve that

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problem because this isn't fair to then ding that person just say you have to hire a diverse slave and then they don't

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they're like well you're a bad executive it's like well you know what let's let's try to figure out how we can un

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unpack that right one of the troubling and frustrating things as you know

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obviously for the NFL is that the NFL is what's the percentage of African-Americans playing in the league

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so we have a little over probably 70 probably 70.

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so why the Rooney Rule at least I think is a lightning rod is that in the NFL

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there's no shortage of black people who are part of the sport and have spent their lives playing that Sport and

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studying that Sport and so people have you know kind of cognitive dissonance

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understanding why that doesn't translate into more senior Executives and coaches

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and other roles and I think that's why the Rooney Rule gets beaten up so much so so not that not thank you but I'm

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gonna cut Mickey off I know uh you know what's interesting listen to this is that you know what here's the reality

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the beyond the fact that indeed he asked me to join the rise board I got on the board for a simple reason that the NFL

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is not like not much different than most sports huge brand multi-billion dollar industry they're small family businesses

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there are 32 or 30 30 billionaires that

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control it so it's not the same as General Motors where you have all this corporate compliance and this you know

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Reliance on you know public perception it is some but you're trying to convince 32 billionaires that it's important to

1:11:58

hire people of color to make their lives and their business better and so so as

1:12:03

interesting as a human being as Stephen Ross is uh the one thing that was

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fascinating to me is it was really simple and it came after he had problems with the Miami Dolphins and he said

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listen Sports is a unifier and we have to get with people and change their mindset at a young age so how do we use

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this platform to improve race relations right and so he made a comment in a meeting one time which is fascinating to

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me and he said I'm desperately trying to have it wasn't like like my friends would but

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my colleagues and peers at the Country Club understand the importance of

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diversity and inclusion and so to me to influence the influencers is really

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critical but the techniques and you know I mentioned NASCAR because look when I went to jail and how Incorporated my

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first idea was we're going to do Dale the movie and it was a DVD it was a documentary about Dale senior who you

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know his anniversary of his death he was the most popular Richard Childress and Theresa Earnhardt did it it was the most

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successful DVD Sports DVD in the history that was sold they split a check for millions of

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millions of dollars and I became Richard's grandson or godson you know and so for me you know they were

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passionate about a project but they saw how my skill set could enhance their life which caused them to think

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differently so I'm gonna go back to indeedy you know it is when you you know the attitude takes a longer time to

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affect you know Behavior you can kind of affect access is really really important

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but it is really kind of like what you were saying having an owner really get to know somebody on a personal level and

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deciding that they want to give them a shot which is much different than you know what what we do at the corporate

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level so I want to personalize the Rooney Rule a little bit just for all of you so I've been Rooney ruled I'll just

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say that not at the company I work at now but in Prior companies when people say they

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don't know who they don't know qualified people of color women I'm a bonus you

1:14:06

could double with me right I'm a woman of color because part of it is you have to be qualified

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and I can't tell you how many people interviewed me and wanted to interview

1:14:18

me and had no intention of hiring me I was to check the box personally

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and it doesn't feel good right and after the third time I thought wait a minute

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wait a minute wait a minute you're calling me because I'm always open to it when someone wants to call me about a

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job I listen why not right we're all open to conversations you want to talk to me about a job that you're feeling

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that's more senior than I am let's talk right well indeed we want to make it a

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formal interview okay I'm gonna check the box you were never going to hire me ever hire me so

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some people it's a check the box and in my opinion that doesn't work I mean

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clearly it doesn't work but I also want to humanize the other part of it when you're the other side of it when I say

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that I'm so many times the only one in the room is getting better now I was the only woman to color in the room so of

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course they're going to come to me and I went to I'm a lawyer from Notre Dame I'm a journalist from Northwestern of course

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they're going to come to me I have everything they want on paper that's what they have to do that's required of

1:15:26

them that is the Rooney Rule and some of the companies I was at and it just doesn't feel so good on the other side

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that's why we have to you know work on access and helping each other get access

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I was just sitting there listening to indeedy and I was thinking about my own career I don't think that I've taken a

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job um since the Army where I wasn't hired by someone

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who who knew me and that I knew I haven't had I mean I've never thought

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about it up until I'm sitting here on the stage I've never had and I'm and I'm an old man I've never had a job I've

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never been hired by any organization that has tapped me just because of my

1:16:11

resume or they had an opening and I applied for it every single job other

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than the Army and the Army was an ROTC scholarship when I was in college so that job was already preordained right

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that's the only job I've had where I didn't have someone who knew me I had

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access to them and they knew that they wanted me and I knew that I wanted them

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every single job so after my experiences I stopped and and from that point on I would only

1:16:42

take meetings and only put my name in after I spoke to someone and I knew they

1:16:47

wanted me and I knew I was going to at least make it to the final round like not that I was guaranteed a job but I knew I was going in for the final round

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otherwise it makes me look bad like why can't I close a deal like how come I'm not getting the job when when the job

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was always taken so to your point you know after that happened three times

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that it's a blueprint yeah you know I'm just it's just an observation right right I mean I would hope that we can

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all apply for jobs that are open and hope that we get a fair shot and I think that with the work that is being done

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that that's changing I'm just making an observation uh that that's not been my

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own experience now the good news is that I've gotten some good jobs over the years so you know so what we do and if

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we have access and if we have people who are supporting us and helping us meet people and people putting us down and

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given us the opportunity it's really about opportunity and then what happens after that you win some and you lose

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some um but again I think that Max's point is well taken why the NFL a Rooney Rule is

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such a Hot Topic lightning rod is that people look at the at the brown faces in

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that league and it's hard to understand why that doesn't translate Max is giving us you know Max and John both have given

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us reasons why but it doesn't make us feel any better yeah I mean I think it hits the core of

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the issue is at the end of the day what we still need to do a lot of work on is

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the point of the decision and how we can ensure that that is fair and Equitable

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for everyone um you know I think a lot of people have gone into an interview knowing that you

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don't have you don't have the shot and that never should be the case but one thing I do have to say I mean I remember

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Tony Dungy said in a meeting that he was in um that when he was interviewing with

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Tampa they were already locked in on someone else for that role it was and and you

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know there's a good chance I think what he was saying I don't want to speak for him is that you know he he was on the

1:19:00

Slate he was a Rooney that person ended up not taking the job he ended up getting it and uh so that

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you never know what how the process is going to turn out and and and until we

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do get that Equity I don't know how long that will go that will take for everyone um you know sometimes we have to make

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that personal decision of and and everyone here um listening of whether you're okay

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knowing that you may be going into a situation where you may not be getting a

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fair shot and I think that's a that's a big problem we have in society is that's

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is that there are times where that doesn't exist and we got to stop that and once we can do that these kind of

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issues can get resolved and I would just add to that you guys clearly see that this bothered me when

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it happened to me but I'm still a proponent of the Rooney Rule because I've seen it work I've seen it to your point I've seen

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um hiring managers being pleasantly surprised by saying wow like I I didn't

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think this would happen and that person may still have not gone that job but that person got the next job

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so it's it is access it's getting in front of somebody and impressing someone and and quite frankly if they have um

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very low expectations it's pretty easy to impress people when they're not expecting anything so um so I I am a proponent of it 100

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um although just not me and then and that shouldn't shock us

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right I mean like the whole point is that there are barriers and so barriers aren't you know kind of the very

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definition of it is the barriers aren't easy to overcome so there's a certain level of resilience that we all have to

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have and that you know people who are in the African-Americans who are in the coaching profession have to have if it's

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something that they really want then they've got to keep going back over and over again and plan again bet on

1:21:02

themselves and bet on their talent and hope that there's that that connection

1:21:07

that they make and you know um and and that it happens for them but

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in insane um you know I I Echo you know the words that that everyone up here has has said

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and indeedy one of the things that you that you just said is one of the reasons why I'm a I'm a fan of of the rule as a

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component I'm not a fan of the rule as a solve but as a component because if you

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start speaking to people of different backgrounds you could be pleasantly surprised and so you could change the

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mind also it's more shots at the basket and so you know you take a guy like Eric

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the enemy we hear about him all of the time because he's interviewing everywhere I remember my first interview

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when I was in law school I had no idea what I was doing I had no idea how to answer the questions I had no idea what

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questions were going we're going to come up but the more I interviewed I was better prepared for that and so if you

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can't get into the room to get interviewed you can't be prepared to actually pass the test and so that's one

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of the things that I that I like and appreciate about the Rooney Rule but one thing that I want to shift a little bit

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of the focus here is we talked about the mindset of an employer but we have not talked about the mindset

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of someone who's looking to get the job everyone I knew growing up wanted to be a professional athlete none of them

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thought about doing the jobs that we have because we didn't know people that were were doing these jobs

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and so I just want to take a quick second here to you know talk to the panelists about like how did you how did

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you get here and so for a student who's here today who's thinking about getting into sports and entertainment like how

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how do we navigate that how can these students lean on your experience and and

1:22:54

leverage us to to help create these opportunities so I'll start with Max

1:23:00

so Dwight King launched my look Dwight

1:23:05

legal research and legal yeah Dwight hey Dwight no I I think there are a number of

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things I would I was sitting up here thinking the same thing I agree with Mickey I think the only job that I got

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without knowing someone was right out of law school from here I think

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first of all I'm always saying that any discipline you can find in a traditional

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business you can find in sports so it doesn't matter if you're you know a tax lawyer litigator marketer you know I

1:23:36

have Physicians that work for me anything you can think of they all work within my organization so the first

1:23:42

thing I think you have to do is you have to develop a substantive skill and I think a lot of people up here said Excellence because at the end of the day

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you know sports and entertainment it's business and you want people who can impact your organization so the second

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thing for me is really you gotta you gotta build a network and you know you

1:24:00

got to have all those things you got to be resilient you got to be persistent I don't think you know these are my

1:24:06

friends and I may have to call them three or four times to get them on the phone because anybody who's worth talking to is not going to be sitting

1:24:12

around waiting for your phone call so they got stuff to do so you shouldn't get your feelings heard if you call 702

1:24:19

345 times and you don't get through the network is critically important because

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you know when you get a bunch of paper on your desk you'd be surprised there's

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there's one young man that that I'm getting ready to hire for an internship I went to a conference out in Atlanta

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and I'm so Antiquated I he I asked him for his car and he pulled out this bling this little QR code on his phone and so

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I was yeah I was fascinated you know I realized that I was Antiquated but uh

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you know but he wound up following up with me and I remembered what happened when I met him you know so that personal

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relationship is really important but I do want to say for the people that hear you cannot underestimate the power of

1:25:02

the Notre Dame Network um you know it doesn't matter what I'm doing if someone has a Notre Dame

1:25:07

affiliation on their resume or something when they call me I'm going to take I'm going to at least take a second look uh

1:25:14

you know there's a 90 chance I'm going to call back and try to figure it all out but most importantly as Miggy said I

1:25:21

think you got to look for opportunities the two two things I think you got to look for opportunities within an

1:25:27

organization that your skill set can make an impact and then you got to demonstrate the people the qualities and

1:25:32

the intangibles that you have I I'm sorry I got to tell a story so there's I produce this TV show with MTV networks

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and there was a young woman who evidently had been trying to get with me

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for like a couple years for a job opportunity so my assistant we had like a production assistant role and she came

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on the set and we shot this series and she was so impressed with staff she came

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to me and I got to know her through this set and she had a master's degree and she wanted to get in sports and I said listen the only job that I have

1:26:04

available for you right now uh it's a receptionist it's like seven dollars an hour and she's like I'll take it so she

1:26:10

came in every day and she worked that job like you know this was her dream job and so we had an open house at the race

1:26:17

team and her mother came in and her mother pulled me aside and let me have it how dare you my daughter has a mass

1:26:23

master's degree from a top university and she just undressed me and I said listen your family so with all due

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respect please don't screw up your daughter's blessing and have this conversation by ever again I don't care

1:26:35

if she's got a law degree a PhD she doesn't know crap about what I'm trying to teach I'm looking for work ethic I'm

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looking for chemistry I'm looking for those character traits I'm looking for someone who can come into my organization that'll fit in with my team

1:26:48

and we can develop and those intangible qualities that people demonstrate when

1:26:54

you meet them are things that you think about when you're trying to hire somebody so you know the network the

1:26:59

substantive skills you got to be resilient you got to demonstrate those intangible qualities and you got to figure out a way to impact the last

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thing I'll say with all the research you can do right now it is quite impressive to know a little bit about the person

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that you're talking to uh you know it's easy to find out information but we're all human beings too sitting on the

1:27:17

other side of the desk so when you come in I mean you know asking about our day our children or whatever that's really

1:27:23

helpful but you know and the last thing I'll say is please don't lead an interview talking about what a fan of

1:27:29

sports you are you got to have passion for the industry we don't really necessarily need fans so

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anyway I'm sorry big facts Mickey you know honestly uh

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you know point of entry I always tell people that um how I slash we got started is not

1:27:49

really any kind of blueprint for anybody other than some of the things Max has

1:27:54

hit upon we talked when we were here about what got us up in the morning

1:28:00

assuming that we were going to actually graduate and actually pass the bar what we wanted to do with that with that

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degree and we both have talked about having the passion in sports and in

1:28:14

media and we just decided that we were going to do it we didn't really know how

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we didn't know what to do exactly there was no

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blueprint it certainly wasn't any class that we took here but we did know that

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we had to work hard at it in the same way that we knew that we had to work hard here as students and to prepare

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ourselves in the best way that we could for going out there and becoming lawyers

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we knew that we had to have some skill set some expertise that somebody wanted

1:28:51

to pay us for right we knew that we didn't catch balls we didn't run fast we

1:28:57

weren't going to do those or I was probably we're probably faster then but we knew that our skill set and that the

1:29:05

only way we were going to have people take it seriously was to get literally good at something and so we just were

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hoping that if we did that and we knew what we wanted to do and and knew what

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we had a passion for that we would be ready for opportunities uh and some

1:29:24

opportunities you can help help create and some just fall in your lap and we had some of each uh and so there's no

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real blueprint but that's the best way that I can put it is that when those opportunities that we either created or

1:29:38

that fell in our laps we were at and you know we were prepared there was nobody who was going to out

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outwork us uh we were going to be prepared for every interview every every

1:29:49

opportunity to sign a client or to get in front of someone and to try to sell

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them on what we thought that we could do for them and it kind of sort of worked out for us so I mean that's that's not a

1:30:01

great answer but that's that's the real deal

1:30:06

um so I would say I I took the path less less taken I guess

1:30:13

my passion was Sports and I'm sorry Dean call but I could take

1:30:19

law or not right my passion was Sports I wanted to get into sports and I wanted

1:30:25

very I wanted some very specific locations some very specific Sports so

1:30:31

for me that mattered a little bit more than um my expertise because I thought I I'm

1:30:38

pretty well-rounded and I could do a lot and as an entry level person I mean it's not going to be rocket science so I'll

1:30:43

figure out how to do the job but let me get there first and um when I was a third year

1:30:50

last student I had I interviewed it with firms like everybody does I had an offer

1:30:56

it was a long time ago six figures and I had an internship offer for the

1:31:02

NCAA in Overland Park Kansas it was that long ago it wasn't in Indy for eighteen

1:31:08

thousand dollars and I took the internship right so people really thought I lost my

1:31:15

mind um but for me I followed my passion and I knew it would work I knew it would

1:31:21

work I waited tables at night these guys knew me back then I mean I I got the

1:31:27

question well you must be here because you didn't pass the bar no I passed the bar first time California it was an

1:31:33

intentional it was intentional and I just knew I was going to bet on myself I'm like I'm going to get in here

1:31:38

I'm used to being a poor college student it's one more year I'm going to bet on myself and when I less than a year I had

1:31:46

offers left and right at most most athletic departments I was you know I was a black woman who played softball

1:31:52

and by the way while I was in law school I was an assistant coach on the softball team here so I coached I was a lawyer

1:31:58

who passed the bar and I worked at the NCAA and had relationships with the NCA like who wouldn't hire me right so that

1:32:06

was my sort of you know strategy is follow my passion get to know people do

1:32:11

a really good job and you know a lot of my friends now at the NCAA they're athletic directors literally like

1:32:18

everywhere all the major at all the major athletic departments and I can pick up the phone anytime from my one

1:32:24

year that I was an intern at the NCAA because when I was an intern I was at everything I was networking I was doing

1:32:30

this doing that so I would say I definitely took a different route and it

1:32:36

probably was a more difficult route but so my advice to all of you is follow your passion and do it while you're

1:32:43

young it's so much harder to follow your passion and and most of the time when you follow your passion you're going to

1:32:48

make less money that's just the reality so it's very difficult to do that when you're in a mortgage and you have

1:32:54

children and you have all this and then I'm going to go back to the to your comment about the fan thing too Max

1:33:00

that's the first if someone says they're a fan they are out a hundred percent

1:33:05

because when they say they're a fan I say buy a ticket that's not what we do we don't watch

1:33:11

games it's not what we do we we are we're running business we're running

1:33:17

businesses and when we watch a game trust me we're not watching the game for the game we're watching the game for I'm

1:33:23

watching the game is like did our announcer say something wrong what was wrong with that camera what was wrong with that shot oh my god did we did we

1:33:30

did we not go to commercial at the right time what kind of call am I going to get that's how I watch the game which annoys

1:33:36

my husband um it's very hard to watch a game but again we are not we are not here to be

1:33:43

fans and I do enjoy being a fan every now and then and like get a ticket and I go in and I enjoy it so this is a

1:33:50

business at the end of the day and also dni is a business at the end of the day

1:34:00

everything is it's Wonder I'll have conversations like this because a lot of times you're so busy you just don't have

1:34:06

time to to do this so it's almost like I feel like we're having coffee chatting and but um I I would say

1:34:15

I came from upper middle class family my father was orthodontist first orthodontist in North

1:34:23

Carolina my mom's educator had a lot of access I had no clue I had
1:34:29
zero clue of how to get into media entertainment and sports but that is has
1:34:35
always been my passion you know I played uh college football I played college tennis
1:34:40
College you know tennis football basketball my whole life that's what I
1:34:45
care about I love movies I love TV shows all of that but I didn't think it was I
1:34:51
had a place I didn't see anything that was welcoming to me as anybody that looked like me but I
had I mean a dream
1:35:00
but it didn't have that for me so for me it's a little bit different because I
1:35:05
always perceive myself to be a fan but I'm going to say how I
1:35:11
agree with the D uh indeedy when I as I get get more into it what I mean by that
1:35:17
is um so I started as an avid fan of of the NFL of the NBA
1:35:25
um of the USTA that's that's just who I am and my wife surely knows that and uh
1:35:33
so for me I just went I said I'm going to go to law school I'm going to be a lawyer I'm going to
get that business
1:35:40
degree so I can really um you know thrive in a large business environment when I realized I I
just
1:35:46
completely didn't like it then I I held on to my passion
1:35:53
and and I think there was a just a lot of luck I almost felt like I I fell into
1:35:59
it and then I had this opportunity and I got a little lucky through connections
1:36:04
and I got into media and that was it um after I got into media I just wanted
1:36:10
if it if it if it's media entertainment or Sports I'm all in because that's what
1:36:16
I do that's just what I love I am a fan but I will tell you once you become a
1:36:23
part of the business you will no longer look at it the same uh I love football
1:36:31
but I can't look at it and it's kind of sad right but I can't look at the game

1:36:37

the same way because I've been in the in the back conversations I know how the

1:36:42

business is run um it's it's different it's different but it's okay because it's a wonderful

1:36:49

industry to be in and we need more of you in it so we really this is this

1:36:56

isn't that I didn't feel like the opportunity was there when I was you know 20 years old

1:37:02

or t you know but there is now we are dying for great diverse Talent

1:37:08

Talent as a whole but the point is now we are inviting and welcoming diverse

1:37:13

Talent where before that was not the case so this is a wonderful time if you are

1:37:20

into this and you want to be engaged if you want it you'll get it there's way

1:37:26

too many opportunities out there so take take advantage and it's okay you might look at the
games a little bit different

1:37:32

but don't worry you're still you're still going to be inspired you're still gonna cheer but you are
going to look at

1:37:40

it differently thank you and uh and Rocket we're going to close with you what what words do
you

1:37:46

want to leave the students with the word that I would leave you with

1:37:53

I had a whole different mindset I was like about to give you my heart I got here but all right so

1:38:00

in short the words I will leave you with is you have to be relentless and being

1:38:07

determined to shine your light and I was talking to some of the young

1:38:14

students earlier and one of the things that I realized and I started with this and I shared it with
the young ladies I

1:38:20

was uh in 2017 I was in my house we had all my nieces and nephews over it was

1:38:26

about 17 people in the house that maybe a family of six could enjoy it

1:38:31

comfortably and it was like jam-packed man it was a summer everybody was over just it was a
great time of Fellowship

1:38:37

they were there for like a month and it was I was I was enjoying it however

1:38:44

just hold that right there in 2012 I had started having like these really severe vertigo attacks going to doctors

1:38:51

everywhere praying having no success with anybody other than well maybe you

1:38:58

could some guy said hey take lithium and it'll make your brain dull and you won't

1:39:04

be searching for balance as intensely as it normally would and that'll reduce the

1:39:09

verdict I was like man you want to make my brain dumb so I don't what the so it was like there was no Solutions and up

1:39:15

until that point I had seen significant results when physical

1:39:21

things would happen and I would just pray and trust that

1:39:26

the healing whatever I needed it would be made manifest that nothing was working so

1:39:33

I give you that now we're back in 2017 and we're in the kitchen and I was like

1:39:41

feeling from time to time I would just feel like oh my energy is low like I would have energy to about 12 o'clock

1:39:47

and I need to take a nap then I'd get up again and I have energy to eight o'clock and I had to go to bed like it was kind

1:39:52

of like one of those deals but this time it felt different and it felt like life

1:39:58

and the essence of life was leaving my body and I remember I was like I didn't

1:40:04

say anything because everybody was having just a great time so I just snuck away went upstairs and laid in the bed

1:40:10

and it became more intense and I knew I was going to die and I remember

1:40:17

recalling a couple of times when I watched near-death experiences and people would talk about how they could

1:40:23

feel their their Spirit getting ready to leave their bike like it was just like Essence was leaving and I felt like that

1:40:29

and I remember I just laid there and I wasn't afraid I it was not that it was

1:40:35

like this this environment of total peace but it was like a not it wasn't

1:40:41

anything anxious or anything like that or worry but I do remember thinking man

1:40:49

my children are going to be really sad my wife's going to be really sad because I'm a great guy like that kind of you

1:40:57

know myself they're gonna miss me and then uh and then my other thought was

1:41:03

and this is I think almost every man who has a family would probably think this

1:41:08

way and you could raise your hand if I'm if I'm far-fetched and I'm wrong but I

1:41:14

was like okay at least I'm not gonna it won't be a financial burden for my family like when my father died and

1:41:20

every they'll be okay to get over it and they'll figure it out and let me tell you something it just came so strong and

1:41:26

I just closed my eyes and I thought I was dead and obviously I'm not I'm still

1:41:31

here and so you know all of a sudden the next awareness that I had was that I was

1:41:40

I was still here my eyes weren't open but it was like coming out of the the core of me was a

1:41:48

voice and this and it said it this is what I said twice it said Ragib there's

1:41:53

an answer a remedy and a solution for everything then it said it again just as

1:41:58

calm and just as I'm talking say Ragib there's an answer a remedy and a solution for everything

1:42:05

and in that moment I didn't feel any different but I knew enough at that time about

1:42:13

myself and about what I call the Rules of Engagement when it comes to being able to partake of the more Abundant

1:42:21

Life that we all have an inheritance to take and to receive it was like I

1:42:27

grabbed the whole of it and it's like I I pulled myself out of the depths of

1:42:33

you're going to die and I just expected which I understand now

1:42:39

whatever we expect especially in moments of tribulation trouble trial

1:42:44

whatever we expect is in fact what we believe and humans are designed in such

1:42:50

a way that not only what we believe but what we truly believe we have the opportunity to

1:42:58

see it manifest in our lives so I didn't feel different but I knew okay even

1:43:04

though the truth is I don't feel different and I still feel uh but I the

1:43:09

whole truth is I just there's an answer remedying the solution for everything so I pulled out of that and it was like I

1:43:17

started finding out what this answer remedying the solution and the magnitude of it in the lives of

1:43:23

everyone that I encountered and I understood that all of us have the capacity and The Inheritance to receive

1:43:32

answers remedies and solutions for whatever it is that we are encountering and our call in this earth which then I

1:43:41

understood we are to have the ability to walk in that same

1:43:47

understanding and more importantly we are the essence of answers remedies and

1:43:54

solutions we can be that and then I started as I'm all these things are

1:44:00

happening over probably the course of the next year and a half and it's like all of a sudden I realize that

1:44:08

the light the there's a scripture that says the Life of Christ is the light of men of the light of mankind there's a

1:44:15

light in all of us when we come into this Earth and our call and and in

1:44:21

essence is to shine our light and the Earth or the world system that's

1:44:28

superimposed on this earth and the powers that should not be any time a

1:44:34

birth comes into the Earth that birth is a threat to the powers that should not be that currently are in positions of

1:44:39

ruler and I'm talking Beyond ethnic capacities and people genders I'm

1:44:45

talking on the level that really influences the influences of this Earth

1:44:50

and so when I understood that it was then that I realized

1:44:57

all of us have the ability to tap into that at any time

1:45:05

and what happens is it has to be a daily exercise because

1:45:10

they're daily bombarding us with things that discourage us daily bombarding us with things that make us afraid daily

1:45:17

bombarding us with things that make us hateful deadly bombarding us with things that still our peace daily bombarding us

1:45:24

with things that make us anxious and one of the great turnarounds in my life

1:45:30

was when I remember I never forget this I remember when I was 37 years old I finally I I was like I was taking an

1:45:38

assessment of how I was feeling internally and I was like wow I feel like a grown man now and the reason I

1:45:46

felt like I felt I was a grown man was because I finally identified what was important to

1:45:52

me and what was important to me was peace

1:45:58

like peace and you say oh that's so simple no I have peace with my family is provided

1:46:05

for I have peace when a problem arises that looks insurmountable and has my dog

1:46:10

on the heart beating out of its chest and all of the stress hormones at high alert

1:46:16

and then I'm able to process it properly and find the answer the REM leader of solution I have peace so it was like all

1:46:24

of us have the light and it's imperative that you start

1:46:30

expecting that answers remedies and solutions not only will be added to you

1:46:36

when you start seeing it this way and drawn to you and not only be able to uh

1:46:43

have that drawn to you but then you become the embodiment of the same so for

1:46:50

the young people in here everybody in here that is the perspective that I would if I had last words to say to you

1:46:56

that I would leave you with and be able to encourage you with and let you know that it's a daily a daily thing and I'm

1:47:04

telling you you're going to just you're going to you ever heard people say

1:47:10

um they're in a conversation and they were like man I should have listened to my

1:47:15

first mind because I made this decision but something was telling me

1:47:21

not to make that decision everybody has that experience

1:47:26

and I'm here to tell you that's the voice of God in you everybody came into this Earth with it whether you believe

1:47:32

there's a God or not that's the the voice of the creator of this universe in

1:47:37

you that is meant to be your guide in this earth and I would say as you are

1:47:43

understanding and expecting answers remedies and solutions to be added to your life

1:47:48

let's start listening to The Voice differentiate because there's a voice that's telling you go here don't go here

1:47:54

and the voice is telling you oh the hell with that get your thing on let's go and you have to be able to differentiate

1:48:02

between the two so let's see your first mind be an expector

1:48:09

that answers remedies and solutions are your inheritance and that whatever comes

1:48:14

your way that you can embody these answers remedies and solutions overcome

1:48:20

whatever it is and in doing so you'll be shining your light and that to me as an

1:48:26

utmost importance as you navigate your way through this Earth

1:48:33

foreign [Applause]

1:48:40

so before I pass it off to to our host to to close us out I just want to thank

1:48:45

you guys for for sharing um your perspectives this was great and I want to thank the audience for listening in

1:48:52

on our as Jonathan said our coffee chat uh that we would have had if y'all weren't here anyway so

1:48:58

so thank y'all [Applause]

1:49:10

wow um well thank you all

1:49:16

for being such an inspiration to all of us in this room my name is Tayo

1:49:21

Adel shafogan I'm the president of the Mendoza black hard resin management club

1:49:27

um and I have the honor and privilege of closing us out tonight and before I do so I just want to thank our sponsors the

1:49:34

fakery Drinker Bill and wreath Notre Dame law office of diversity equity and inclusion Notre Dame Notre

1:49:42

Dame law alumni relations Notre Dame athletics department Mendoza College of

1:49:47

Business the Mendoza Black Card risen management club and last but not least Notre Dame Sports communication and

1:49:53

entertainment law forum and um I am overwhelmingly

1:50:01

inspired by what we just witnessed and I hope that everyone here can take in the

1:50:08

true essence of what you just heard and be able to apply it to your daily life

1:50:14

and I don't want this moment to pass you by and for you and even the panelists as well because you all was also fed from

1:50:20

each other um I don't want this to pass you by and I don't want you to feel like you're not

1:50:27

empowered I did not know what to expect from here today I am not in the sports industry

1:50:33

whatsoever but after I have heard what I've heard tonight I am so confident not only in my

1:50:41

abilities but in the abilities of every single person in this room that you can't make change in this world we are

1:50:47

in a school that gives us opportunity that some of us may have never thought we would have we are seeing people that

1:50:54

are doing things that some of us may have never seen but this is a true Testament to what we 1:51:00

all can do especially as minorities in this country and what we all can achieve and to see this representation

1:51:09

in the Notre Dame law Department inspires me to

1:51:14

go and make change in the Mendoza Department we don't have a black Dean you know and that is amazing to see and

1:51:21

I'm grateful to see you brother to see what you have been accomplishing so far and I want to leave you all with just

1:51:27

these words of encouragement or to build off of what we have just witnessed so

1:51:34

far that no matter what you are going through in life and no matter what you may face remember that you are just

1:51:40

going through that season for a small period of time and James talks about that that your endurance is being built

1:51:46

that you are being built up to have the faith to be able to experience something and Lead something so that someone else

1:51:54

can come after you to do Greater Works and this is what this looks like this

1:51:59

panel and moderator and Association and student body of true excellence

1:52:06

and I do not want you to leave here feeling like you yourself are not excellent everyone in this room you have

1:52:12

the privilege of being here and you will continue to be a privilege and an honorable person to make and to exceed

1:52:18

expectations as you move forward in life so thank you to our panelists thank you to our moderator thank you to volsa

1:52:24

thank you I said it correctly I hope so um thank you to everyone for being here and

1:52:30

with that I say good night and I wish you all a safe journey back home thank you [Applause]

