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## THE VATICAN VIEW ON SPORT AT THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY

ED EDMONDS\*

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### INTRODUCTION

*Catholic social teaching is based on and inseparable from our understanding of human life and human dignity. Every human being is created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ, and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family.<sup>1</sup>*

*Sport is far more than a luxury or a form of entertainment. Access to and participation in sport is a human right and essential for individuals of all ages to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. Sport—from play and physical activity to organised competitive sport—has an important role in all societies. Sport is critical to a child’s development. It teaches core values such as co-operation and respect. It improves health and reduces the likelihood of disease. It is a significant economic force providing employment and contributing to local development.<sup>2</sup>*

The importance of play and sport to the flourishing of a human being and their place in promoting peace and community development have emerged in the twenty-first century as critical to the missions of the Catholic Church, the United Nations (UN), and the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Pope Francis appreciates that sport can be a powerful force for advancing the common good and serving human development.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Catholic Social Teaching*, U.S. CONF. OF CATH. BISHOPS, <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/index.cfm> (last visited Oct. 4, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> U.N. INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE ON SPORT FOR DEV. & PEACE, SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE: TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS 1 (2003), [https://www.sportanddev.org/sites/default/files/downloads/16\\_sport\\_for\\_dev\\_towards\\_millennium\\_goals.pdf](https://www.sportanddev.org/sites/default/files/downloads/16_sport_for_dev_towards_millennium_goals.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> See *infra* notes 12–15 and accompanying text.

This essay will discuss the 2016 Sport at the Service of Humanity Conference, the first global conference on faith and sport, which was held at the Vatican. It will place the conference within the larger context of sport's ability to advance the common good. Finally, it will profile the efforts of individuals with a connection to the University of Notre Dame, demonstrating how sport can successfully support human development and the common good.

## I. SPORT AT THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY CONFERENCE

On December 10, 2015, the Pontifical Council for Culture announced that the Vatican, with the support of the UN and the IOC, would host the first global conference on faith and sport, the Sport at the Service of Humanity Conference, on October 5 to 7, 2016.<sup>4</sup> The Council stated that “[t]he goal of the conference is to create a place where thought leaders from different religious faiths, sports, business, academia and media can discuss how faith and sport can work together to better serve humanity.”<sup>5</sup>

The Pontifical Council for Culture was an outgrowth of the Second Vatican Council and the decision by Pope Paul VI in 1965 to create a “Secretariat for Non-believers.”<sup>6</sup> Pope John Paul II established the Pontifical Council of Culture on May 20, 1982.<sup>7</sup> A department of Culture & Sport exists within the Pontifical Council for Culture, and it has adopted four major objectives:

1. Bring together the saving message of the Gospel and the world of sports, in order to open it up further to the Christian faith, which creates culture.
2. Encourage use of sport as an educational resource and tool for the cultural development of peoples.
3. Along with other offices of the Holy See in this sector, establish relationships with international sports bodies, and with Catholic sports associations.
4. Facilitate dialogue at the Church-University with sports people, sports centers and organizations, and promote meaningful encounters between these cultural worlds.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Press Release, Pontifical Council for Culture, Sport at the Service of Humanity Global Conference on Faith and Sport (Dec. 10, 2015), <http://www.cultura.va/content/cultura/en/press/sport.html>.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> *Profile*, PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR CULTURE, <http://www.cultura.va/content/cultura/en/organico/profilo.html> (last visited Oct. 6, 2017).

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> *The Department Culture & Sport*, PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR CULTURE, <http://www.cultura.va/content/cultura/en/dipartimenti/sport.html> (last visited Oct. 4, 2017).

To assist with the Sport at the Service of Humanity Conference, Allianz, the German global financial services company headquartered in Munich that provide services in over seventy countries, joined as a founding partner.<sup>9</sup> Because of its global reach and strong history of supporting sports including Formula One racing, golf, soccer/football, tennis, and swimming, Allianz was strongly positioned to assist the Pontifical Council for Culture in promoting its vision and mission.<sup>10</sup> Allianz CEO Oliver Bäte underscored the company's support when he declared that

[w]e are proud to partner with the Holy See's Pontifical Council for Culture to launch this movement . . . . It perfectly aligns with Allianz's desire to support those who choose to live life with courage. With the Sport at the Service of Humanity Conference, we will be laying the cornerstone of a global movement that builds bridges between people and helps transform lives.<sup>11</sup>

Pope Francis opened the Conference on October 5, 2016, in the Paul VI Auditorium, by declaring that "[s]port is a human activity of great value, able to enrich people's lives; it is enjoyed by men and women of every nation, ethnic group and religious belonging."<sup>12</sup> The Pope continued by underscoring an essential value of Catholic social teaching by noting that "[o]ur religious traditions share the commitment to ensure the respect for the dignity of every human being. So it is good to know that the world's sporting institutions have taken so courageously to heart the value of *inclusion*."<sup>13</sup> Pope Francis specifically acknowledged the Paralympics and the Special Olympics for enabling individuals with disabilities to experience the joy of athletic competition and pressed those in the audience to make sure that children in poverty not be denied the opportunity to participate in sports. Next, the Pontiff specifically singled out the founders of the Homeless Cup for their efforts to "offer the most disadvantaged a possibility of integral human development."<sup>14</sup> Pope Francis also challenged the assembly to ensure the purity of sport and to "fight against the cancer of corruption."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Press release, Allianz, Allianz Becomes Founding Partner of the Sport at the Service of Humanity Conference (July 14, 2016), [https://www.allianz.com.my/documents/144671/153079/Allianz\\_SE\\_Founding\\_Partner\\_of\\_Sports\\_at\\_Service\\_of\\_Humanity\\_Conference\\_20160714.pdf/06eb4831-6ede-496c-a0b7-3c1dba1d4144](https://www.allianz.com.my/documents/144671/153079/Allianz_SE_Founding_Partner_of_Sports_at_Service_of_Humanity_Conference_20160714.pdf/06eb4831-6ede-496c-a0b7-3c1dba1d4144); see also *About Us: Who We Are: At a Glance*, ALLIANZ, [https://www.allianz.com/en/about\\_us/who\\_we\\_are/at-a-glance/](https://www.allianz.com/en/about_us/who_we_are/at-a-glance/) (last visited Oct. 6, 2017); *Allianz Headquarters in Munich*, ALLIANZ, <https://www.allianz.com/en/careers/allianz-as-employer/locations-and-organizations/allianz-headquarters-in-munich/> (last visited Nov. 17, 2017).

<sup>10</sup> See *Allianz Sports and Culture Partnerships*, ALLIANZ, [https://www.allianz.com/en/about\\_us/sports-culture/partnerships/](https://www.allianz.com/en/about_us/sports-culture/partnerships/) (last visited Oct. 3, 2017).

<sup>11</sup> *Vatican to Host a "Sport at the Service of Humanity" Conference*, ZENIT (July 14, 2016), <https://zenit.org/articles/vatican-to-host-a-sport-at-the-service-of-humanity-conference/>.

<sup>12</sup> Pope Francis, Audience to the Participants of the First "Sport and Faith" Meeting (Oct. 5, 2016) (transcript translated from Italian to English available at <http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/it/bollettino/pubblico/2016/10/05/0709/01589.html>).

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* For additional information about the Homeless Cup, see HOMELESS WORLD CUP FOUND., <https://homelessworldcup.org/> (last visited Nov. 3, 2017).

<sup>15</sup> Pope Francis, *supra* note 12.

The Conference invited 200 individuals to participate in the proceedings. They were charged with embracing both a purpose—“[t]o unite people from every faith, nationality and culture through sport, in a common goal: To help the ones who need it most, especially the marginalized and the disadvantaged, and to encourage everyone to develop their life skills, character, values, and enjoyment of life itself, through sport,”<sup>16</sup> and a vision to establish “[a] global movement that inspires every organization and participant in Sport to live, think and act in accordance with the ‘Sport at the Service of Humanity Declaration of Principles.’”<sup>17</sup> The Declaration of Principles is based on six core elements—compassion, respect, love, enlightenment, balance, and joy.<sup>18</sup>

The Pope also focused on inclusion, inspiration, and involvement as the foundation of the event.<sup>19</sup> During the conference’s first day the delegates were divided into breakout groups of twenty-five to explore numerous issues involving the intersection of sport and human development.<sup>20</sup> The ultimate goal of the conference, however, was to galvanize the attendees into concrete development that matches the vision of the organizers. Bishop Paul Tighe, who delivered the closing address, Jan Aage Fjortoft, John Mara, and Richard Lapchick all echoed the charge to produce positive, integrated change that would require everyone to join together in a common effort.<sup>21</sup>

The Conference adopted a “Movement 5 Year Roadmap” that included a regional conference to spread the message of the movement and a second global conference in 2018.<sup>22</sup> Villanova University’s Office of Mission and Ministry and the Big East Conference<sup>23</sup> quickly responded by hosting Sport at the Service of Humanity: A Regional Conference on Faith and Collegiate Sports on June 7–8, 2017.<sup>24</sup> Big East Commissioner Val Ackerman, who attended the Vatican conference, provided the opening address by challenging more than 100 invited delegates from twenty-eight faith-based colleges and universities to explore how they could adopt the six core elements and the Declaration of Principles.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *The 2016 Conference*, SPORT AT THE SERV. OF HUMAN., <http://sportforhumanity.com/2016-conference/> (last visited Oct. 6, 2017).

<sup>17</sup> *Vision: Launching a Movement*, SPORT AT THE SERV. OF HUMAN., <http://sportforhumanity.com/vision/> (last visited Oct. 6, 2017).

<sup>18</sup> *See Declaration of Principles*, SPORT AT THE SERV. OF HUMAN., <http://sportforhumanity.com/declaration-of-principles/> (last visited Oct. 4, 2017).

<sup>19</sup> *See* Abraham D. Madkour, Opinion, *Inclusion, Inspiration, and Involvement: Sports as a Unifying Factor for Faith and Culture*, STREET & SMITH’S SPORTSBUSINESS J., Oct. 17–23, 2016, at 34.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

<sup>21</sup> *See id.* at 34–35.

<sup>22</sup> *2017 and Beyond: Growing the Movement*, SPORT AT THE SERV. OF HUMAN., <http://sportforhumanity.com/growing-the-movement/> (last visited Oct. 3, 2017).

<sup>23</sup> The Big East Conference was reorganized in 2013 after the departure of Division I football playing schools Cincinnati, Connecticut, Louisville, Notre Dame, Pittsburgh, Rutgers South Florida, and Syracuse. Nine of the ten members of the current Big East Conference, all except Butler University, are Catholic Universities, and these affiliations were a factor in the sponsorship of the Conference. *See About the Conference*, BIG EAST CONF., <https://www.bigeast.com/sports/2015/6/10/History.aspx?> (last visited Jan. 23, 2018).

<sup>24</sup> *Collegiate Working Group Formed*, VILL. UNIV., <https://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/mission/SSH.html> (last visited Oct. 6, 2017).

<sup>25</sup> *See* Val Ackerman, Comm’r of the Big East, A Vision for a Holistic [sic] Collegiate Athletics Experience (June 7, 2017) (transcript available at [https://www1.villanova.edu/content/dam/villanova/mission/mandm\\_assets/SportsandSpirituality/Ackerman.pdf](https://www1.villanova.edu/content/dam/villanova/mission/mandm_assets/SportsandSpirituality/Ackerman.pdf)); *A Regional Conference on Faith and Collegiate Sports*, VILL. UNIV., <https://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/mission/SSH/2017.html> (last visited Nov. 5, 2017). The author of

## II. SPORT AND THE COMMON GOOD

A fundamental component of Catholic social teaching is support for the common good. In considering the extent to which sport can contribute to the common good, it is well to consider a definition. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* provides a starting point: "In keeping with the social nature of man, the good of each individual is necessarily related to the common good, which in turn can be defined only in reference to the human person."<sup>26</sup> The *Catechism* continues by stressing that

[b]y common good is to be understood "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily." The common good concerns the life of all. It calls for prudence from each, and even more from those who exercise the office of authority. It consists of three essential elements:

First, the common good presupposes respect for the person as such. In the name of the common good, public authorities are bound to respect the fundamental and inalienable rights of the human person. Society should permit each of its members to fulfill his vocation. . . .

Second, the common good requires the social well-being and development of the group itself. Development is the epitome of all social duties. Certainly, it is the proper function of authority to arbitrate, in the name of the common good, between various particular interests; but it should make accessible to each what is needed to lead a truly human life: food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on.

Finally, the common good requires peace, that is, the stability and security of a just order.<sup>27</sup>

A fuller explanation of the Aristotelian and Thomistic underpinnings of the common good is beyond the scope of this essay. However, it might suffice to note David Hollenbach's observation that

One of Aristotle's most significant conclusions was that a good life is oriented to goods shared with others—the common good of the larger society of which one is a part. The good life of a single person and the quality of the common life persons

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this article was fortunate to be one of the four Notre Dame delegates at the Villanova Conference. The other three delegates were Fr. Jim Bracke, C.S.C., Staff Chaplain; Clark Power, Psychology Professor/Director, Play Like A Champion; and Claire VeNard, Assistant Athletics Director, Student Welfare & Development.

<sup>26</sup> VATICAN, CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH § 1905 (2003), [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_P6K.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P6K.HTM).

<sup>27</sup> *Id.* §§ 1906–1909 (footnotes omitted).

share with one another in society are linked. Thus the good of the individual and the common good are inseparable. In fact, the common good of the community should have primacy in setting direction for the lives of individuals, for it is a higher good than the particular goods of private persons.<sup>28</sup>

The interest of the organizers and participants in the Sport at the Service of Humanity Conference in establishing a movement supporting the use of sport as a vehicle for advancing human development incorporates the fundamental centrality of the common good in Catholic social teaching. Further, the partnership with the IOC and the UN points to a universality of purpose that places sport in a significant role in producing a more just and peaceful world order.

### III. INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

The alignment of the IOC and the Vatican on sport and human development is evident from reading the “Fundamental Principles of Olympism” that serve as a foundation for the Olympic Charter.<sup>29</sup> The initial principle—“Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind”<sup>30</sup>—establishes a shared interest with modern aspects of Catholic social teaching. The second goal of “plac[ing] sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity”<sup>31</sup> coincides with the Catholic values of promoting the dignity of all human beings and the furtherance of human flourishing and human development. The foundation for organizing the Conference on Sport at the Service of Humanity is supported by principle four, which declares that “[t]he practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practising sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.”<sup>32</sup>

### IV. UNITED NATIONS

The organizing influence behind the Sport at the Service of Humanity Conference also shares a common goal with numerous initiatives of the UN. The Office on Sport for Development and Peace supports the work of the Special

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<sup>28</sup> DAVID HOLLENBACH, S.J., *THE COMMON GOOD AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS* 3 (2002).

<sup>29</sup> See INT’L OLYMPIC COMM., *OLYMPIC CHARTER* 11–12 (Sept. 15, 2017), [https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/General/EN-Olympic-Charter.pdf#\\_ga=2.97615967.158767279.1506953115-1703731158.1504753359](https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/General/EN-Olympic-Charter.pdf#_ga=2.97615967.158767279.1506953115-1703731158.1504753359).

<sup>30</sup> *Id.* at 11.

<sup>31</sup> *Id.*

<sup>32</sup> *Id.*

Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace. The Special Adviser's role is "to reach out further to the world of sport and more systematically and coherently encourage the use of sport as a means to promote development and peace."<sup>33</sup> The efforts of the Special Adviser are guided by a mandate that identifies three specific roles of advocate, facilitator, and representative.<sup>34</sup>

The formal organizational component of the UN's efforts in this area is largely a twenty-first century phenomenon.<sup>35</sup> In February 2001, Adolf Ogi, the former President of Switzerland, was appointed as the first Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace.<sup>36</sup> In November 2001, the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace was established.<sup>37</sup>

Adolf Ogi was responsible for establishing the foundation for sport to formally join the larger UN effort for human development.<sup>38</sup> Thus, in February 2003, the first International Conference on Sport and Development was held in Magglingen, Switzerland, with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Federal Office of Sport, resulting in the publication of "[t]he Magglingen Declaration and Recommendations" representing the "first step in our commitment to create a better world through sport."<sup>39</sup> The efforts in Magglingen were strengthened later that year when the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace held the first "Next Step" Conference in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, where it presented its report, *Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*.<sup>40</sup> The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were the result of the UN Secretary-General's 2002 commissioning of the Millennium Project "to develop a concrete action plan for the world to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to reverse the grinding poverty, hunger and disease affecting billions of people."<sup>41</sup> The Project focused on eight goals.<sup>42</sup> Adolf Ogi and his successors launched an effort that established that "[s]port has

<sup>33</sup> *Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace*, U.N. OFFICE ON SPORT FOR DEV. & PEACE, <https://www.un.org/sport/content/about/special-advisor-un-secretary-general-sport-development-and-peace> (last visited Nov. 6, 2017).

<sup>34</sup> *Id.*

<sup>35</sup> See *Chronology*, U.N. OFFICE ON SPORT FOR DEV. & PEACE, <https://www.un.org/sport/content/chronology> (last visited Nov. 6, 2017).

<sup>36</sup> Press Release, Secretary-General, Secretary-General Appoints Adolf Ogi, Former President of Switzerland, Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace, U.N. Press Release SG/A/768 (Feb. 28, 2001) [hereinafter U.N. Press Release SG/A/768].

<sup>37</sup> See *Chronology*, U.N. OFFICE ON SPORT FOR DEV. & PEACE, <https://www.un.org/sport/content/chronology> (last visited Nov. 6, 2017).

<sup>38</sup> See U.N. Press Release SG/A/768, *supra* note 36.

<sup>39</sup> SPORT & DEV. INT'L CONF., THE MAGGLINGEN DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: CREATING A BETTER WORLD THROUGH SPORT (Sept. 18, 2003), [https://www.sportanddev.org/sites/default/files/downloads/18\\_the\\_magglingen\\_declaration.pdf](https://www.sportanddev.org/sites/default/files/downloads/18_the_magglingen_declaration.pdf).

<sup>40</sup> See U.N. INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE ON SPORT FOR DEV. & PEACE, *supra* note 2.

<sup>41</sup> *Background*, U.N. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkgd.shtml> (last visited Nov. 6, 2017).

<sup>42</sup> The eight Millennium Goals are: Goal 1: "Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger"; Goal 2: "Achieve universal primary education"; Goal 3: "Promote gender equality and empower women"; Goal 4: "Reduce child mortality"; Goal 5: "Improve maternal health"; Goal 6: "Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases"; Goal 7: "Ensure environmental sustainability"; and Goal 8: "Global partnership for development." See U.N. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> (last visited Jan. 9, 2017) [hereinafter MDGs].



proven to be a cost-effective and flexible tool in promoting peace and development objectives. Since the inception of the MDGs in 2000, sport has played a vital role in enhancing each of the eight goals.”<sup>43</sup> In 2015, the UN adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to create a fifteen-year plan to build upon achievements reached under the MDGs while targeting the need to address continuing challenges to the human community.<sup>44</sup> The Office declared that

based on the past success of Sport for Development and Peace activities and programmes across multiple sectors, sport will continue to advance global development assisting in the work towards, and the realization of, the SDGs. The United Nations envisages sport to do so as an important and powerful tool with the potential to tackle challenges entailed in each of the 17 SDGs.<sup>45</sup>

To further that effort, the Office adopted a specific policy statement in support of each of the seventeen SDGs. For instance, in support of goal three (“Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”), the Office adopted the following target: “[t]hrough sport, individuals can adopt active lifestyles that enhance well-being, health and prevent diseases, particularly noncommunicable diseases. Sport can be a successful tool for health education and awareness raising towards healthy lives, especially among hard-to-reach or vulnerable individuals and communities such as refugees.”<sup>46</sup>

The power of the use of sport to advance the common good and the MDGs and SDGs adopted by the UN is visible in the work of many throughout the world. To explore initiatives that underscore this power, the efforts of Notre Dame graduates Ruth Riley and Lindsay Brown and of former Notre Dame men’s soccer coach Bobby Clark and his son Tommy Clark will be highlighted.

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<sup>43</sup> *Sport and Sustainable Development Goals*, U.N. OFFICE ON SPORT FOR DEV. & PEACE, <https://www.un.org/sport/content/why-sport/sport-and-sustainable-development-goals> (last visited Oct. 6, 2017) [hereinafter *SDGs*].

<sup>44</sup> The seventeen Sustainable Development Goals are: Goal 1: “End poverty in all its forms everywhere”; Goal 2: “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”; Goal 3: “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”; Goal 4: “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”; Goal 5: “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”; Goal 6: “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”; Goal 7: “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all”; Goal 8: “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”; Goal 9: “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”; Goal 10: “Reduce inequality within and among countries”; Goal 11: “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable”; Goal 12: “Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns”; Goal 13: “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts”; Goal 14: “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development”; Goal 15: “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”; Goal 16: “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”; and Goal 17: “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.” *Id.*

<sup>45</sup> *Id.*

<sup>46</sup> *Id.*

## V. RUTH RILEY: FROM RURAL INDIANA TO A GLOBAL STAGE

Ruth Riley was born in Ransom, Kansas, but grew up primarily in Macy, Indiana.<sup>47</sup> Ruth's mother Sharon worked as a waitress and at factory jobs while also styling hair in the family's home.<sup>48</sup> Ruth and her two siblings, Rachel and Jacob, qualified for free and reduced lunch programs while attending schools, and that experience established the motive for her later involvement in Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry program.<sup>49</sup>

After a standout four years playing basketball at North Miami High School in Denver, Indiana, Riley accepted a scholarship to play at the University of Notre Dame.<sup>50</sup> During Riley's senior season, she led her team to the 2001 Women's NCAA Basketball Championship, earning the Most Outstanding Player of Final Four Award.<sup>51</sup> She was named Naismith Women's College Player of the Year and graduated *magna cum laude* with a bachelor's degree in psychology.<sup>52</sup>

Ruth Riley's post-intercollegiate career was similarly spectacular. She played for the 2003 and 2006 WNBA champion Detroit Shock while being selected as the WNBA Finals MVP in 2003.<sup>53</sup> Riley concluded her thirteen-year WNBA career in 2013 by retiring from the Atlanta Dream, after also having played for the Miami Sol, San Antonio Silver Stars, and the Chicago Sky.<sup>54</sup> She also played for teams in the National Women's Basketball League, the Greek League, the Polish League, and the Spanish League.<sup>55</sup> Riley earned a gold medal as a member of the United States basketball team in 2004.<sup>56</sup> After the conclusion of her career she returned to Notre Dame, where she earned an Executive

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<sup>47</sup> Mike Fletcher, *Circus City Parade Draws Huge Crowd*, KOKOMO TRIB. (July 20, 2015), [http://www.kokomotribune.com/news/circus-city-parade-draws-huge-crowd/article\\_ef1fad54-2d7b-11e5-bc44-cf91b7eac1a3.html](http://www.kokomotribune.com/news/circus-city-parade-draws-huge-crowd/article_ef1fad54-2d7b-11e5-bc44-cf91b7eac1a3.html).

<sup>48</sup> Karen Croake Heisler, *Ruth Riley: From Pro Athlete to Humanitarian*, in UNIV. OF NOTRE DAME ATHLETICS DEPT., *STRONG OF HEART: PROFILES OF NOTRE DAME ATHLETICS* 93, 93 (2014).

<sup>49</sup> *Id.* at 93–94.

<sup>50</sup> Chris Masters, *From The Hardwood: A Champion Says Goodbye*, UND.COM (June 18, 2014), <http://www.und.com/sports/w-baskbl/spec-rel/061814aaa.html>.

<sup>51</sup> *Ruth Riley*, UND.COM, [http://www.und.com/sports/w-baskbl/mtt/ruth\\_riley\\_11663.html](http://www.und.com/sports/w-baskbl/mtt/ruth_riley_11663.html) (last visited Oct. 4, 2017).

<sup>52</sup> *Id.* (Riley's biography lists her degree as one in psychology and sociology although most sources list the bachelor's degree as one in psychology); see, e.g., Beau Wicker, *Ruth Riley Retires After 13 Seasons in WNBA*, PHAROS TRIB. (June 19, 2014), [http://www.pharostribune.com/sports/local\\_sports/article\\_642cfba4-4eba-5c04-bb82-ea9ed749c034.html](http://www.pharostribune.com/sports/local_sports/article_642cfba4-4eba-5c04-bb82-ea9ed749c034.html).

<sup>53</sup> *Former Irish All-American Ruth Riley Named WNBA Finals MVP As Detroit Wins First League Title*, UND.COM (Sept. 16, 2003), <http://www.und.com/sports/w-baskbl/spec-rel/091603aaa.html>.

<sup>54</sup> *Ruth Riley WNBA Stats*, BASKETBALL-REFERENCE.COM, <https://www.basketball-reference.com/wnba/players/r/rileyr01w.html> (last visited Oct. 4, 2017).

<sup>55</sup> Heisler, *supra* note 48, at 96; Wicker, *supra* note 52.

<sup>56</sup> *Ruth Riley and Team USA Take Olympic Gold With 74–63 Win over Australia*, UND.COM (Aug. 28, 2004), <http://www.und.com/sports/w-baskbl/spec-rel/082804aab.html>.

M.B.A. in 2016.<sup>57</sup> In April 2016 Riley was hired as General Manager of the San Antonio Stars, and she served in that role for one season.<sup>58</sup>

Early in Riley's WNBA career, she became involved in NBA Cares, "the league's global social responsibility program that builds on the NBA's mission of addressing important social issues."<sup>59</sup> Although her early efforts focused on the Miami and Detroit communities, that changed in 2006 when she was chosen to serve as a league representative at a Global AIDS awareness event held in Nairobi, Kenya.<sup>60</sup> Reflecting on this transformative experience, Riley recalled that,

[w]hat I learned about AIDS paralyzed me . . . . These women basically had no rights. It was very hard for me since I was raised by an incredibly strong single mother. Here were these women fighting to save their lives and the lives of their children. I looked in their eyes and they reminded me of my mom. The trip truly enlightened me.<sup>61</sup>

Riley's experience in Africa led her to lend support to Basketball Without Borders, "the NBA and FIBA's global basketball development and community outreach program."<sup>62</sup> She has traveled to Africa numerous times to participate in clinics and camps.<sup>63</sup> Her connection to causes in Africa also includes working for Nothing But Nets, the UN Foundation's initiative focusing on eradicating malaria.<sup>64</sup> The primary goals of Nothing But Nets are raising money to send bed nets to families in Africa to provide protection from malaria-carrying mosquitos, improving methods to diagnose and treat the disease, and training health workers to combat malaria.<sup>65</sup> Reflecting on that experience, Riley commented that "[f]or me it was just powerful to go and deliver nets to Nigeria and

<sup>57</sup> Carol Elliott, *Former WNBA Star and Olympic Gold Winner Recognized As One of 30 Influential Leaders*, UNIV. OF NOTRE DAME (Sept. 19, 2016), <https://mendoza.nd.edu/ideas-news/news/ruth-riley-honored-for-leadership-and-service/>.

<sup>58</sup> *Stars Announce Head Coach Dan Hughes Will Step Down After 2016 Season, Name Ruth Riley GM*, WNBA.COM (Apr. 20, 2016), <http://www.wnba.com/news/san-antonio-stars-announce-dan-hughes-succession-plan/>. See Ben Dull, *Bill Laimbeer New Stars Coach/GM, Katie Smith to Coach Liberty*, SUMMIT HOOPS (Oct. 13, 2017), <https://summitthoops.com/2017/10/13/bill-laimbeer-head-coachgm-las-vegas-stars/>.

<sup>59</sup> *Mission*, NBA CARES, <http://cares.nba.com/mission/> (last visited Oct. 4, 2017); Hiesler, *supra* note 48, at 95.

<sup>60</sup> Hiesler, *supra* note 48, at 95.

<sup>61</sup> *Id.*

<sup>62</sup> *Basketball Without Borders*, GLOBAL NBA, <http://global.nba.com/basketball-without-borders/> (last visited Oct. 4, 2017); Ruth Riley, *Other Former WNBA Players in Africa for Basketball Without Borders*, WNBA.COM (July 30, 2015), <http://www.wnba.com/news/ruth-riley-other-former-wnba-players-in-africa-for-basketball-without-borders/>.

<sup>63</sup> See, e.g., Aliko Carter, *NBA Players And Nike Push Basketball Without Borders Global Camp To Next Level*, FORBES (Feb. 9, 2017, 12:27 PM), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alikocarter/2017/02/09/nba-players-and-nike-push-basketball-without-borders-global-camp-to-next-level/#19702eb27333>; Ruth Riley, *Other Former WNBA Players in Africa For Basketball Without Borders*, *supra* note 62.

<sup>64</sup> Cailean Geary, *Ruth Riley to Speak at Notre Dame*, UNIV. OF NOTRE DAME OFF. OF PUB. AFFAIRS & COMMS. (Apr. 1, 2014), <https://news.nd.edu/news/ruth-riley-to-speak-at-notre-dame/>.

<sup>65</sup> *About Us*, NOTHING BUT NETS, <https://nothingbutnets.net/about/> (last visited Oct. 4, 2017).

Angola . . . Something that costs so little was actually saving lives and so it's been incredible to be a part of that campaign."<sup>66</sup>

Riley joined with Sarah Kate Noftsinger, who played soccer at Wake Forest, and Katherine Wald, a psychotherapist from Miami, Florida, to create Inspire Transformation (IT).<sup>67</sup> In responding to the efforts of IT, Riley specifically mentioned the UN Millennium Developments Goals:

Whether it is poverty, hunger, disease, or education, the key to solving most of the Millennium Development Goals set forth by the U.N. is to focus on teenage girls . . . Women need to be educated and empowered. They are the ones who effectively use microfinance opportunities to reinvest back in their community. They are the ones who are responsible for the health of their communities.<sup>68</sup>

Riley's work on AIDS and malaria directly correlates to Goal 6 of the MDGs, while Goal 3 is to "promote gender equality and empower women."<sup>69</sup> SDG Goal 5 is to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls."<sup>70</sup> Positive strides in gender equality for girls and women in the United States are often tied to the passage of Title IX in 1972.<sup>71</sup> However, as pointed out by the United States Department of Justice in its 2012 report *Equal Access to Education: Forty Years of Title IX*, there is still work to be done to improve educational attainment:

Over the past four decades, the Department of Justice's work to enforce Title IX and other laws prohibiting sex discrimination in education, including its work in partnership with the Department of Education, has significantly advanced educational equity. However, despite the gains achieved in the last forty years, inequalities in education persist. The Department of Justice remains committed to pursuing the goal of equality in education through its continued enforcement of Title IX and other federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination based on sex.<sup>72</sup>

As noted in the same report, "Title IX has also vastly expanded women's access to athletic programs. For example, from 1972 to 2011, female participation in high school sports rose dramatically . . . Women enjoyed similar gains at the

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<sup>66</sup> Keisha Katz, *Ruth Riley: Paying It Forward*, REAL GOOD SPORTS (Mar. 5, 2015), <http://www.realgoodsports.com/ruth-riley-paying-it-forward/>.

<sup>67</sup> *Behind IT*, INSPIRE TRANSFORMATION, <https://www.inspire-transformation.org/behind-it/> (last visited Nov. 2, 2017).

<sup>68</sup> Heisler, *supra* note 48, at 96–97.

<sup>69</sup> See MDGs, *supra* note 42.

<sup>70</sup> SDGs, *supra* note 43.

<sup>71</sup> 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681–88 (2012). Title IX may be called the "Patsy Takemoto Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act." See Pub. L. No. 107–255, 116 Stat. 1734 (2002).

<sup>72</sup> U.S. DEPT. OF JUST., EQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION: FORTY YEARS OF TITLE IX 1 (June 23, 2012), <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/crt/legacy/2012/06/20/titleixreport.pdf>.

college level.”<sup>73</sup> However, in many developing countries around the world, discrimination in education and athletic participation for females is substantial and undermines human development, flourishing, and dignity.

Riley’s childhood experience has also translated into her work for the Share Our Strength’s No Kid Hungry, where she currently serves as a member of the No Kid Hungry Leadership Council.<sup>74</sup> Triggered by the 1984–1985 famine in Ethiopia, Bill and Debbie Shore launched Share Our Strength in 1984.<sup>75</sup> The organization currently focuses on child hunger issues in the United States, where their mission focuses on the improving the conditions for the one in six American children who live without sufficient food.<sup>76</sup>

Concern for hunger aligns with the UN’s MDG Goal 1 (eradicate extreme poverty & hunger) and SDG Goal 2 (end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture).<sup>77</sup> Malnutrition and hunger are particularly problematic for young children during their early developmental stages. The World Health Organization claims that around 104 million children worldwide were underweight or malnourished in 2010, and that “undernutrition contributes to about one third of all child deaths.”<sup>78</sup> There is also a significant problem on the other side of the weight issues where “about 1.5 billion people are overweight worldwide, of whom 500 million are obese, in 2008 figures.”<sup>79</sup> This issue creates serious concerns due to the connection to cancer, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes.<sup>80</sup> Athletic participation is often listed as part of the solution to obesity as many countries try to combat the sedentary lifestyles of their population.

## VI. LINDSAY BROWN: FROM NATIONAL CHAMPION TO WORLDWIDE IMPACT

Lindsay Brown was a member of the 2010 Notre Dame Women’s Soccer national championship team that claimed victory in the Women’s College Cup with a 1-0 victory over Stanford.<sup>81</sup> During the season the team raised money to send three girls to school in Nepal by selling special tie-dye cupcakes.<sup>82</sup> During the summer of 2011, Brown journeyed to Surkhet, Nepal, to coach the first

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<sup>73</sup> *Id.* at 3.

<sup>74</sup> *Staff & Board*, NO KID HUNGRY, <https://www.nokidhungry.org/about-us/staff-and-board> (last visited Oct. 4, 2017).

<sup>75</sup> *About Us*, NO KID HUNGRY, <https://www.nokidhungry.org/about-us> (last visited Oct. 4, 2017).

<sup>76</sup> *Id.*

<sup>77</sup> See *supra* notes 42, 43.

<sup>78</sup> *Nutrition: Challenges*, WORLD HEALTH ORG., <http://www.who.int/nutrition/challenges/en/> (last visited Oct. 4, 2017).

<sup>79</sup> *Id.*

<sup>80</sup> *Id.*

<sup>81</sup> *Leon Lifts #7/10 Notre Dame to NCAA Title in 1–0 Win over #1/1 Stanford*, UND.COM (Dec. 5, 2010), <http://www.und.com/sports/w-soccer/recaps/120510aaa.html>; *Lindsay Brown Wins 2012 Seventeen Pretty Amazing Contest*, UND.COM (Sept. 5, 2012), <http://www.und.com/sports/w-soccer/spec-rel/090512aab.html> (stating that “[f]ormer Notre Dame women’s soccer player Lindsay Brown . . . won a national championship on the field with the Fighting Irish in 2010.”).

<sup>82</sup> *About Us*, SEGWAY PROJECT, [http://www.segwayproject.org/about\\_us](http://www.segwayproject.org/about_us) (last visited Nov. 19, 2017).

soccer team ever created for girls at the Kopila Valley School.<sup>83</sup> Because these young girls had never experienced an opportunity to play a game reserved in their culture for only boys and men, the young girls were initially reluctant to play and their parents were not supportive.<sup>84</sup> While in Nepal, Lindsay “witnessed the transformative role soccer could play in a girl’s life.”<sup>85</sup> After returning to the United States, Brown decided to establish the non-profit SEGway Project—“Soccer Empowering Girls Worldwide & You.”<sup>86</sup> At the core of the project’s mission is to connect soccer players in the United States with girls worldwide while reducing gender barriers through sports participation and to create more confident and self-reliant young women.<sup>87</sup> Lindsay Brown’s efforts helped her win *Seventeen Magazine*’s 2012 “Pretty Amazing” contest.<sup>88</sup>

Similar to the efforts of Ruth Riley, Brown’s efforts align nicely with both the MDGs and SDGs. They also promote the efforts that underscore sport and the common good and the goals of the Vatican’s Sport at the Service of Humanity.

## VII. BOBBY AND TOMMY CLARK: GRASSROOT SOCCER

It was 1983 and Bobby Clark, who would later serve as Notre Dame’s men’s soccer coach from 2001–2017,<sup>89</sup> was completing his seventeen-year playing career in the Scottish Premier League for the Aberdeen Football Club.<sup>90</sup> As Clark considered the next phase of his life, he was presented with an interesting opportunity to coach the Highlanders FC professional team in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.<sup>91</sup> Clark, his wife, Bette, and three children, Tommy, Jennifer, and Jamie, headed to Africa, and Clark discovered a passion for coaching and teaching soccer.<sup>92</sup> The experience would ultimately lead to a life-changing initiative for the family and the residents of many developing countries around the world.

After a year in Africa, Bobby Clark and his family would head to the United States, where Clark began his collegiate coaching career at Dartmouth College, where his teams captured three Ivy League titles.<sup>93</sup> After a stint as the coach of the New Zealand National Team, Clark returned to the collegiate ranks as Stanford’s coach before moving to Notre Dame in 2001.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> *Id.*

<sup>84</sup> *Id.*

<sup>85</sup> *Id.*

<sup>86</sup> *See id.*; SEGWAY PROJECT, <http://www.segwayproject.org/> (last visited Jan. 9, 2018).

<sup>87</sup> *See About Us*, *supra* note 82.

<sup>88</sup> *Lindsay Brown Wins 2012 Seventeen Pretty Amazing Contest*, *supra* note 81.

<sup>89</sup> *See Bobby Clark Announces Retirement After 17 Seasons As Notre Dame Men’s Soccer Coach*, UND.COM (Nov. 28, 2017), <http://www.und.com/sports/m-soccer/spec-rel/112817aao.html>.

<sup>90</sup> Bobby Clark, *Grassroot Soccer: A Different Irish Soccer Holiday*, in UNIV. OF NOTRE DAME ATHLETICS DEPT., STRONG OF HEART: PROFILES OF NOTRE DAME ATHLETICS 25 (2014).

<sup>91</sup> *Id.*

<sup>92</sup> *Id.* at 26; Bobby Clark, UND.COM, [http://www.und.com/sports/m-soccer/mtt/bobby\\_clark\\_973007.html](http://www.und.com/sports/m-soccer/mtt/bobby_clark_973007.html) (last visited Oct. 5, 2017).

<sup>93</sup> *Bobby Clark*, *supra* note 92.

<sup>94</sup> *Id.*

Tommy Clark played midfield for Dartmouth and graduated in 1992 before pursuing a professional playing career that allowed him to return to Zimbabwe, as well as to play in New Zealand and Scotland.<sup>95</sup> On returning to Africa, Tommy discovered that many of his friends and acquaintances had died from human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).<sup>96</sup> Tommy returned to Dartmouth to attend medical school and accepted a pediatric residency at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Benjamin Hoffman, the residency director, wanted his residents to become involved in projects targeting communities underserved by the health care industry.<sup>97</sup> Although Hoffman's primary goal was local projects, he was intrigued by Tommy's interest in an HIV/AIDS education program in Zimbabwe with the powerful attraction of soccer at the core of the effort.<sup>98</sup>

With the help of co-founders Kirk Friedrich and Ethan Zohn, Tommy Clark created Grassroot Soccer, "an adolescent health organization that leverages the power of soccer to educate, inspire, and mobilize youth in developing countries to overcome their greatest health challenges, live healthier, more productive lives, and be agents for change in their communities."<sup>99</sup> Using a curriculum modeled on Albert Bandura's social learning theory, soccer players-turned-educators discuss HIV with children.<sup>100</sup> As expressed by Bobby Clark, "[s]occer is the carrot that attracts the young boys and girls, and then there is the curriculum which teaches them how to avoid becoming infected, spreading the disease, and, if they are infected, how to live with it. It also discusses dealing with the social stigma."<sup>101</sup> In 2014, Bobby Clark took his Notre Dame team to Zimbabwe to see firsthand how the charity that they support is merging HIV education with their sport.<sup>102</sup>

Grassroot Soccer has expanded throughout Africa and beyond. It has partnered with the Peace Corps to increase its coverage beyond HIV education to include programs on gender and sexuality, malaria, and financial literacy.<sup>103</sup> As with Ruth Riley and Lindsay Brown, the Clarks are using the power of sport to advance the common good and to advance the UN's MDGs and SDGs.

## CONCLUSION

The Sport at the Service of Humanity Conference provided a strong framework for the advancement of sport in the furtherance of the common good.

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<sup>95</sup> Laura Stephenson Carter, *Thomas Clark, M.D., '01: On the Offensive*, DARTMOUTH MED. 64 (Winter 2004), [http://dartmed.dartmouth.edu/winter04/pdf/alumni\\_album.pdf](http://dartmed.dartmouth.edu/winter04/pdf/alumni_album.pdf).

<sup>96</sup> Clark, *supra* note 90, at 26.

<sup>97</sup> Carter, *supra* note 95, at 64.

<sup>98</sup> *Id.*

<sup>99</sup> *Overview: Our Mission*, GRASSROOT SOCCER, <https://www.grassrootsoccer.org/founder-and-leadership-staff/> (last visited Oct. 5, 2017).

<sup>100</sup> Carter, *supra* note 95, at 65.

<sup>101</sup> Clark, *supra* note 90, at 27.

<sup>102</sup> *Id.* at 25, 27.

<sup>103</sup> *Peace Corps Partnership*, GRASSROOT SOCCER, <https://www.grassrootsoccer.org/global-map/#peace-corps-partnership> (last visited Oct. 5, 2017).

The delegates were charged with taking the message back to their home countries and organizations to rally support for following Pope Francis in merging sport with human development. These efforts align strongly with the deep and rich history of Catholic social teaching to build a more peaceful and productive world order. The hope of many attendees was that the Conference would be the catalyst for positive and constructive global action in support of the Declaration of Principles. This is the challenge: to dedicate everyone's efforts to work in the Lord's vineyard.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> See *Matthew* 20:1–16.