

WE PLAY TOO

Girls and Women in Sports Leadership Conference

May 4 | 12 – 3 pm



The We Play Too: Girls and Women in Sports Leadership Conference focuses on the positive influence sports have on girls' and women's lives by driving home the message of playing to your strengths both on and off the field, resiliency in the face of adversity and gaining leadership skills throughout the journey.

The goal of the conference is to give each participant empowering tools to take back with them to their field of play and in their everyday lives. The conference features three sessions with knowledgeable leaders speaking

on various aspects of sport. These interactive sessions focus on the tools needed for success in developing the female leaders of tomorrow.

This event provides participants with a chance to learn from industry leaders and gain new knowledge and understanding of sport. Participants will learn how to inspire themselves and those around them and they will leave equipped with the resources that will help them in their journeys as athletes and beyond.

AGENDA

Time	Event
12 - 1 pm	Registration, Sports Demonstrations and Try-It Sessions
1 pm	<p>Welcome and Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harkirat Singh, Deputy Mayor; City Councillor, Wards 9 & 10 • Rowena Santos, Regional Councillor, Wards 1 & 5, Brampton Women Empowerment Network • Navjit Kaur Brar, Regional Councillor, Wards 2 & 6, Brampton Women Empowerment Network
1:15 - 2:45 pm	<p>Keynote Speakers and Activities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Melanie Bradley: I Am More Than My Sport 2. Alessia Franco: Empowering Females Through Sports: Leadership, Community and Belonging 3. Simi Olatunji: Mental Game: Overcoming Adversity
2:45 - 3 pm	Girls Chat - Panel Discussion/Q&A
3 pm	Nutrition Break - Free Pizza Sponsored by 

MEET OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Melanie Bradley

*Executive Director,
Oakville Futsal Club*

I Am More Than My Sport

Melanie Bradley is an advocate for accessibility, equity and diversity in sports. With over a decade of experience working in soccer operations, she has used her passion to remove barriers in soccer to design various programs.

In 2021, Melanie joined Ontario Soccer's Anti-Racism, Access and Equity Committee (ARAEC), dedicated to reducing racial and gender inequities, as well as making soccer more accessible for marginalized groups.

In her role as former Executive Director at Brams United SC and an advocate for mental health and promoting mental wellness for athletes, Melanie and Brams United were innovators and collaborators, offering an annual virtual event in partnership with various organizations, with attendees of up to 500 athletes nationwide. As a multi-sport athlete, coach and now operational leader, Melanie envisions a safe place for everyone to enjoy the sport they love.



Alessia Franco

*Program Specialist,
Jays Care Foundation*

Empowering Females Through Sports Leadership, Community and Belonging

Alessia is a dedicated Program Specialist at the Jays Care Foundation, where she channels her passion for community development and youth empowerment into creating impactful summer programs. Her journey in this field began at the University of Toronto, where she earned her bachelor's degree in criminology and sociology. Driven by a desire to understand and improve youth dynamics, she pursued a master's degree at Western University, focusing on transformative research in this area.

Throughout her academic journey and beyond, Alessia has been deeply involved in supporting youth and communities. Within Jays Care, she has taken on various roles within the summer camp programs, utilizing her expertise to create inclusive environments where all athletes can thrive. Additionally, she volunteers as a proud Challenger Baseball volunteer for the High Park League in Toronto, where she supports athletes with physical and cognitive disabilities, furthering her commitment to equity and accessibility in sports.

Currently, as a Program Specialist in the RBI Summer Camp program at Jays Care, Alessia is excited to leverage her skills and experiences to design engaging and inclusive programs that foster community, equity, and belonging for all participants. With a strong dedication to leveling the playing field for athletes of all backgrounds, Alessia continues to make a meaningful impact in the lives of youth and communities through her work at Jays Care.



Simi Olatunji

*Manager of Office
Administration, Toronto
Argonauts*

Mental Game: Overcoming Adversity

Simi Olatunji, a Nigerian Canadian with over ten years of experience in the sports industry, currently serves as the Manager of Office Administration for the Toronto Argonauts, while also providing support to the Team Operations department. With previous roles at Toronto FC and FIFA in Qatar during the last Men's World Cup, she is honing her expertise in all things operations.

She completed her undergraduate studies at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU), formerly Ryerson University – and graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce and a minor in Public Relations. Furthermore, she pursued a post-graduate program at George Brown College in sports and event marketing.

Currently, she is working on her Master of Business Administration at TMU with a focus on sports and business where she is the VP of Operations for the MBA Sports Leadership Association.

Guided Questions from Melanie

Use your notepad if you need more space!

- Q1.** Describe your motivations and passions without using your sport(s):

- Q2.** Name two interpersonal and two intrapersonal skillsets that you hold:

- Q3.** List your top 3 values (core beliefs):

- Q4.** If there were no barriers and money was not a factor, where do you see yourself in the future? (*Describe yourself in 5 years. Describe yourself in 10 years. I.e., travelling the world or volunteering with an organization that means a lot to you.*)

Guided Questions from Alessia

- Q1.** What are some specific examples of how sports have been used as a tool for positive change in various communities?

- Q2.** Provide examples of how team sports foster teamwork, communication, and decision-making skills:

- Q3.** How does leadership development connect to long-term personal and community success?

- Q4.** How can building confidence through sports translate into success in other areas of life?

Guided Questions from Simi

- Q1** Can you share a time when you faced a significant challenge or setback in your life and how you overcome it?

- Q2** How do you think the mental challenges of being an athlete translate to the professional world, particularly within the sports industry?

- Q3.** How do you maintain a positive mindset and stay resilient in the face of criticism, setbacks or external pressures?

- Q4.** How can we cultivate a culture of resilience and support within the sports community to empower women and girls to pursue their goals fearlessly?

GAME ON BRAMPTON!

Follow the City's official Parks and Recreation social media accounts to stay informed on exciting initiatives, events, programs and more!

