



Title IX: A Personal Journey

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May, 2012

I have directly and indirectly benefited from Title IX throughout my entire life. At the scholastic and collegiate levels, I was able to participate in women's lacrosse because of Title IX, the 40th anniversary of which is commemorated on pages 40-45 in this edition of *Lacrosse Magazine*.

I had the good fortune to be part of the first women's lacrosse team at the University of Connecticut with Bonnie Rosen at the helm. Call it being at the right place at the right time, but the players who came up from the club program fought hard for a varsity team, something that would have been impossible to do without the weight of that important federal law.

Title IX is about opportunity. It is part of a broader body of important laws that are not all about sports – they can apply in a chemistry lab or on a lacrosse field. The opportunity Title IX presented me cannot be quantified. I learned that I am physically stronger and tougher than I ever knew. That I may not like all my teammates, but we still have to work together toward a common goal and leave our differences aside. That being a good coach has a lot more to do with who you are as a person and how you treat your players than it has to do with wins and losses. That the balance between work, life, school and recreation is hard to find, but so rewarding when you find it.

Being part of a collegiate program shaped how I see the world, sports and myself. Title IX has contributed largely to the explosion of sports as an industry at all levels, therefore affording many opportunities not just to women, but to everyone.

I didn't realize how much Title IX was a part of my life until doing graduate work that focused on the legislation. It forced me to examine my own experience, mentors, friends and family in a world of women seeking opportunity. My mom had three career choices: nurse, teacher or secretary. She chose to teach and then had to hide a few pregnancies to keep her job. This was not that long ago.

The pre-Title IX stories and history are so important to understanding where we have come from, why certain policies are in place and where we want to go as a society. I love hearing the stories of battles women (and men) have fought to ensure equal opportunity to participate in the things we love. It is so important to share these stories with young women so they don't take them for granted. They should know that college coaches used to do the teams' laundry, schedule 11 p.m. practices just to get court time and purchased vans to drive their teams around when they were not family vehicles.



There are so many pioneers of the cause of women's equality in all realms of life. I challenge all of the young readers to find a coach, teacher or administrator and ask her (or him) to share a pre-Title IX story with you. It will sure shine a light on your experience.

Student of the Game?

As officials move into the summer tournament season, we need to be equal parts stewards and students of the game.

A student of the game cares about details – there are a lot of rules, exceptions and setups in women's lacrosse – and studies the new rulebooks and manuals each year. She sees herself as a constant work in progress, striving for perfection. She sets goals and fine-tunes her skills in the core areas of officiating – judgment, calls, mechanics, communication and game management.

She watches film of herself and great officials to mimic and asks partners for feedback. She sees the value of traveling to different areas to attend clinics or work with different officials as opportunities for professional growth.

While this is a part-time endeavor for most officials, it is nevertheless a profession. Treat your game with the same care and concern you afford your full-time profession. No matter what your day job is, being a great official will give you skills you can apply throughout your life.

Are you a student of the game?

A Real Chick Flick

My favorite movie related to Title IX is called "[Kick Like a Girl](#)." An HBO documentary released in 2008, the film provides a poignant look at gender roles and expectations placed on young athletes more than 30 years after Title IX. There's still a lot of work to be done, and it starts in youth sport. You will laugh and cry. I guarantee it.

Go Cheetahs!