



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

NEWS RELEASE

NFHS to Hold Second Annual Virtual National Student Leadership Summit in August

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Elliot Hopkins

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (June 1, 2021) — For the second straight year, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) will host world-renowned leadership experts for the NFHS Virtual National Student Leadership Summit (NSLS). The 2021 virtual conference will be broadcast August 8-10 on the NFHS Network (www.NFHSNetwork.com) and will be the 14th national student leadership initiative sponsored by the NFHS since 2001.

Originally, the NFHS' summer plans included both the virtual version of the summit and the return of the in-person NSLS after a one-year hiatus. However, extended sports and activities calendars in some states and lingering COVID-19 concerns significantly impacted the number of in-person registrants and led to a cancellation earlier this month. As a result, all efforts have been focused on the virtual event experience with the goal of eclipsing last year's three-day total of 22,000 student viewers.

Though a live gathering in Indianapolis would have been ideal, hosting the summit in a virtual setting provides free access to leadership instruction for thousands of students across the country who can then apply their newfound techniques in their schools and communities. The increased reach will also enrich students' ability to build relationships with one another, as summit attendees will once

again have the opportunity to interact on the BAND group communication app. Last year, the BAND app served as a conduit to the formation of several subgroups on other social media platforms.

"We have been affected by COVID-19 again for another year, but we are not going to let it affect our mission and purpose to our nation's young student leaders who are interested in being better leaders in their schools and on their athletic teams and performing arts activities," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS director of sports, sanctioning and student services and coordinator of the National Student Leadership Summit. "We want to better prepare our attendees with the tools and skills to make changes and show leadership ability. Our young people are ready for this post-pandemic challenge, and we are proud to provide them the training and guidance to set them up for success."

Ivy Watts, a new addition to the talented lineup of NSLS speakers, will be featured in the opening general session. Watts is a dedicated advocate for mental wellness and strives to reduce stigmas surrounding mental illness, and has empowered more than 10,000 students, parents and administrators across the country through her public speaking circuit, Ivy Watts Speaks. Watts has also recently developed Athletes' Minds Matter, an all-in-one mental health platform for student-athletes designed to develop their mental wellness toolkit for success on and off the field.

Bookending the summit as the closing general session speaker is **Julie Carrier**, a global authority on authentic confidence and leadership development for women, young women and girls. Carrier has authored award-winning books including the No. 1 national bestseller "Girls Lead," and as CEO of Girls Lead Worldwide, is leading a movement to "empower those who empower girls and empower girls to empower each other." Recognized as the "#1 Coach for Young Women in the World" by Marshall Goldsmith and the Leading Global Coaches Awards, Carrier utilizes her applied neuroscience in leadership education background to provide stimulating keynotes, seminars, curricula, and best-practice program consulting.

"As an education-based organization, (the NFHS) takes special interests in the speakers we place in front of our young leaders," Hopkins said. "We feel that Ivy Watts and Julie Carrier are two of the premier speakers of our time with messages that resonate with our student and adult leaders. These women are extremely gifted, and they see the value in our high school students. They want to empower our attendees with confidence, self-reliance and determination, and they know they can make the world a better place by providing these young leaders with the right skills."

In between Watts and Carrier, the expanded schedule for the 2021 summit includes seven workshops – almost double the number of sessions from a year ago. Each day of the virtual NSLS will begin with highlights from past summits at 12:45 p.m. EDT and will close at 3:00 p.m. after the final workshop session.

Omari Pearson, an author, speaker, facilitator, mentor and consultant, will speak on “Brain Mapping (Goal Setting in the 21st Century)” during the first NSLS workshop at 1:50 p.m., Sunday, August 8. Pearson is the president and founder of Passion To Purpose, LLC, an education-based life skills company that equips young people with the necessary knowledge, skills and tools to empower them to be effective, accountable and productive members of the global society. He will be followed by **Barry Houser**, associate director of bands, director of the Marching Illini, director of the Fighting Illini athletic bands, and clinical associate professor in the School of Music at the University of Illinois, at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday to round out the first day of action.

A pair of returning guests, **Deb Hult** and **Deanna Singh**, will open the middle day of the summit on August 9 with workshops at 1:00 p.m. and 1:50 p.m., respectively. Hult, a nationally recognized presenter in relational and motivational leadership and the co-founder of Core Trainings, will speak on relationship building and maintenance. Hult is contracted regularly with schools and organizations in several states to deliver hands-on workshops, mentoring programs, administrative team training, civility training, and leadership academies and camps. Singh, an accomplished author, educator, business leader and champion for marginalized communities, is the founder/chief change agent of Flying Elephant and consults with individuals and companies that are looking to make a positive difference in the world. She is known for giving clients the tools and courage to imagine, activate and impact the world as agents of change.

Elizabeth Price and **Liam Price**, a Youth Ambassador Unified Pair, will speak on behalf of Special Olympics in the fifth workshop session at 2:30 p.m. on Monday, August 9. Elizabeth Price, a recent graduate of Carmel (Indiana) High School, has been involved with Unified Sports for the past four years and was president of Carmel’s Unified Champion School Committee. Liam Price is a freshman at the University of Indianapolis and has participated in several Unified Sports including basketball, swimming, and track and field through Special Olympics Johnson County. The tandem will speak on the importance of meaningful inclusion and how NSLS student leaders can help encourage and implement meaningful inclusion into their school communities and activity programs.

The last day of the summit on August 10 will begin with a workshop from **Greg Dale**, a professor of sport psychology and sport ethics at Duke University and the director of sport psychology and leadership programs for Duke Athletics. In addition to his work with Duke athletes and coaches, Dale provides leadership training, executive coaching and team-building services for organizations and corporations around the world including IBM, VF Corporation, COACH, The World Bank, Airports Council International, Habitat for Humanity International, Pfizer, Northwestern Mutual and Skanska International.

The final workshop session will be co-hosted by **Charlie Frasor** and **Brittany Miller** from Regions Bank. Frasor and Miller, a pair of Regions Bank branch managers, will provide summit attendees with valuable financial education and advice that will help them establish a healthy, stable foundation with their future income.

“These students have gone through a world-changing plague and are still standing tall and accomplishing wonderful achievements in school with their athletics and/or activities,” said Hopkins. “They have shown themselves and the world that they are more resilient than they ever imagined. We knew they had it in them, and we are helping them to further develop their skill sets for the future.”

Students can register for the second Virtual National Student Leadership Summit and view complete information on the summit schedule and speakers at:

<https://www.nfhs.org/resources/conferences-meetings/national-student-leadership-summit/>

Once registered, students will receive a link to the Network’s coverage, which will be accessed each day, and can be shared with fellow students.

This press release was written by Nate Perry, coordinator of media relations for the National Federation of State High School Associations.

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About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the

high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,500 high schools and 12 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.9 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

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