



The Drake Group

Realizing the Promise of College Athletics

2022 Student Journalism Prize for Investigative Reporting on Intercollegiate Athletics

for

“UNLEVEL PLAYING FIELDS”

by

STUDENT JOURNALISTS

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Shirley Povich Center for Sports Journalism and the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism at the University of Maryland Philip Merrill College of Journalism

The Prize recognizes the print, video, or multimedia work of a graduate or undergraduate college student journalist(s) for exceptional substantive investigative reporting on intercollegiate athletics. The work must address an issue related to the protection of current or prospective college athletes, financial excess, academic integrity, ethical conduct, racist or sexist practices, treatment of a whistleblower, or similar significant concerns.

“Unlevel Playing Fields,” a four-month investigation of Title IX and high school sports, reveals a system that is failing countless girls. Passed by Congress in June 1972, Title IX guarantees equity in “any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” The investigation shows that boys are favored over girls in many ways, playing on better fields, wearing nicer uniforms and receiving greater publicity from their schools. The work consists of 12 text stories, several video pieces and a national poll of high school parents and their student-athletes to measure awareness of Title IX.