



Webinar Series – Critical Issues in Collegiate Athletics

Thursday, January 22, 2026, 2:00-3:30pmET

Webinar #53 - Title IX Under Fire

House v. NCAA: College Athletes Speak Out on the House Settlement with Attorney Leigh Ernst Friestedt

Attorney Leigh Ernst Friestedt will lead a candid conversation with the collegiate athletes she represents in one of the most consequential legal battles in sports history. These athletes have stepped into the legal spotlight to challenge the settlement, arguing that the proposed revenue-sharing models and back-pay distributions directly violate Title IX.

This webinar goes beyond the headlines to understand the high stakes in the *House v. NCAA* settlement, moving past the balance sheets to explore the human element of collegiate sports. The session focuses on bridging the gap between law and lived experience, offering a unique platform for the athletes themselves to share their stories. You will hear firsthand athlete perspectives on the new NCAA financial landscape and why the approval of the settlement agreement should be overturned.

Together, they will discuss:

- **The Future of Equity:** How the *House* settlement could reshape college athletics, altering the path for future generations.
- **Title IX & Sustainability:** Exploring how past damage and proposed revenue-sharing models conflicts with Title IX protections and the long-term sustainability of women's—and men's—collegiate sports.
- **Highlight the Human Impact:** Given the legal complexity of the settlement, we highlight the personal stories of the athletes involved to show the real-world consequences of these policy changes.

Meet Our Panelists



LEIGH ERNST FRIESTEDT, Moderator, Leigh Ernst Friestedt is the Founder of Equity IX, LLC, a boutique law firm that specializes in Title IX, women's sports and education. As a former student-athlete at Brown University, Leigh is uniquely qualified to advise universities, student-athletes and coaches on legal matters surrounding Title IX, gender equity and name, image and likeness matters. Prior to forming Equity IX, Leigh was a Mergers & Acquisitions investment banker on Wall Street at Lazard, Donaldson Lufkin & Jenrette (DLJ) and GE Capital. Leigh has over twelve years of M&A experience advising global companies across all sectors with a specialty in media.



BROOKE BAKER, Brooke Baker is a Division I women's lacrosse player at Vanderbilt University, where she is completing a Master of Legal Studies in the Law School while holding a Master of Science in Marketing and a Master of Education from Vanderbilt. A national champion and All-AAC student-athlete, Brooke has consistently balanced elite athletic performance with academic excellence. She has earned recognition on multiple Academic Honor Rolls, including conference and national distinctions for scholar-athletes. Originally from Raleigh, North Carolina, she also holds a Bachelor's degree from UNC-Chapel Hill, graduating with distinction. Her collegiate experience reflects a strong commitment to leadership, academic excellence, and top-tier competition.



Gracelyn Laudermilch, Gracelyn Laudermilch is a freshman Division I Track & Field and Cross Country athlete from Rome, Pennsylvania. Since January 2025, she has been a formal objector to the House v. NCAA settlement agreement and is currently a pro se appellant before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Gracelyn has publicly raised concerns about the settlement's implications for collegiate athletes, voicing her objections at both the final approval hearing and the fairness hearing. She is committed to advocating for integrity, accountability, and fairness in college athletics. Guided by the biblical principles of Micah 6:8, to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly, Gracelyn approaches both her athletic career and her advocacy with conviction, discipline, and purpose.



Lexi Drumm, Lexi Drumm is a former Division I women's soccer player and team captain at the College of Charleston. She graduated with a B.S. in Business Administration, earning distinction as Valedictorian of the Honors College and receiving multiple conference academic honors. She is currently a first-year law student at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law. Lexi's involvement with the House settlement grew out of her academic and professional engagement with Title IX. Through internships and her undergraduate thesis, *Unsettled: How Education on Title IX Shapes Female Athletes' Views of the NCAA Settlement*, Lexi became deeply involved in advocating for a continued commitment to Title IX to ensure equal access to the privileges of collegiate athletics and the opportunities that flow from them.



Scott Iannaccone, Scott Iannaccone was a Division I swimmer at California Polytechnic State University where he is studying Computer Engineering. In his last season, he finished in the top five in the 100-yard backstroke at the 2025 Big West Conference Championships and earned one of the top five fastest times in Cal Poly history. He also achieved the Spring Quarter Dean's List in 2025. Swimming has always been a part of Scott's life, and he comes from a family of swimmers. His older brother, Ryan, swam at Cal Poly for four years, and his twin sister, Stephanie, currently competes on the Harvard University swim team.