

# VIRGINIA MODEL UNITED NATIONS



NBA (WNBA) League Executives  
Meeting  
Chair: Habib Karaky

**Dossier:**

When Researching and Preparing Positions - Try to think about what each person would want. What do WNBA Owners want? What do WNBA players want? What do executives want? What does a coach want? There will also be NBA representatives in the committee. Think about the issues at hand from an NBA owner's and NBA player's perspective. Would they want money and marketing streams shifted to the WNBA? Think outside the box and be creative!

**WNBA/NBA Executives (4):**

*Lisa Borders, Former WNBA President* - Lisa Borders served as the President of the WNBA from 2016-2018. While she is no longer in the position, she has been faced with the leagues issues head on and was responsible for making the tough decision.

*Bethany Donaphin, Head of WNBA League Operations* - As head of league operations, and a former WNBA player herself, Donaphin is the quite literally lies in the intersection of basketball and business.

*J.B Lockhart, Chief Financial Office or the NBA* - Lockhart the CFO of the NBA which means he fully understands the revenue breakdown of the NBA and WNBA. When the talks escalate about league revenue, TV deals, player salaries, and anything with monetary implications, he is an important influence in those talks.

**WNBPA Representatives (3):**

*Nneka Ogumike, President, WNBPA* - Ogumike is a former MVP and top player on the court, and President of the Player's Association off of it. It is her duty as President of the WNBPA to represent the collective opinion of the player's and campaign on their behalf.

*Sue Bird, Vice-President Elect, WNBPA* - Sue Bird will go down as one of the legends of the WNBA. A true floor general, Bird has been playing in the WNBA since she was the first overall selection in 2002 out of UCONN. She also has played overseas, similar to several other WNBA athletes, so she has the basketball and business experience to push for serious changes in the league.

*Elena Delle Donne, Vice President-Elect, WNBPA* - Delle Donne is not only an elected VP of the WNBPA she is also a former MVP and one of the top players in the WNBA. most notably advocated for lowering the rims for women's basketball, a surprising counter to the views of other distinguished athletes.

*Chiney Ogwumike, Vice President, WNBPA* - Ogwumike is an Executive Vice President for the WNBPA, fighting for the WNBA athletes alongside her sister Nneka. She is also a player herself, allowing her to impact both on and off the court.

***WNBA Distinguished Athletes (8):***

*Diana Taurasi, Player, Phoenix Mercury -*

Taurasi is the WNBA career record holder for points and she is still playing for the Phoenix Mercury. She will undoubtedly go down as one of the greatest to have played the game, and she famously sat out a WNBA season at the request of her international team in Russia. Due to her accomplishments and experiences she has a unique and credible opinion to offer due to playing overseas and being one of the top players in the world.

*Breanna Stewart, Player, Seattle Storm -* Having just won the WNBA championship and WNBA MVP award, Stewart is one of the peak players in the WNBA. As a former number 1 overall pick, she has always been nationally recognized as one of the top rising players in the sport. Stewart also has actively spoken against lowering the hoop for the WNBA. As such a dominant WNBA player, her voice will carry weight in this committee.

*Maya Moore, Player, Minnesota Lynx -* Arguably one of the best scorers in the WNBA, Maya Moore will for sure go down as an all time great. As a former collegiate superstar, WNBA Champion, WNBA MVP, Rookie of The Year, and Number 1 overall pick she is definitely well respected among the entire basketball realm. She is also the first female basketball player to be sponsored by the Jordan Brand, a major sneaker brand in the basketball space.

*Brittney Griner, Player, Phoenix Mercury -* Brittney Griner is crucial to this committee because she is the first name that comes to mind with WNBA players dunking. A physical force in the paint, Grimes is a former Number 1 overall pick, WNBA Champion, and All-Star. As another player that plays overseas in the offseason, she will have a strong opinion on wages and any proposed rule changes.

*Candace Parker, Player, Los Angeles Sparks -* Candace Parker is considered a veteran in the WNBA. Having played overseas for several years, and domestically in one of the biggest markets that we have to offer, Parker is an extremely popular figure in the basketball world. She was also the number 1 pick in the WNBA draft when she came out of Tennessee, where she was coached by the legendary Pat Summitt. She has been around the global game for years and interacted with some of the brightest minds in the game, which will give her an educated perspective on the game.

*Tina Charles, Player, New York Liberty -* Tina Charles is another WNBA veteran and former MVP. A powerful and respected voice in the league, she has already spoken publicly against lowering the rim for women's basketball.

*Sheryl Swoopes, Former WNBA Player -* Sheryl Swoopes is viewed as one of the pioneers of the WNBA and one of the best players to ever lace them up. She is the only player in WNBA history to win MVP 3 times. Her legacy and status will give her a persuasive voice in committee.

*Becky Hammon, Former WNBA Player* - Becky Hammon made waves in the basketball world not only for her play in the WNBA, but for becoming the first female assistant coach in the NBA. With an incredibly high basketball IQ and experience in both leagues, she will be a crucial comprising voice in committee.

### **Women's NCAA Coaches (2):**

*Geno Auriemma, Women's Coach, University of Connecticut* - Auriemma is arguably the best college basketball coach of all-time (men's or women's) and has been in charge of UCONN's Women's team since 1985. He has won an absurd 11 NCAA championships at the University of Connecticut and has coached several WNBA Superstars including Maya Moore, Sue Bird, Breanna Stewart, Diana Taurasi and Tina Charles. As an important figure in the women's game he has been exposed to top athletes from early stages of their college development to when they are in the peak of their primes representing our nation. Therefore, he has a unique perspective to add in terms of rule changes and the resulting effects on the game.

*Pat Summitt, Former Coach, University of Tennessee* - The late Pat Summitt will always be remembered as a legend in the basketball world, having held the record for most wins in college basketball. Due to the legacy she has left and the impact she has had on the decades of players, she will be given a powerful voice in this committee.

### **WNBA/NBA Owners (5):**

*Ted Leonsis, Owner, Washington Mystics* - Ted Leonsis is head of the Monumental Sports & Entertainment, the company that owns both the Wizards and the Mystics. As the only basketball teams located in D.C, Maryland, and Virginia, it is in Leonsis's best interest to try to take advantage of the large market he has and increase revenue for both teams.

*Magic Johnson, Owner, Los Angeles Sparks* - Ervin "Magic" Johnson is one of the greatest basketball players in NBA history. Post-retirement he has turned himself into a millionaire businessman and recently has helped elevate Los Angeles sports. He is a principal investor on the Los Angeles Dodgers, one of the favorites to win the World Series, President of Basketball Operations for the Los Angeles Lakers, and an investor in the Sparks. Magic lives and breathes LA and will do anything to ensure their franchises thrive both professionally and financially.

*Robert Sarver, Owner, Phoenix Mercury* - At the start of his ownership, the Suns had a few playoff runs behind Steve Nash, Shaquille O'Neal, and Amar'e Stoudemire. However, since that team was broken up, it seems as though team that has gone through a seemingly endless rebuild process. However, behind recent draft picks Josh Jackson, Devin Booker, and Deandre Ayton hopefully they can work themselves back into playoff contention. However, his WNBA team, the Phoenix Mercury, have consistently been championship contenders in recent history. This will give Sarver a unique perspective when trying to increase WNBA revenue, as it will surely increase his own team's revenue as well.

*Glen Taylor, Owner, Minnesota Lynx* - Glen Taylor has become the face of Minnesota basketball, buying the Timberwolves, the Lynx (WNBA) and the Timberwolves G-League affiliate, the Iowa Energy. Fighting through the small market limitations that Minnesota provides, Taylor has gradually built a legitimate basketball city. The Lynx won the WNBA Championship a few seasons ago and have done better on the court than their shared NBA counterparts, which gives Taylor a motivation to push for increased WNBA revenue.

*Herbert Simon, Owner, Indiana Fever* -

Simon is the longtime owner of the Indiana Pacers. Simon and his brother have owned the team since 1983. Although the Pacers have not won a championship in the NBA, they have had some memorable teams with all star level talent, such as Reggie Miller, Jermaine O'Neal, Chris Mullin, and more recently Paul George and Victor Oladipo. Simon also owns the Indiana Fever, which gives him a unique voice as both an owner in the WNBA and NBA.

### **National Basketball Player Representatives (5):**

*Chris Paul, President*

On the court, Chris Paul is the elite floor general for the Houston Rockets and one of the top point guards in the league. The 9 time All Star is also one of the top role-models in the league as he is known for his work off the court. In addition to the surplus of charity work, Paul is about to begin his second 4-year term as President of the NBPA. During his last term Paul played a crucial role in fighting for new opportunities for players both on and off the court, negotiating the Collective Bargaining agreement, increased salaries, pensions, and health benefits. Paul has also been very vocal on political issues as he LeBron James, Carmelo Anthony, and Dwayne Wade made a speech during the annual ESPY Awards regarding racial divide and violence.

*LeBron James, First Vice president*

LeBron James is widely accepted as the best basketball player of the current generation. A physically dominant forward for the Cleveland Cavalier has torched the league with his off the charts athleticism and basketball IQ for years. He has been to 7 consecutive NBA Finals and captured 3 Championships and 4 MVP Awards. In addition to his on the court heroics, James has developed into a spokesman and face for the league. He has been vocal in player issues as well as political issues on multiple occasions. His leadership and character helped make him the unanimous selection as the first vice president of the NBPA. James was tasked with spearheading the Collective Bargaining Negotiations with President Chris Paul. One of the biggest issues with the players was that as NBA franchise values skyrocketed into the billions, players were making small fractions of what owners made. As a superstar and the most valuable player from a monetary and marketing standpoint, James was the perfect representative to fight for the rights of the all players, especially the valuable superstars like himself.

*Garrett Temple, Vice President*

Unlike superstars Chris Paul and LeBron James, Garrett Temple brings a unique perspective to the NBPA. He went undrafted out of LSU and spent time working his way up through the

Development League (Now known as the G-League). As a result he understands the difficulty of working up to an NBA roster as well as the financial differences between the top NBA athletes and the G-League (which is similar to WNBA pay) and he can serve as a voice for all players.

*Stephen Curry, NBA Player, Golden State Warriors* - Widely accepted as the greatest shooter basketball has ever seen, Curry is an expert on 3-point shooting. As a fan of the WNBA and such a dominant NBA player, Curry's name and perspective carries weight in basketball circles.

*Kobe Bryant, Former NBA Player, Los Angeles Lakers* - Kobe Bryant is one of the greatest NBA scorers of all time. A former MVP, 5x Champion, and 18x All-Star, Bryant will always be remembered for his drive, determination, and ridiculous commitment to the game. Bryant, a father of two daughters, has always been a fan of the WNBA, often being interviewed on the sidelines of Sparks games. With his passion and knowledge, of the sport, he will certainly have a unique opinion to add.

### **Large Market/Billionaire NBA Owners(6):**

*Mark Cuban, Dallas Mavericks*

Known by many for his star role on the hit show "Shark Tank", billionaire Mark Cuban has translated his passion for business into the NBA. In 2000, Mark Cuban purchased the Dallas Mavericks for \$285 million. Over the last 17 years, Cuban has transformed the franchise by overhauling the stadium and personnel. Although he has grown even more in other business ventures, there is no doubt that Cuban has fully immersed himself in the basketball world. He sits behind the bench or in the front row of the stands near the team in every game he attends. Furthermore Cuban has been instrumental in constructing the team, from the executives down to the players that upset the Miami Heat to win the 2010 NBA Championship. He has also been very outspoken, sharing his distinct opinions on several basketball issues with the media, including the one and done rule. Unafraid to speak his mind, some of his statements have been very controversial, and Cuban has earned over \$2 million in fines since purchasing the Mavericks.

*Michael Jordan, Charlotte Hornets*

Arguably the greatest basketball player of all time, Michael Jordan truly revolutionized the game and made the NBA a global brand. Before entering the NBA, Jordan dominated college basketball for three years for the North Carolina Tar Heels. He hit the game winning shot to clinch the 1982 NCAA Championship against Georgetown and was named the player of the year in 1984. Following his junior year, Jordan entered the NBA Draft, where he was selected by the Chicago Bulls with the 3<sup>rd</sup> overall pick. With jaw-dropping athleticism and a constant chip on his shoulder, Jordan led the Chicago Bulls to 6 championships while earning 5 individual MVP (Most Valuable Player) awards during his Hall of Fame career. After basketball, Jordan continued to build up his brand on his way to becoming a billionaire. He is the face of the Air Jordan Brand, which continues to produce and sell new gear (especially sneakers) and became the majority owner of the Charlotte Hornets in 2010. Due to do his immense success on and off the court, Jordan has earned the highest level of respect from everyone in the basketball world.

*Steve Ballmer, Los Angeles Clippers*

Ballmer is most notably known as a former President and CEO of Microsoft. As a former friend of Bill Gates at Harvard, Ballmer dropped out of a Stanford Graduate Program to be one of Gates's business managers in 1980. As Microsoft has blossomed into one of the top companies in the world, so has Ballmer's fortune. After stepping down as CEO in 2013, Ballmer purchased the Los Angeles Clippers for \$2 Billion in 2015. Now Ballmer often makes the news in the media due to his energetic cheering at the sidelines of Clippers games. Although a businessman by heart, he has fully committed to the basketball aspect of the NBA franchise as he has been part of several recruiting and free agency meetings with players.

*Joe Lacob, Golden State Warriors*

Billionaire businessman Joe Lacob is the current majority owner of the Golden State Warriors, the current defending champions in the NBA. He and Peter Guber bought the struggling franchise for \$450 million in 2010 and he promised to bring passion into the organization. Fast-forward to 2017 and the Warriors have won 2 championships and are on track to win several more in the near future. He has been credited with turning the Warriors into a first class organization with the potential to establish a dynasty in the next few years behind general manager Bob Myers, head coach Steve Kerr, and star players Stephen Curry, Kevin Durant, Draymond Green, and Klay Thompson. Lacob has also invested in the new Oracle Arena and has been pivotal in marketing the team and growing the fan base into some of the most passionate and energetic in the NBA.

*James Dolan, New York Knicks*

Dolan owns possibly the most disappointing large market team in the NBA, the New York Knicks. The Knicks are the heart of the city and get to play under the bright lights of Madison Square Garden. Unfortunately, Dolan has not put forth a successful team in years, and has been criticized for putting aside the Knicks, instead prioritizing his musical career. Following a rough breakup with Phil Jackson and superstar Carmelo Anthony, Dolan hopes to rebuild the franchise back to its winning history behind 7 ft 3 future all-star Kristaps Porzingis.

*Wycliffe Grousbeck, Boston Celtics*

Grousbeck bought the famous Celtics franchise in 2002 and became a championship owner in 2008 when the team won their record 17th title. Currently, the Celtics have developed in to another championship contender out of the weaker Eastern Conference. Having not won a championship since 2008, this historically great franchise is ready to go back to its winning ways behind latest additions Kyrie Irving, Gordon Hayward, and Al Horford, to go along with young wings Jaylen Brown and Jayson Tatum.

We appreciate your feedback about our conference. Please direct all inquiries and comments to our Secretary-General.

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