

Arizona Executives Rally Behind New Initiative Linking Sports and Business Education

On Oct. 22, 2025, the World's Best Connectors Gathered Sports and Business Leaders for "Conversations Over Cocktails" to Empower Sports Parents in the NIL Age

PHOENIX, AZ, UNITED STATES, October 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On October 22, 2025, The World's Best Connectors introduced Arizona community and business leaders to the [Wish I Had Known Sports Parents Mastermind](#), which will help families nationwide navigate the Name, Image & Likeness (NIL) era.

An exclusive gathering of community and business leaders from throughout Arizona convened on October 22, 2025, to learn more about how a new online program will provide needed business

education and management tools to parents, who have student-athletes. The event was held at the beautiful home of Al and Marsha Sue in Scottsdale, Arizona. Marsha Petrie Sue is a well-known author and speaker and is, currently, Chair of the Arizona Game & Fish Commission. She and her husband are active champions of conservation and other philanthropic missions.

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Twenty-five prominent business and community leaders gathered in Scottsdale on Oct 22, 2025 to hear about the new Wish I Had Known Sports Parents Mastermind.

“We will be promoting Wish I Had Known: The Sports Parents Mastermind nationally and it will be open to any students, in any sports and any schools,” said Denise Meridith, the CEO of the World’s Best Connectors (WBC), a community of CEOs who help other CEOs enhance their connections with families, employees, clients, government, and the media. “But we wanted to launch it from here in

Arizona to be an outstanding example of the power of public/private partnerships. “

Meridith is known for her government and community leadership roles in innumerable projects, such as the founding of the Greater Phoenix Black Chamber of Commerce, designations of four National Monuments, and the creation of Tempe Town Lake, State Farm Stadium, and MLB spring training stadiums over the past 30 years. The 25+ select leaders represented private businesses, academic institutions, government, sports organizations, and non-profit institutions.

“Student athletes have an advantage in the workplace and community,” Arizona Congressman Greg Stanton said to the crowd. “They understand teamwork, preparation, and leadership. Playing on a winning team is more important than individual statistics.”

Meridith feels the US has wasted a lot of time and talent in not taking full advantage of the ambition, ingenuity, energy, and charisma (all contributors to business success) of athletes, and by not providing parents with what she calls the needed 3 R's (resources, references, and referrals) to nurture them.

Meridith describes the importance of being prepared and nurturing teamwork in her latest book *Wish I Had Known: The Sports Parents Playbook to Reduce Time, Money and Stress (TMS)*. With stories, workbooks, and



The Wish I Had Known program will ultimately be providing resources, references and referrals to athletes' parents nationwide.



Al Sue welcomed Arizona Congressman Greg Stanton, Joe Delgado and Jose Gonzalez to his and Marsha's home for the VIP Wish I Had Known Sports Parents Mastermind launch on October 22, 2025

contributions from experts in sports, business, and mental health, the book is available in ebook (<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0F6KVLXHY>) and paperback (<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0F7FP4LK6>) editions.

The book starts to come to life this winter. The Wish I Had Known Sports Parents Mastermind will be a moderately priced class comprised of a series of online panel discussions accompanied by optional talks by different subject matter experts, a private virtual chatroom, and different live events throughout the country. Parents will have access to top, vetted talent to learn about four areas: 1) getting their act together (e.g., goal-setting, whom they need on "their teams," etc.); 2) financial management (e.g., budget-keeping, taxes, latest info about NIL and scholarships; 3) the athlete him/herself (e.g., physical & mental health issues, identifying strengths & weaknesses, how to help them maintain the branding and image they need to be successful, how to work with the media, etc.); and 4) family matters (e.g., schedules, rivalries, how to start a family business, etc.).

Meridith mentioned a couple of examples of current partnerships. For instance, Charles Norman, CEO of 2025 Sports Solutions LLC in California, has used AI to create AthleteSOS, a system that uses GPA & other test scores, sports, athletic levels, and other factors to generate a priority list of schools for which a student-athlete would qualify. That drew a bunch of oohs and ahs from the parents and coaches in the living room.

"Among recruiting platforms, ATHLETICSOS uniquely combines academic precision with athletic opportunity," says Norman, "Giving families a clear, data-backed path to athletic scholarships."

There are famous sports celebrities (Jerry Colangelo, Lorenzo Alexander, Charli Thorne, Mike Fitzgerald), who have already endorsed and spoken or filmed clips for WIHK (visit <https://www.wishihadknown.net/episodes>). A new influencer for the program this year is Elijah Higgins of the Arizona Cardinals. He epitomizes the intelligent (Stanford alum) and successful young athlete who can be a great mentor and role model for student-athletes and an inspiration for their parents.

Finally, attendees heard about how WBC will be promoting its student-athletes, speakers and sponsors with its NILO ("We add 'Ownership' to NIL") Media programs. Again a partnership (this one with On the Hash Live) will feature athletes, parents, speakers, and sponsors at major sports events like Bowl games, NCAA championships, and World Cup events in the years ahead via a 24/7 television network devoted to college sports.

The din was loud, and it was hard to get the crowd to stop talking, exchanging phone numbers, and setting up appointments to leave and let the Sues get to bed that night.

Parents (of any age athlete) who are interested in the WIHK program should submit a [Parents Application](#) and book a call quickly for the first pilot Wish I Had Known class or to be placed on the waiting list for classes in 2026: <https://bit.ly/WIHKParentApplication8-25>.

Potential speakers or sponsors should submit a [Speaker Interest Form](#) and book a call immediately to learn about opportunities from now through next year:
<https://bit.ly/WIHKSpeakers8-02>.

There will be more Connections over Cocktails to inform, educate, recruit, and enlist parents who need guidance for their children; coaches and schools seeking answers for their team members; and corporations and business owners looking for new markets and customers. Interested individuals can join the mailing list: <https://bit.ly/WIHKMailingList>

“Just think of the impact on families, communities, and our society as a whole,” Meridith says, “If together we can empower 1000 athletes or families to launch new businesses around the country.”

Denise Meridith
World's Best Connectors
+1 480-790-1365

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