



# Raymond A. Mason School of Business

WILLIAM & MARY

DIVERSITY GOES TO WORK PODCAST

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## EPISODE 20: STUDENT TAKEOVER PART 2– TRANS SPORTS

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### **Phil Wagner**

Hello from the halls of the Mason School of Business here at William & Mary. I'm Phil, and this is Diversity Goes to Work. Buckle up because we're getting ready to take a deep dive into the real human lived experiences that shape and guide our diversity work in the world of work. Should be fun.

### **Phil Wagner**

Hi all. Welcome to episode two of our mini Summer Student Takeover arc. If you missed my tee-up last time, go back and listen to the last special Student Takeover episode on the gender pay gap from Will Casale, Tasia Ricks, and Katherine Davis. But if you missed the note, we're taking a little bit of a summer sabbatical step-back plan and record season two. Keep an eye out for exciting updates soon. In the meantime, I wanted to give you something to chew on. So we've released three special episodes as part of a Student Takeover. These episodes stem from work completed in our spring 22 Diversity in the Workplace course. And in this second episode, you'll hear from Katie Stevenson, Mohammad Ali, and Eugenio Masari as they explore issues of gender identity within athletics. They're joined by a special guest and offer some really interesting insight. We have given them full control, and all perspectives expressed in the episode are theirs and theirs alone, but we hope you enjoy the discussion. So, without further ado, summer Student Takeover Episode Two Katie, Eugenio. Mohammad, take it over.

### **Katie Stevenson**

Hi, everyone, what is up? Welcome back to Over Sit, where we break down our understanding and talk about controversial topics that foster so many polarizing opinions from people that tend to stand and talk before they sit down and listen. My name is Katie Stevenson, I'm one of your hosts, and I'm a junior here at William & Mary on the swim team.

### **Mohammad Ali**

And my name is Mohammad Ali, and I'm a sophomore currently here at William & Mary.

### **Eugenio Masari**

Hello. My name is Eugenio. I am one of the other cohosts. I'm also a sophomore here at William & Mary, and I'm on the varsity swim team.

## **Mohammad Ali**

Yeah, guys. So we're sitting here today because this past March, we witnessed one of the most controversial sporting finishes in recent memory. When an individual, Lia Thomas, captured a Division One national championship in women's swimming. But she did so as the first openly transgender athlete to do so.

## **Eugenio Masari**

Before we dive in swimming pond, pun intended, we should make sure to define for audience what it means to be a transgender. A transgender woman is a woman who was assigned a male gender at birth. This constant internal struggle of having to prove your own gender to yourself and to societal standards is something that transgender individuals constantly have to battle with. Actually, we know that one in every 250 people come out as transgender in the U.S. But that number is likely to be much higher with how many individuals decide to conceal their identity in fear of not opening up to others and being rejected.

## **Katie Stevenson**

Yeah, and Lia Thomas is actually not the first trans swimmer to compete in the NCAA. So it's very interesting to me. Why is it that her story is blowing up? We know of over two dozen trans athletes that have competed in college sports, but Lia Thomas's story has been propelled into the public eye as a result of her dominance and victories in women's swimming.

## **Mohammad Ali**

Right, I totally agree. I think that if you look at Lia Thomas's success like in a vacuum, you would think that she should be celebrated and she should be applauded. But instead, she's met with incredible amounts of scrutiny and hostility from the media, from people and family attending the competitions, from her competitors, and even from her own peers and teammates.

## **Katie Stevenson**

Scrutiny from her own teammates. As a swimmer myself, that must be so hard to compete confidently because team dynamic is so important in a team sport. We learned, if you guys remember, in our diversity and inclusion class, that when individuals seemingly possess undesirable traits quote, such as larger bodies or a gluten allergy, it becomes difficult for individuals to be productive because they're rejected by their peers, which can affect their productivity and which impacts the company.

## **Mohammad Ali**

Yes, I totally agree. And if we look at the scrutiny itself that Lia's facing, it's rooted in the perception that Lia Thomas possesses an unfair advantage that stems from the hormone balance and testosterone differences between male and females that people believe present benefits to individuals that simply can't be erased through treatment. And so we've seen that the perspectives from credible individuals out in the world, such as Michael Phelps, someone who's a decorated athlete, who has sided against Lia and argues that there needs to be an even

playing field within the sport. So clearly, the sports world has completely erupted, and with so many people expressing their opinions on Lia and her decision and speculating on what she should and should not be doing, but we believe it's important to provide a forgotten perspective in this whole story, which is the perspective, Lia Thomas.

### **Eugenio Masari**

Yeah. I was actually currently reading a Sport Illustrated article, and when asked about the situation, Lia said, I'm a woman just like anybody else on the team. I've always viewed myself as just a swimmer. It's what I've done for so long. It's what I love. I want to swim and compete as who I am. Lia's early struggle to maintain her identity while pursuing her passion led her to pursue hormone replacement therapy for a year, which was required by the NCAA prior to competing against other women.

### **Mohammad Ali**

Yeah. And so clearly, you see that she was abiding by the stipulations that had already been provided by the NCAA to allow athletes to change their gender identity or their gender categories. So just to be clear, Lia was doing everything right, but because of the COVID sort of outbreak in 2020, it derailed her whole 2020 to 2021 season, and she found herself on HRP again. Hormone replacement treatment for more than two years when only one is required.

### **Eugenio Masari**

Yeah. Lia clearly overly abided by the oldest stipulation provided by the NCAA. However, she's still faced with this constant scrutiny about her decision to participate against other female athletes. Although she attempted to remain optimistic about the situation and effort to pave a path for future young trans athletes, there is little doubt on the impact of the constant negative attention on the young athletes mental health. An obstacle day to day routine, unlike any other collegiate athletes.

### **Katie Stevenson**

Yeah, and I've seen, along with the occasional social media threats and negativity, which Lia has forced to limit her participation in social media. The negativity is especially prevalent in actual competitions and among Lia's own team. This disapproval of a few teammate parents started in the early 2021 to 2022 season, the season in which she was able to return after transitioning, like we mentioned, having two and a half years of the hormone, which is more than the one that was required. And when letters of Penn Swim parents were sent to the NCAA to remove Thomas from women's competitions, this must have been horrible for Lia. These letters were fueled with arguments about her puberty as a male, giving her, quote, larger hands, feet, greater bone density, and a greater lung capacity.

### **Eugenio Masari**

Right. And just to think about how your teammates think about you must be an extraordinarily uncomfortable situation. An example of their discontent was proved by 16 of

her teammates, which kept sending letters to Ivy League officials requesting Thomas to be ineligible from competing in the conference championship because they said she could now break Penn, Ivy, and NCAA women's swimming records. Feats that she could not have done as a male athlete.

### **Mohammad Ali**

Yeah, and if you look at the sentiments from her teammates that sort of circulated the whole season, they jeopardize the chemistry, the camaraderie of the team. They jeopardize the chemistry and the camaraderie of the team itself. And we've actually heard from Lia's own teammates, such as Hadley DeBruyn, saying that sometimes it doesn't even feel like a team. So these actions are against Lia. We're just a few examples of many that we just wanted to point out, but it doesn't tell the whole story. But what we wanted to do was just simply highlight the perspective of Lia Thomas so viewers can come to a more holistic view in interpreting and judging the situation.

### **Katie Stevenson**

Right, Mohammed. That leads me into a very exciting time. I'm so excited to introduce Isaac Henning, a Yale swimmer who is currently transitioning from female to male and has swam with Lia multiple times at Ivy League championships and NCAA Championship. Isaac is here to share his experience in the swimming world and will leave us with such valuable insight into how we can best support him and other transgender athletes. All right, Isaac, thank you so much for taking the time out of your crazy final schedule to meet with us briefly. How are finals in school going?

### **Isaac Henning**

Thanks for having me. Finals are going alright. We start at the end of the week, so hopefully, looking good.

### **Katie Stevenson**

Well, best of luck.

### **Isaac Henning**

Thanks.

### **Katie Stevenson**

Yeah. So thank you for coming on today. Would you like to do a quick introduction on who you are, hometown, things like that?

### **Isaac Henning**

Yeah, absolutely. My name is Isaac Henning. I'm a junior at Yale. I use him pronouns. I'm also on the swim team. I do some work on campus around communication and consent, and I also am an Earth and planetary science major.

**Katie Stevenson**

Oh, very cool.

**Isaac Henning**

I'm in California. So I'm super excited to be here today to talk to you guys.

**Katie Stevenson**

Yeah, awesome. So I guess just to start off, we'll give you a little insight into what we've been doing this semester. So we've been talking a lot about how important inclusion is to a successful, functioning group. So we're in like a business class of how the workplace, in order for it to be successful, everyone needs to be working together and feeling included. There's an example in a case study about how a coworker was gluten-free, and the allergy options were much worse than the pasta and pizza. They felt like the nonallergy people, and the coworker felt really unwelcoming and not wanting to be part of this group anymore. So are you able to speak at this at all? And has there been a time in your own life where you didn't feel comfortable or the welcoming environment which may have hindered your ability to perform? Or like, on the flip side, if you had a really welcoming environment and that really positively affected your ability, whether that's like workplace or school or job?

**Isaac Henning**

Yeah, definitely. I've been super lucky in that a lot of the spaces that I am in on campus have been super supportive of me. My team especially has been wonderful. The coaches were great. At this point, I came out to them over a year ago, and they were super supportive at the time. One of my coaches even cried on the call. I won't tell you which one it is because they'll get embarrassed, but just like super supportive. And so that really allowed me to have the season of my life. This last year. I was super grateful for how it went and for how my team responded, and I think them going out of their way to respect me and how I am, it was really lovely.

**Katie Stevenson**

That's so great to hear. Yeah, you crushed it. That was so awesome.

**Isaac Henning**

Thank you.

**Katie Stevenson**

I saw a picture, and you had written on your arm with like sharpie because there was a rule against you. I forget what it was about. Political something, and you found a way around it, the article said. Can you talk about that at all? That was awesome.

**Isaac Henning**

Yeah, for sure. The background as to why it was written on my skin is because the NCAA has pretty specific messaging around things that could be political or policy-related on uniforms, but absolutely nothing at all about what you can have on your skin. For me, the idea of,

because there was so much media coverage coming into N.C.s, having the opportunity to just share a message of inclusivity, it doesn't need to be political. It's just kids are kids. They should play sports. They should have community. I think you guys, as athletes, understand, you need that. You need a group of people who's going to stick by you. You're going to learn how to work as a team and all of those important skills. Every single kid should be able to access those in a way that makes them feel comfortable. And so it was a no-brainer for me to write that and have it.

### **Katie Stevenson**

Yeah, What you said about having like I feel like in sports, we learned so much from our teams, and we carry that into like I carry into school all the time. And in professional work, is there like, a skill from your sport that you feel you use the most or like, you will use the most, like, soft skill?

### **Isaac Henning**

Yeah. No, it's a good question. I think, honestly, not to be too topical, but kind of finding connections with people no matter what, sometimes someone walks in, and you're like, wow, I just can't stand this person. They're breathing, and it annoys me. But finding ways to connect with them, you go from feeling that way to being someone's friend, and I think that's really powerful and really cool to foster connections across disagreements or differences in belief.

### **Katie Stevenson**

Yeah. I was just curious, how are the reactions to let trans kids play? Like, the message you wrote on your arm? Was it positively surprising, or like there's some people that gave you weird stares at all?

### **Isaac Henning**

No, I wish I could answer that question. It was sort of one of those things where I'm notorious for being completely in my own world, especially at some meets. So if people were looking at me weirdly, I didn't really know, but the people who came up to me, for the most part, were really supportive.

### **Katie Stevenson**

That's so great to hear.

### **Mohammad Ali**

Yeah. Isaac, kind of going back to your point. You said you came out a year ago to your, like, your coaches and your team. So from my understanding, you sort of went through this transition during COVID, right? You said you took a year off, and you had a lot of time on your hands to sort of come to groups with your identity. And so, if you don't mind, could you talk about that journey that you went on to come to accept your identity? And you talk about if it was difficult growing up in a body that didn't necessarily coincide with how you actually felt.

**Isaac Henning**

Yeah, absolutely. It's a good amount there. I could probably talk about that for a while, but the sort of short summary of it is like, I came home because of COVID. I decided to take a year because I wanted to be able to swim all four years of college. And then I was in a really bad place. I'm not going to lie to you. And so having just a therapist who I love and adore, and having the time to be able to sort of reflect and understand why like things felt so hard was really powerful. And there was a moment where are you guys familiar with the idea of a binder? So it's an article of clothing that sort of compresses your chest, and so that is used to combat dysphoria in a lot of FTM trans people. And I put one on for the first time, and I tried on every single piece of clothing in my wardrobe, and I was like, am I allowed to curse?

**Katie Stevenson**

Go for it.

**Isaac Henning**

I was like, holy shit. This is exactly how I imagined all of my clothes fitting, right? And so that was a moment for me. I was like, okay, I'm starting to understand how much this affects me, how deeply I hold this. It was not the first time that I had voiced even this feeling. I had had similar feelings in 8th grade but wasn't really ready to accept that reality, especially given the cultural opinions at the time. I think it's easier to come out when I have more confidence in myself and when there's been more trans people just in general, in the media and then public sort of view. Yeah. I don't know if that answers your question.

**Mohammad Ali**

Thank you.

**Katie Stevenson**

I love that story. That's awesome.

**Eugenio Masari**

Yeah. I also want to ask about maybe like an uncomfortable topic, but how are you able to deal with adversity in the past and deal with adversity is probably going to come face you in the future. I feel like everyone goes through adversity, but definitely. I believe in your place you might have to face more. But yeah, I just wanted to ask simple question like that.

**Isaac Henning**

Yeah, it's a good question, and it's definitely something that I am still figuring out. I'm super lucky to have really great friends, supportive family and coaches, and team, and so leaning on them has been wonderful. And then I also am lucky enough to have a level of comfort with myself where it gets easier to deal with adversary because I feel very secure.

**Katie Stevenson**

Okay, this is kind of a random question, but if there was one character trait that you wish every single person in the entire world had, what would it be?

**Isaac Henning**

Self-confidence.

**Katie Stevenson**

Good answer.

**Isaac Henning**

I think it's more powerful than we sometimes give it credit for. I think that it lets people feel more comfortable. And when people are more comfortable, they're more able to hear. They're more able to listen and hear things that might challenge their held beliefs. I like to believe that no one in this world sets out to be hateful. And so I think if people felt more confident in themselves and in their knowledge and might open the door for open discussions, open mind, rather than feeling a need to cling to belief so tightly that you can't hear anything that might challenge them.

**Katie Stevenson**

Yeah. Wow, that's great. Mohammed and Eugenio, what would you guys say? Do you have any thoughts?

**Mohammad Ali**

No, I agree. I definitely agree. Self-confidence is really important characteristic for people to have.

**Katie Stevenson**

I was thinking also, like, empathy was a good one. We talked a lot about that in the workplace too.

**Eugenio Masari**

Compassion as well, I would say. We don't like each other enough. I think humanity just doesn't really collide. I also wanted to ask you a question regarding I don't know if you know like Michael Phelps perspective on the topic of transition. Especially in the swimming world. But obviously, he was rather against it. Which for me, it's quite unbelievable, and it shouldn't be the case. But I think he claimed that there should be like an even playing of field for people to be in the same sport. But at the same time, he was genuinely gifted because he had to say but like longer arms. Like shorts. Longer torso or stuff like that. How would you perceive it's kind of like a hypocrite perspective? If we really think about it.

### **Isaac Henning**

Yeah, it's a good question. And I think that it's always hard because you want to be able to turn to experts when you're forming opinions. I think you identified it and that we're much more able to, like, as a society, accept, like, genetic differences when it comes along with things that we are used to. Don't feel as so foreign, but being born taller, being born with a longer arm span, you know, those are genetic advantages. And like, no matter how you come to have that advantage over your competitors, there's no such thing as even playing fields in sport. Right. We are all college athletes. We're all taller, stronger, more able to do something than someone else that we raced in high school, someone else that we raced when we were younger. And so, for me, I think it's much more about understanding that trans people are people and they should be able to come to their sports in the same ways and we should celebrate them just as much and we should have just as much understanding and willingness to be like. Wow. That's a phenomenal athlete. And just be able to respect athleticism when it comes to us, regardless of what form.

### **Mohammad Ali**

Yeah, if you don't mind Eugenio, if I could ask mine now. So, sort of going back to Eugenio's first question. Yesterday, Isaac, we actually talked a lot about the perception of Lia's transformation on her own team, how people felt about it. So, like, we know that you sort of competed alongside Lia in a competition, and sort of could you just talk about the environment, the atmosphere, in terms of the fans, and if you hear the heckling and how that impacts maybe your ability to compete or do you think it takes a toll on you? What would you say about the atmosphere of these competitions?

### **Isaac Henning**

Yeah, I can't comment on Lia's experience. She's a great friend of mine. I love her to death. I'm not sure what her team looks like internally, but for me personally, yeah, it's tough where you always have in the back of your mind, like, oh, these people don't want to support me. But then it's like, that's not really that different. Like, there are always going to be people who are cheering for the opposing team, for someone else who you're racing. And at the end of the day, it's just swimming. Right. We're just out here to have a good time, go fast, see what we can do. It doesn't need to be so heavy. And I think that's how I sort of found my way through it.

### **Katie Stevenson**

You're so mature.

### **Mohammad Ali**

I think probably his experience also helped him with that, having to deal with diversity. So you have to mature. A lot of people don't have to deal with this.

### **Katie Stevenson**

But it's not that it's a sport. We're all just here to play. I was going to ask about the hecklers that maybe have never been involved with swimming until they see one article in a newspaper. I personally find that a little bit frustrating to the swimming community.

### **Isaac Henning**

Yeah. As swimmers, I'm sure you're familiar with this whole joke that once every four years for about a week, everyone becomes the biggest swimming fan for the Olympics and then just kind of fads to the background.

### **Katie Stevenson**

Yeah.

### **Isaac Henning**

And I think there's something to be said for like, anyone should be able to come and enjoy a sport and have opinions about it and feel like they are able to engage, but at the same time, recognizing that news headlines are written to be inflammatory. They don't always tell the whole story, and they don't always do every side the justice that it deserves. And so recognizing that, yeah, you should probably read more than one article. Yeah. You should probably take a deep breath and just say, okay, what am I actually feeling about this? Is this feeling like I am engaged with this, or am I feeling upset because this article that was written to sort of provoke this very visceral reaction has done exactly that? And so, I think I would just say it's okay to feel certain things, but it's also okay to gather more information and have your opinion change over time. And coming to things with an open mind is far more important than, like, knowing something right away.

### **Katie Stevenson**

Right. Yeah. I feel like that we've been talking about that a lot, about how important it is before you say something to maybe like, sit down and take a deep breath.

### **Mohammad Ali**

Sorry. So for my understanding, you sort of took this transition. You said that you wanted to take this transition slowly, and you talked about how you haven't taken the male hormones, and you decided to stay on the woman's swimming team this year. So for next year, I just wanted to ask you in your senior year, I believe next year, when you compete in the male category, I'm assuming, is that something that you're anxious about or excited about moving forward? What are your thoughts about that next year?

### **Isaac Henning**

Yes. It's not something I discussed publicly yet, but I am going to be competing on the men's team next year, which I'm incredibly excited about. Yeah. So far, it's just been kind of fun to be able to race people that are faster than me in practice, and so I feel like that makes me a better swimmer, and that's great. I'm excited. I have no expectations. It's kind of this very

liberating feeling of, like, I was supposed to graduate this spring anyway, originally, and so I really just am considering next year a little bit like a victory lap of, like, let's just go around and see what happens and enjoy ourselves, you know.

**Katie Stevenson**

That's awesome. Do you guys have a combined program, like, coaches-wise?

**Isaac Henning**

Yeah.

**Katie Stevenson**

Oh, cool. We have that here at William & Mary. I kind of love it. It's nice to be able to race Eugenio in practice.

**Isaac Henning**

What do you guys swim?

**Katie Stevenson**

I swim 50, 100, 200 free.

**Eugenio Masari**

I swim 100, 200 freestyle. Supposedly also swim the five free, but it's been a little rough lately. I don't know. Aerobic capacity is not there, and I'm getting too old for that. Recovery-wise, it's just not as quickly as 17 year old.

**Katie Stevenson**

Eugenio has been tiptoeing his way out of the factory.

**Isaac Henning**

I respect that. Joins the group the best.

**Katie Stevenson**

I'm so glad that your team is like, you guys are so close. That's, like, the key to a successful team, in my opinion.

**Isaac Henning**

Totally. Happy swimmer is a fast swimmer.

**Mohammad Ali**

Yeah. I think this is one final question. I think we could wrap this up because the whole sort of point of looking at this is, like, in our classes. How does this relate to diversity, inclusion in the workplace? I think. Katie, your last question. So just to end the podcast, I think it's a good

point is what are you interested in pursuing after graduation, and what do you think? What life experiences and lessons have you learned, and during the experience, will you take with you into the real world?

**Isaac Henning**

Yes. I think I'm not exactly sure what I'll be up to directly out of college, but I would love to be a teacher. I want to teach high school science, probably. And I think for me, just recognizing that students come from so many different places, they have so many different experiences, and that changes the way that they perceive things. And so doing a little bit of work on the front end to anticipate that. Right. Kind of like the example you guys gave of the food options. Right?

**Katie Stevenson**

Right.

**Isaac Henning**

Making sure that people are feeling catered to. People are feeling like they are being heard, that their concerns are listened to. I think I would love to create a classroom environment where students feel comfortable showing up as 100% themselves.

**Katie Stevenson**

Yeah. That's so awesome. I would definitely take your class.

**Isaac Henning**

Thank you.

**Katie Stevenson**

All right, well, thank you so much for joining us on our podcast today. This was such a cool experience.

**Isaac Henning**

Thank you for having me. Great to meet you all.

**Katie Stevenson**

Yeah, nice to meet you too. Good luck with finals, by the way.

**Isaac Henning**

Yeah, thank you. You guys as well.

**Katie Stevenson**

We're almost done.

## **Mohammad Ali**

Welcome back. Wow, that was a great interview. And Isaac brought in a really great insight into trans athletes and their perception on this whole situation.

## **Katie Stevenson**

I totally agree. That was such a cool experience. I'm so glad that he was able to take out the time of his finals. I've never learned more from a zoom call before.

Mohammad Ali

**Yeah. So as we conclude, we believe it's important to wrap up the podcast with tying our focus** on the experience of transgender athletes and its relevance in bringing about diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

## **Eugenio Masari**

So let's talk about a couple of questions that we have been exploring. Why do people feel excluded in the workplace? How can experiences of exclusion influence employee attitudes, behavior, and performance? And why are there conflicts between groups in the workplace?

## **Mohammad Ali**

Yeah, so these are questions that we've actually been exploring throughout the course, and it's clear that these feelings of exclusion are high indicators that companies will not be successful. And so, as we've heard from Isaac, he had one of his best seasons, and he attributed part of that to his close and tight-knit team and support network. And as he decided to come out.

## **Katie Stevenson**

Yeah, it was so cute when he said his coach even cried. That just shows how supportive and respectful and kind his environment must be. And I think a lot of times, companies in society as a whole misinterpret the term integration as inclusion when in reality, they're quite different. I learned this in my education class, but integration in the business world is hiring or competing with someone who is different than the majority. And while, yes, they are inside the same circle, it's as if there's this bubble preventing them from feeling part of the community. So if you're picturing it on as a picture, it's like a big circle. And within the big circle, there's a minority circle that's smaller. So while it may look like an inclusive environment, it's really not. And in order to feel the senses of the conclusion and get that internal bubble that's holding this, like, minority group captive is tricky sometimes.

## **Eugenio Masari**

Right. And I think the conflicts arise on a daily basis in the workplace. Because of this butting of heads, colleagues have differences in opinion between the management and his employees. There are divergences. There are a variety of reasons why situation like these arise amongst groups inside of an organization. Ultimately, diversity is the main reason for conflicts in the workplace. People tend to not enjoy being with others that do not align with them.

### **Mohammad Ali**

Yes. And this is actually a major issue. And we've seen some research done at the Pew Research Center that they calculated that in 2021, 57% of people said that part of the reason they left their field of employment was because they felt disrespected or excluded. Even more interesting is that 35% of those people said that that was the main reason or the major reason that they left. And actually, according to Research Society for Human Resource Management, it's reported that it costs, on average, six to nine months of the employee salary to replace them. And so what this really means is that looking at this subject, even from just a strictly business standpoint, it's still not in the best interest of the companies to not accommodate the needs of people working under them and having an environment that is not inclusive because it's going to result in losses for the company.

### **Katie Stevenson**

Yeah, so I like what you said about the business standpoint, and I think in order to achieve this, you need to kind of work on those softer skills, like, quote, which is more like feelings of empathy and kindness towards your employees. And I think it's important that these feelings are being taken into account of everyone that's working at an organization or business. And while, yes, regulations and rules that may mandate more diversity in the workplace may seem like a positive and end all be all, but in reality, it comes down to the internal feelings of someone. And people need to feel welcomed and have self-confidence, which is one of the words that Isaac said that everyone should have, are a critical piece to this puzzle.

### **Mohammad Ali**

Yeah. So Isaac mentioned how in the future, he wants to be a teacher, and his goal for his students is for them to feel like they can be whoever they want, which ties into how we want people to feel in the workplace, which is DEI work.

### **Eugenio Masari**

Yeah. And as Isaac said himself, it is so important from a young age to practice this inclusion and equity, even just in simple life and work and in the workplace as well.

### **Katie Stevenson**

So, audience, we hope that you have come to a more holistic perspective on a situation like transgender athletes in sports. And I've come to really value inclusion and what that can do for an individual and for a team in a sport or workplace.

### **Mohammad Ali**

Yeah. And although we haven't solved the problem of exclusion, like Katie said, we hope that, like you said mentioned, the audience understands the value and the need of inclusion and being accepted in the workplace and what that means for each individual person.

### **Katie Stevenson**

Yeah. This is a great final project.

**Mohammad Ali**

Yeah. Who knew a final project would be so valuable?

**Katie Stevenson**

I agree. Okay, folks, that wraps up today's episode of Over Sit. We hope that you sat down and over-listened so that your understanding is better. Have a great day.

**Phil Wagner**

Thanks for taking a second to listen to Diversity Goes to Work. If you like what you heard, share the show with a friend, leave us a review on Apple podcast or wherever you listen to podcasts, and reach out because we're always looking for new friends. And if you'd like to learn more about any of our programs or initiatives here in the business school at William & Mary, be sure to visit us at [mason.wm.edu](http://mason.wm.edu). Until next time.