



BLACK CANADIAN COACHES ASSOCIATION



SPORT



CELEBRATION



EDUCATION



ADVOCACY

Dear RSEQ,

My Name is Nelly Owusu, and I am currently in my 3rd playing season as a member of the Concordia Women's Basketball program. Prior to that, I was part of the Dawson College Blues D1 Basketball team and before that I spent several years at St. Laurent Express developing my deep love for the wonderful sport of Basketball.

As you have clearly noted, I have been a member of the Réseau de Sport Étudiant Quebec since a very young age, 7 years old to be exact. I have proudly represented the RSEQ as a league that gave me a chance to play a game that has afforded me the opportunity to continue my post-secondary education at a prestigious University and compete against some of the most talented athletes in Canada.

Despite the pride I have playing in the RSEQ, I would be remiss if I didn't address the disappointment and overall sadness I felt and currently still feel in the RSEQ's lack of care and empathy as it pertains to the well-being of its BIPOC student – athletes. It has been very unfortunate how quiet the RSEQ has been.

Black Lives Matter is more than just a movement, it is more than a hashtag and most definitely more than blacking out your social media screens. We are more than a trend. We are real people. With goals, dreams, aspirations and real fear that we face every single day because of the color of our skin.

We [Black athletes] are, for the most part, the majority of a conference that has no Black representation in their policy, rules, guidelines and decision making. That is a major problem and no surprise why the RSEQ just doesn't seem to get it right when it comes to addressing racism. Racial injustice happens everywhere, it is not regulated to the United States. It happens right here, in our province, in our city, and on some of our teams. It must be addressed with absolute urgency.

As disheartened as I and others that look like me may be with the RSEQ, I do understand that racism, and social injustice can be difficult to address. However, if you are intentional about making positive changes that represent us all and most urgently us Black athletes, reaching out and at the very least starting the conversation about change is positivity headed in the right direction.

We all want to be heard, we all want to feel safe, we all want to be seen and acknowledged. I Nelly Owusu want to know that the league I have literally poured my blood, sweat and tears in cares about my well-being on and off the court. How will you show me? How will you show us?

Silence speaks volumes, and now more than ever we are all listening - Hopefully, we see a change.

Nelly Owusu

Member of Concordia Women's Basketball Team

#StrongerTogether