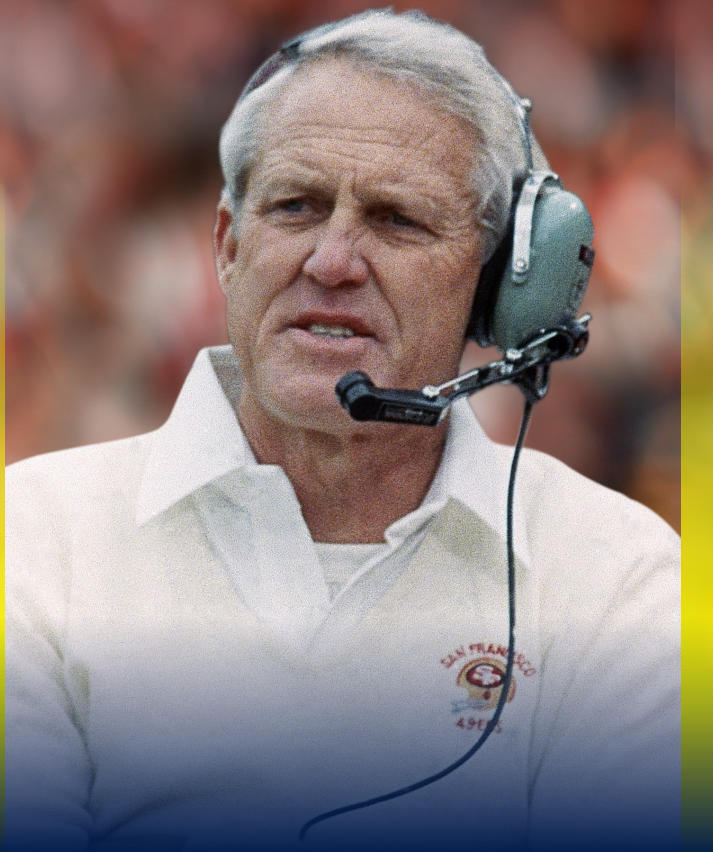




VOLUME IX



**OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY PATTERNS:
An Examination of Leadership, Access, Opportunity, Social Capital
and the Reshuffling Effect within the NFL**

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at University of Central Florida

A report presented by the National Football League.

"Clearly, we are not where we want to be on this level. We have a lot of work that's gone into not only the Rooney Rule but our policies overall. Its clear we need to change and do something different. There's no reason to expect we're going to have a different outcome next year without those kinds of changes and we've already begun engaging in those changes. Not just with our diversity committee, not just with the Fritz Pollard Alliance, but others. And trying to figure out what steps we could take next that would lead to better outcomes. It's clear we're all committed to doing that, and we have to make those changes. We will have a series of meetings which we've already scheduled over the next month to get that kind of dialogue going, to continue the dialogue to try to determine what are the solutions so we can have those better outcomes."

***Roger Goodell, NFL Commissioner
(January 2020)***

"We were painfully reminded through this past hiring cycle that attaining diverse leadership in the NFL can only happen through the willful actions of the team owners and decision makers. True devotion to diversity starts with a recognition of the profound good that it can bring to the game. It embraces a belief that the benefactors who contribute to the business of football should also share in the benefits. It embraces a core belief that the game should be accessible at every level for those that possess the skills and who have the resources to meet their aspirations. . . . The current system of hiring and promoting talent into the upper levels of NFL management is a flawed system. We cannot expect fairness if business remains status quo. Our focus must shift from counting emblematic victories each year to calling for measurable initiatives that support sustainable progress. The Fritz Pollard Alliance is calling on the National Football League, owners and club leaders to develop specific diversity action plans to improve diversity in all aspects of management. Our goal is to inspire better results and to work with all NFL stakeholders to come up with meaningful solutions."

***Fritz Pollard Alliance
(January 2020)***

OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY PATTERNS IN THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

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MESSAGE FROM TROY VINCENT, NFL EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

Since the inception of the Occupational Mobility Report, there have been incremental advances in professional opportunities and growth for minorities that spark glimmers of hope. However, those tiny sparks have yet to foster a flame toward reaching the ultimate objective of a fair and open process for all.

Adherence to what the industry professes as “best practices” has yielded little results. In fact, the outcomes are in no way commensurate with the tremendous efforts invested by the well-intentioned advocates across the football universe. We can no longer rely on these best practices. In order to reach our intended goals, we must acknowledge our shortcomings and use that data and information to examine, analyze, and revitalize the entire hiring system at both the Club and League levels. It is time to develop a new strategy built upon education, league policies, club policies, and the Rooney Rule that addresses both intent and accountability.

An intentional training, awareness, and communications plan should be implemented. In addition, we must encourage a safe nonjudgmental educational environment that seeks to provide a clear understanding of the “why” behind hiring biases. These things coupled with football and C Suite personnel operating under the notion that diversity is good for business, will ultimately provide an opportunity to build the business case for diversity in hiring.

Furthermore, the Rooney Rule must be updated. Rather than relying on the Rooney Rule as the main policy for minority hiring, it must be repositioned as a tool to assist in achieving diversity and inclusion excellence. To effect change, consideration must be given to expanding current hiring practices and policies to establish consistency across the league and individual clubs. This alignment is essential and should include developing a universal diversity action plan that informs the individual club-level diversity action plans.

In parallel, we must continue to develop the talent pool and provide opportunities to cultivate relationships with decision-makers. Building interpersonal relationships and establishing trust limits the temptation of accepting moving standards that so often contribute to the color barrier. In the same vein, merit-based policies and practices need to be considered in order to discourage the system of nepotism that unduly influences the hiring cycle—family, agents, friend networks.

As we approach this new decade of occupational mobility, we must be willing to boldly determine success metrics, expand policy, provide proper incentives, and prioritize accountability. Decisions must be based on merit rather than subjectivity, and reflect a transparent, fair, and level playing field. This is the challenge of the human factor impacting the sports ecosystem and equally as important, this is business critical.

MESSAGE FROM DR. C. KEITH HARRISON, LEAD INVESTIGATOR AND RESEARCHER

It is 2020. By now, I truly wish our research team no longer had to be commissioned by the NFL to study and investigate why a dearth of opportunities exist for non-White coaches and other leaders in comparison to White coaches and leaders in the NFL. However, the reality is that we still have a long way to go if we are ever going to find and create answers and solutions. The more things change, the more they stay the same. Clearly, we have a systemic problem that is related to an “ism” that is talked about less than racism yet is just as detrimental to equity and inclusion: cronyism. Scholars have previously defined “cronyism” as “favoritism shown by the superior to his or her subordinate based on their relationship, rather than the latter’s capability or qualification, in exchange for the latter’s personal loyalty” (Khatri & Tsang, 2003). Nearly ten years since the release of the first occupational mobility report for the NFL, the myth of meritocracy continues to be exposed with the inequities of the hiring of head coaches and other leadership positions across NFL teams. Why still? This is the question we must ask after progress seems to get better for a stint of time; nevertheless, this progress is followed by opportunities for men of color worsening at the blink of an eye from one football season to the next.

We have gathered numbers and we have seen some of the success stories of men of color. We need the hearts and eyes (i.e., perspectives) of those that make the final hiring decisions to further examine how much representation (i.e., cultural imagery) impacts their decisions versus the logic of seeing those that have earned the chance to fail just as much as the opportunity to succeed. We remain concerned about several recent head coach hires seemingly “catapulting” to the position of NFL head coach without ever serving as an NFL level offensive or defensive coordinator.

Despite all of the practical training and development programs recently implemented by the NFL to develop and strategically position candidates of color for coordinator, head coach and general manager opportunities, the hiring metrics in this current occupational mobility report demonstrate marginal—but certainly not exceptional—progress from an inclusive hiring perspective. Therefore, the hiring approach (i.e., mindset) of the hiring managers likewise needs to evolve in order to genuinely embrace hiring and supporting men of color. Team owners and other key decision-makers involved in the hiring process need to focus on hiring people that NFL players relate to and respect—not necessarily those job candidates team owners can relate to and believe in.

For now, “without struggle there is no progress” (Frederick Douglass). We are in a struggle with this issue of coaching and leadership hiring practices in the NFL. I believe that we can get this one right if we all open our eyes, minds and hearts to what is really going on and change the conversation, do things differently and collaboratively move the ball down the field.

REPORT BACKGROUND

In 1963, the National Football League (NFL) began tracking data on the occupational mobility patterns of head coaches. From January 1963 to February 2020, only 18 different African American men and four Latino men have served as head coaches in the NFL. As of February 2020, four head coaches of color led NFL teams as compared with 28 White NFL head coaches. Four head coaches of color likewise led NFL teams a year prior (as of February 2019)—the only recent change concerning head coaches of color involved Ron Rivera transitioning from head coach of the Carolina Panthers to head coach of Washington.

Previous empirical and other data-driven studies on NFL coaches and other key team leaders generally focus on the effectiveness of the Rooney Rule (for example, analyzing the hiring process and proposing new strategies to increase the number of head coaches of color) as well as comparing the win/loss records of head coaches (for example, determining whether coaches of color are provided with a true meaningful opportunity to turn around a team with a losing record) (see Cochran & Mehri, 2002; Madden & Ruther, 2011; Thornton, 2009).

This NFL Diversity & Inclusion research report series began analyzing data on occupational mobility patterns commencing with the start of the 2012 NFL regular season in order to develop actionable data-driven policy and best practices recommendations. The current study on occupational mobility patterns expands and complements existing research within this space via an extensive analysis related to whether ethnic minorities face occupational access barriers after one or more stints as a head coach in the NFL. In addition, this research study examines occupational access barriers and mobility patterns with respect to NFL general managers, offensive coordinators, defensive coordinators and other primary NFL team position coaches—for example, quarterbacks coach, wide receivers coach, tight ends coach, running backs coach, offensive line coach, linebackers coach, defensive line coach and defensive backs (secondary) coach.

The current empirical research study aims to address the following four research questions:

- 1. Do coaches and other leaders of color within the NFL face actual (and perceived) access barriers with respect to occupational mobility patterns?***
- 2. What factors and variables impact and influence the occupational mobility patterns of coaches and other leaders of color within the NFL?***
- 3. What are examples of innovative practical strategies with respect to improving career opportunities for coaches and other leaders of color within the NFL?***
- 4. How can the Rooney Rule be revamped, revised, improved, supplemented and strengthened?***

Based on the findings of the current study, the NFL and teams within the league must continue to focus on retention, career progression, continued access and “life after being a head coach” in addition to the central goal of the Rooney Rule related to initial entry/access for ethnic minorities.¹ The findings of the current study indicate that, historically, NFL teams have been reluctant to hire a person of color for a head coach, offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator position after a person of color has previously served as a head coach in the NFL.

Since the start of the 1963 NFL season, 115 White individuals have been hired as an NFL head coach, offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator after a first NFL head coach opportunity, whereas only 20 men of color have been hired as an NFL head coach, offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator after a first head coach opportunity.

¹ It is important to note that mere technical compliance with Rooney Rule requirements does not guarantee that men of color are truly provided with a meaningful opportunity to compete for open general manager and head coach positions.

For example, Ron Rivera—a Latino American coach—was recently named head coach of Washington after previously serving as head coach of the Carolina Panthers from 2011-2019. Mike McCarthy was recently named head coach of the Dallas Cowboys after previously serving as head coach of the Green Bay Packers from 2006-2018. Jason Garrett was recently named offensive coordinator of the New York Giants after previously serving as head coach of the Dallas Cowboys from 2011-2019. Jay Gruden was recently named offensive coordinator of the Jacksonville Jaguars after previously serving as head coach of Washington from 2014-2019. And, Raheem Morris—an African American coach—was recently named defensive coordinator of the Atlanta Falcons after previously serving as head coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers from 2009-2011.²

In addition, since the start of the 1963 NFL season, 27 White individuals have been hired as an NFL head coach, offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator after a second NFL head coach opportunity, whereas only three men of color have been hired as an NFL head coach, offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator after a second head coach opportunity. For example, Pat Shurmur was recently hired as offensive coordinator of the Denver Broncos after previously serving as head coach of the Cleveland Browns (2011-2012) and New York Giants (2018-2019). Gary Kubiak was recently hired as offensive coordinator of the Minnesota Vikings after previously serving as head coach of the Houston Texans (2006-2013) and the Denver Broncos (2015-2016). And, Jack Del Rio was recently hired as defensive coordinator of Washington after previously serving as head coach of the Jacksonville Jaguars (2003-2011) and the Raiders (2015-2017).

Nonetheless, the hiring of Lovie Smith and Jim Caldwell as “second opportunity” NFL head coaches in 2014 combined with the hiring of Hue Jackson as a “second opportunity” NFL head coach in January 2016 and the recent hiring of Ron Rivera as a “second opportunity” NFL head coach in January 2020 serve as indicators of improvement and hope.³

2 Chan Gailey and Mike Nolan are not included/considered as new additions to the data set for this 2020 report because each of these current NFL team coordinators previously served as an offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator following a head coach stint but prior to their current coordinator position (for example, this is Chan Gailey’s second offensive coordinator position since coaching the Buffalo Bills from 2010-2012, and Mike Nolan is in his fourth defensive coordinator position since coaching the San Francisco 49ers from 2005-2008). As a result, Gailey and Nolan were previously included in the calculation of this data point within prior reports.

3 In March 2016, Lovie Smith became the first former NFL head coach of color to be named a head coach of a college football team in the Football Bowl Subdivision when he accepted the head football coach position at the University of Illinois.

As of February 2020, 11 out of the 22 total NFL head coaches of color from January 1963 to February 2020—including Ron Rivera—have earned a second opportunity to be the head coach of an NFL team.

A primary challenge for candidates of color is breaking into the head coach pipeline, as many head coaches and key position coaches continue to get “reshuffled,” thereby preventing new talent from entering the candidate pipeline. For example, eight of the eleven recently hired offensive coordinators have previously served as an NFL offensive coordinator—Joe Brady, Shane Steichen and Scott Turner are the only three recently hired first-time NFL offensive coordinators. In addition, five of the twelve recently hired defensive coordinators have previously served as an NFL defensive coordinator—Josh Boyer, Andre Patterson, Phil Snow, Brandon Staley, Cory Undlin, Anthony Weaver and Adam Zimmer represent the seven recently hired first-time NFL defensive coordinators.

Relatedly, Andre Patterson and Anthony Weaver represent the two “new talents in the pipeline” related to leaders of color who entered the head coach pipeline by earning a coordinator opportunity during the most recent hiring cycle, as Patterson was promoted from defensive line coach to co-defensive coordinator of the Minnesota Vikings and Weaver was promoted from defensive line coach to defensive coordinator of the Houston Texans. The three other men of color hired to coordinator positions during the most recent hiring cycle (Raheem Morris, Joe Woods and Patrick Graham) all have previous NFL team coordinator experience. This “reshuffling effect” reduces the number of opportunities for new candidates to break into the head coach pipeline.

The following review of literature section provides an overview of relevant empirical research on occupational mobility patterns in the sport business industry. Social capital theory, particularistic mobility thesis, minority vulnerability thesis and performance-reward bias constructs provide a foundational theoretical framework for the current research study. One of the primary objectives of this research report is to apply existing empirical research to the findings of the current study in order to create awareness and accelerate transparency with the ultimate aspiration of reducing the degree of racial bias and other problematic biases embedded within the overall hiring process.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Performance-Reward Bias

Rider et al. (2016) researched racial disparity in NFL leadership positions and examined how “performance-reward bias” (for example, lesser rewards for equivalent performance) generates a racial disparity in leadership by suppressing the rate at which minorities—relative to equally-performing whites—are promoted to positions considered a prerequisite for organizational leadership. These scholars found that performance-reward bias was prevalent in lower level positions (for example, position coaches). For instance, coaches of color were initially hired into positions with inferior promotion prospects and then subsequently “stacked” into positions with similarly inferior promotion probabilities. As explained by Rider et al. (2016), performance-reward bias “is a specific within-job mechanism that generates differential returns to position for equivalent performance in the same position . . . performance-reward bias implies that even when racial minorities are allocated to relatively promising positions, they are less likely to continue ascending the corporate hierarchy as white, equivalently-performing position-holders” (pp. 2, 9). Stated differently, in order to earn equally positive subjective evaluations of performance, “racial minorities must invest more in personal relationships, education, and the accumulation of work experience before their promotion prospects become equivalent to those of white employees” (p. 13).

This empirical research study by Rider et al. (2016) suggests “pipeline programs designed to increase diversity in leadership by increasing diversity in lower level positions are undermined by performance-reward bias” (p. 6). For example, performance-reward bias in key lower-level positions such as quarterbacks coach, linebackers coach, and defensive backs (secondary) coach results in access barriers for men of color with respect to the inability of attaining key leadership positions such as offensive coordinator and defensive coordinator. Rider et al. (2016) found “clear evidence of a racial disparity in promotion prospects for NFL assistant coaches

that have persisted for over two decades despite a high-profile intervention designed to advance the candidacies of minority candidates” (p. 36). Findings from this study and parallel recent empirical research studies suggest that “racial stereotypes continue to be influential in football culture and leadership” (Siler, 2018).⁴

Particularistic Mobility Thesis and Minority Vulnerability Thesis

Day (2015) investigated the effects of job-level, task-based segregation on racial differences in college football coaching promotions. Day (2015) examined the connection between occupational attainment of college coaches and the particularistic mobility thesis. The particularistic mobility thesis can be defined as “the predominant theoretical explanation for racial/ethnic differences in both authority attainment and promotions in the labor market, particularly in high-status professions” (p. 3). As explained by Day (2015), “According to the particularistic mobility thesis, performance indicators in high-level positions are inherently vague and uncertain, and the characteristics that upper management looks for when considering promotions such as loyalty, leadership potential, trustworthiness, and achievement orientation are not easily measured and quantified. This mobility report opens promotion decisions to ‘particularistic manipulation,’ or the subjective (mis) perceptions of upper level managers” (p. 3). Day (2015) applied the particularistic mobility thesis to examine race-based occupational mobility differences that result from “subjective aspects of work, such as upper level managers’ (mis)perceptions, stereotypes, and biased evaluations of workers’ managerial abilities” (p. 25).

⁴ As explained by Kay et al. (2009), NFL leadership candidates of color “will have to do more than simply overcome the obstacles inherent in how the current social system is structured; they will also have to alter how people think it should be structured” (p. 421-22).

Day (2015) further explained that, as a result of these (mis) perceptions of key decision makers, “minority workers follow a more circumscribed pathway to high-level positions where they are limited to formal channels of mobility based on their objective experience, credentials and skills. White workers, on the other hand, not only have access to formal channels of mobility but also benefit from the subjective and sometimes biased assessments of their skills and abilities” (pp. 3-4). Day (2015) suggested that candidates of color experience “restricted access to jobs, occupations, and economic sectors that offer the opportunity to develop requisite human capital, social network contacts, and display the particularistic criteria necessary for promotion into high-status jobs and occupations has been implicated in divergent mobility outcomes for White and Black workers” (p. 2). Day concluded that, “if coaches are hired into executive positions based on their perceived intangible traits (for example, loyalty, leadership abilities, and work effort), in addition to their real or perceived professional experience and technical expertise, the particularistic manipulation of these traits and skills will likely lead to more numerous and less constricted promotion opportunities for White coaches than for Black coaches” (p. 25).

In a similar recent empirical research study that investigated racial differences in occupational mobility patterns of college football coaches, Day (2018) found that, “congruent with the particularistic mobility thesis, black coaches were less likely than white coaches to traverse mobile career patterns and, congruent with the minority vulnerability thesis, were more likely to become stuck in stagnant career trajectories characterized by low-level positions that presumably make them more vulnerable to dismissal and downward mobility” such as being demoted/reassigned from defensive coordinator to linebackers coach (p. 11).⁵ Day (2018) also examined the impact of rushed/hurried hiring decisions—according to the particularistic mobility and minority vulnerability theses, the “quick, secret, and informal processes are expected to produce better outcomes for white coaches and worse outcomes for black coaches” (p. 12).⁶

⁵ The minority vulnerability thesis posits that “African Americans experience different rates of promotion, are less likely to attain authoritative positions within work organizations, and are more likely to experience downward mobility in high status occupations” (Day, 2018, p. 2).

Unconscious Bias and Social Capital

Scholars have previously examined how unconscious bias and aversive racism impact occupational mobility (for example, see Bridgeman, 2008; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998; and Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). Because these processes and biases are “subtle and operate largely by default” (Wang, 2006, p. 16), company decision-makers (e.g., general managers of NFL teams) are prone to categorize and stereotype with respect to a candidate’s qualifications for a specific opportunity without any intent or conscious awareness. As explained by Bridgeman (2008), “many people who do not consider themselves to be racist or sexist and who generally may want to have a diverse working environment may still select people for participation in ways that are biased and discriminatory” (p. 267). Collins (2007) examined the impact of the Rooney Rule and the importance of “social capital.” Collins suggested, “due in large part to unconscious bias; these networks tend to reinforce traditional power structures by limiting hiring practices and/or business transactions to other elites or acquaintances within the network . . . Since it is unconscious, this bias is neither cognitive nor intentional . . . unconscious bias influences head coaching selections through the internalization of stereotypes regarding African Americans’ intellectual inferiority and the establishment and maintenance of ‘old boy’ networks” (pp. 875, 876).⁷

Social capital can be defined as “the goodwill that is engendered by the fabric of social relations and that can be mobilized to facilitate action” (Adler & Kwon, 2002, p. 17). Social capital influences career success (see Gabbay & Zuckerman, 1998) and creates a richer pool of recruits for companies (see Fernandez, Castilla, & Moore, 2000).

⁶ In another recent empirical study assessing the particularistic mobility thesis, Wilson et al. (2018) concluded that, “African Americans, relative to Whites, have low rates of mobility and are restricted to relying on a circumscribed and formal mobility route that is structured by a traditional range of stratification-based causal factors, i.e., background socio-economic status, human capital and job/labor market characteristics . . . a racialized glass ceiling in mobility prospects emerges across destinations based on two criteria—income and supervisory authority.”

⁷ Art Rooney II, president of the Pittsburgh Steelers, offered the following narrative in February 2019: “We have to judge our progress on the results. It’s like looking at your team. You are what your record says you are. I’m not going to sit here and accuse anyone of racism, but the facts are what they are. We have to look at the opportunities that were given to minorities this latest round and see what can be done about it.”

Day and McDonald (2010) analyzed the “differential processes by which social capital influences occupational attainment of whites and racial minorities” with respect to collegiate football coaches; these scholars found that people of color often lack the social capital resources (i.e., resources embedded in networks) needed to facilitate occupational advancement (p. 140). Day and McDonald (2010) found that same race contacts and strong ties are positively associated with the number of promotions received by White coaches; however, those same ties were found to be the least effective for African American coaches because “a diverse set of weak-tied network resources offer the greatest opportunities for promotion among black coaches . . . access to higher status contacts also appears to be a more important predictor of mobility among black coaches than among white coaches” (p. 140).

This reality is significant as Sagas and Cunningham (2005) explained that the “lack of same-race ties among Black coaches thus can be detrimental to the development and success of Black coaches” (p. 791). In a similar empirical research study, Cunningham and Sagas (2005) analyzed the notion of access discrimination with respect to coaching positions in college athletics. These scholars found that, based on the predominance of same-race hiring practices, personnel decisions in college athletics are often influenced by “who you know who is racially similar” (p. 157).

Kilduff et al. (2016) recently extended the social network research literature with an empirical investigation related to the career mobility impact of aspiring NFL head coach candidates (i.e., “acolytes”)⁸ developing “advantageous connections” with high-reputation industry leaders (e.g., NFL head coaches such as Bill Belichick and Mike Tomlin). These scholars investigated the occupational mobility patterns of 1,298 NFL head coaches and position coaches from 1980-2010 in order to determine the long-term significance of initially beneficial workplace ties between acolytes and high-reputation leaders. Kilduff et al. (2016) concluded that “affiliation with a successful leader can facilitate or damage career progress, even in an industry in which quantitative indicators of performance are routinely used to assess outcomes” (p. 371). Kilduff et al. (2016) observed that “high-reputation social connections can be considered not just as signals of underlying quality” but also as “lenses that

potentially distort individuals’ qualities both beneficially (in terms of enhancing the value of prior performance) and detrimentally (in terms of ex post settling up)” (pp. 369-70). One of the primary practical implications of the research study was as follows: “The results concerning NFL promotions indicate an industry system in which social connections, rather than just skills and abilities, enable people to move into positions such as head coach” (p. 370).

Seebruck and Savage (2013) examined how an assistant coach’s race and the race of his supervisor (the head coach) interact to affect occupational mobility. Seebruck and Savage (2013) found that African American collegiate basketball assistant coaches working under African American head coaches (“black homophily”) were significantly disadvantaged with respect to the probability of earning a head coaching position; results indicated that while homophily (same race connection) is neither advantageous nor disadvantageous for White job candidates, it is disadvantageous for African American job candidates. As explained by Seebruck and Savage (2013), “this racially based disadvantage makes it difficult for minority job candidates to break through the glass ceiling and has real-world financial implications . . . effort should be directed at ensuring that white coaches continue to hire and sponsor capable minority assistant coaches” (pp. 75, 98).

In another recent empirical study within the sports context, Pope, Price, and Wolfers (2018) analyzed the behavior of National Basketball Association (NBA) referees in order to examine the potential impact of racial bias with respect to the number of fouls called on players by referees. The findings of this research study suggest that publicity and awareness providing “evidence of racial bias was enough to bring about meaningful change . . . simply making individuals more aware of their own bias leads them to have decreased prejudice . . . incentives, pressure, and transparency can change racial biases” (pp. 4991-4992). As explained by Pope et al. (2018), “while social and legal changes have eliminated many institutionalized forms of racial discrimination, the same policy tools may have less leverage against the implicit racial stereotypes that underpin in-group favoritism” (p. 4988).

⁸ An “acolyte” can be defined as someone who has experience working on the same management team as one or more high-reputation leaders (see Kilduff et al., 2016).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study investigated data regarding NFL head coach demographics, tenure and occupational mobility patterns from January 1963 to February 2020. This specific range of years is utilized because 1963 serves as the first year during which the NFL began to track relevant data on head coach mobility patterns. Based on the NFL archival human resource database on head coaches, these data were analyzed to determine occupational mobility patterns. Interim head coaches were not included in the data set with respect to determining the total number of people who have held head coach positions in the NFL from January 1963 to February 2020. This study also contains data regarding NFL offensive coordinator, defensive coordinator and general manager demographics as well as tenure and mobility patterns from the start of the 2012 NFL regular season (September 5, 2012) to kickoff at Super Bowl LIV (February 2, 2020)—this NFL Diversity & Inclusion research report series began analyzing data on occupational mobility patterns commencing with the start of the 2012 NFL regular season. This research study also highlights mobility patterns of head coaches, offensive coordinators, defensive coordinators and general managers during the approximate one-year period from the day following Super Bowl LIII (February 4, 2019) to kickoff at Super Bowl LIV (February 2, 2020). A specific emphasis is placed on the occupational mobility patterns of offensive coordinators and defensive coordinators because these two positions have historically functioned as the primary occupational pipelines for NFL head coach hires. For instance, findings in the current research study demonstrate that 29 out of the 55 head coaches hired since the start of the 2012 NFL regular season were previously an offensive coordinator in the NFL for at least one full NFL season before earning a head coach opportunity. Sixteen of the 55 head coaches hired since the start of the 2012 NFL regular season were previously a defensive coordinator in the NFL for at least one full NFL season before earning a head coach opportunity. This study also spotlights additional key head coach “pipeline positions” such as quarterbacks coach, linebackers coach and defensive backs (secondary) coach.

A comprehensive database of descriptive data was also developed to analyze the career paths, organizational tenure and occupational mobility patterns of current NFL position coaches in conjunction with examining opportunities for these position coaches to earn promotions to coordinator or head coach positions. In addition, this study integrates descriptive data from recent relevant research conducted by the NFL related to occupational mobility and job success determinants of NFL head coaches.

Researchers verified the number of vacancies filled and individual separations, trajectories and occupational patterns of NFL head coaches, offensive coordinators, defensive coordinators and general managers based on data provided by the NFL. For example, if an individual was a head coach for multiple NFL teams, this study counts that coach one time in the data set because this study focuses on an analysis of access, opportunity and coaching mobility (i.e., the number of individuals who have held head coach positions) instead of the total number of head coach vacancies from January 1963 to February 2020. This analytical framework was also applied to the occupational mobility patterns of offensive coordinators, defensive coordinators and general managers from January 1963 to February 2020.

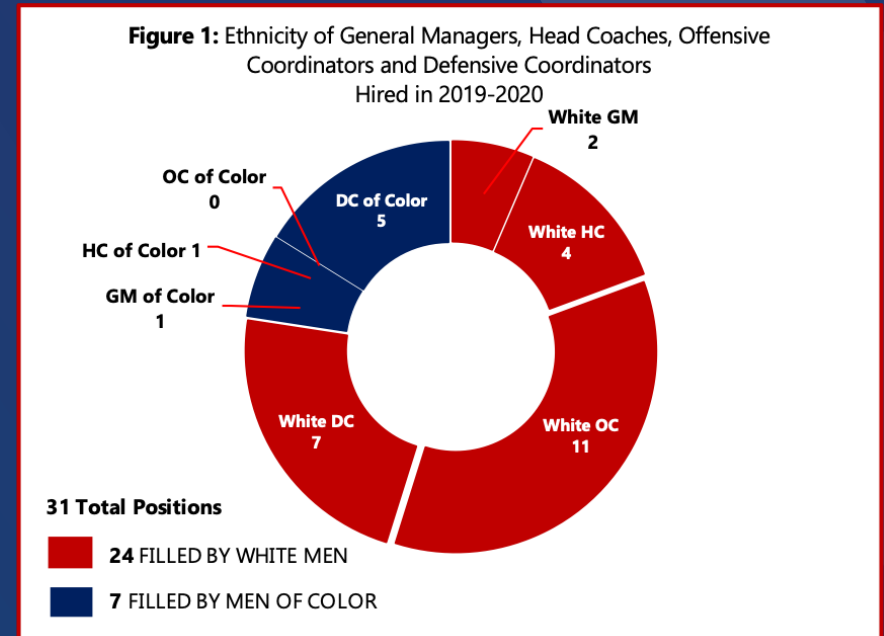
The next section of this report presents the findings and results related to an extensive descriptive analysis on the occupational mobility patterns of more than 500 current and former NFL head coaches, general managers, offensive coordinators, defensive coordinators and position coaches.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Between February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) and February 2, 2020 (day of Super Bowl LIV), NFL teams hired a total of 31 head coaches, offensive coordinators, defensive coordinators and general managers for open positions. White individuals were hired for 24 of these 31 available positions. Only seven different men of color were hired for these 31 recently filled positions (see Figure 1). In addition, during this same time period, six of the 31 head coaches, offensive coordinators, defensive coordinators and general managers who were fired, resigned, promoted, retired or otherwise “mutually parted ways” with an NFL team were men of color. Stated differently, from February 2019 to February 2020, the total number of men of color serving as head coaches, offensive coordinators, defensive coordinators and general managers increased only by one within the NFL—a marginal change with respect to improving leadership diversity and inclusion at the NFL team level.

Tables 1–4 and Figures 1–13 provide a summary overview of key findings and results of the research study. The remainder of this section expands on the quantitative findings highlighted in Tables 1–4 and Figures 1–13.

Figure 1: Ethnicity of General Managers, Head Coaches, Offensive Coordinators and Defensive Coordinators Hired in 2019-2020



"Only seven different men of color were hired for these 31 recently filled positions. In addition, during this same time period six of the 31 head coaches offensive coordinators, defensive coordinators and general managers who were fired, resigned, promoted, retired or otherwise 'mutually parted ways' with an NFL team were men of color. Only three of the nine head coaches of color hired since the start of the 2012 NFL season remain current NFL head coaches as of February 22, 2020 (Anthony Lynn, Brian Flores and Ron Rivera)."

Head Coach Career Pipelines and Multiple Head Coach Opportunities

Table 1: Head Coach Mobility Patterns (2019-2020)

Team	Former Head Coach	Race of Former Head Coach	Next Opportunity for Former Head Coach	Name of New Head Coach	Race of New Head Coach	Previous Position of New Head Coach
Carolina Panthers	Ron Rivera	Latino American	Head Coach, Washington	Matt Rhule	White	Head Coach, Baylor University
Cleveland Browns	Freddie Kitchens	White	Tight Ends Coach, New York Giants	Kevin Stefanski	White	Offensive Coordinator, Minnesota Vikings
Dallas Cowboys	Jason Garrett	White	Offensive Coordinator, New York Giants	Mike McCarthy	White	Head Coach, Green Bay Packers
New York Giants	Pat Shurmur	White	Offensive Coordinator, Denver Broncos	Joe Judge	White	Special Teams Coordinator & Wide Receivers Coach, New England Patriots
Washington	Jay Gruden	White	Offensive Coordinator, Jacksonville Jaguars	Ron Rivera	Latino American	Head Coach, Carolina Panthers

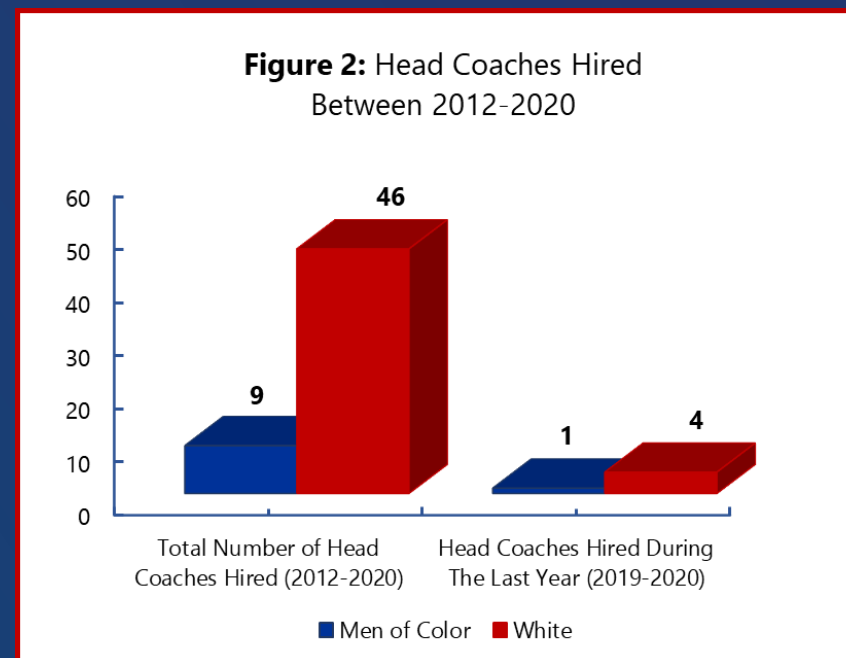
Date range for data: February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) to February 2, 2020 (date of Super Bowl LIV)

As illustrated in Table 1, between February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) and February 2, 2020 (day of Super Bowl LIV), NFL teams hired four White head coaches. During that same time period, NFL teams hired one head coach of color—Ron Rivera. Ron Rivera has been an NFL head coach since 2011 when he was named head coach of the Carolina Panthers. In addition, between the start of the 2012 NFL season (September 5, 2012) and Super Bowl LIV (February 2, 2020), NFL teams hired 46 White head coaches. During that same time period, NFL teams hired nine head coaches of color (see Figure 2).

"We are learning from our progress, and building a model for developing a sustainable diverse talent pool. The Occupational Mobility Report documents our efforts—both our successes and challenges—and assists us in achieving a future where diversity makes the best better and the sum of the parts is greater than the whole."

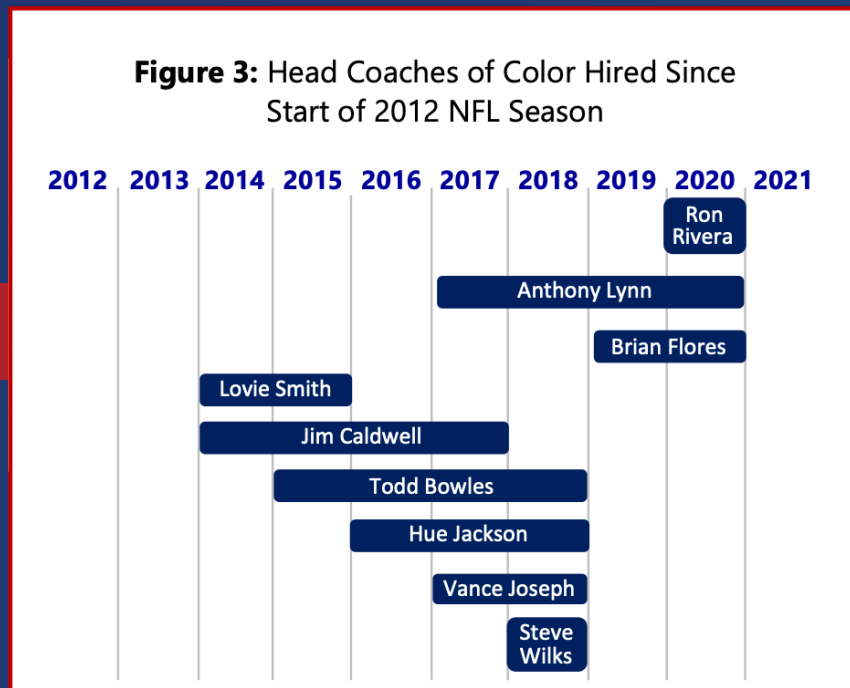
- Troy Vincent, NFL Executive Vice President of Football Ops

Figure 2: Head Coaches Hired Between 2012-2020



Notably, only three of the nine head coaches of color hired since the start of the 2012 NFL season remain current NFL head coaches as of February 22, 2020 (Anthony Lynn, Brian Flores and Ron Rivera). For instance, Lovie Smith served as head coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers during the 2014-2015 NFL seasons. Jim Caldwell served as head coach of the Detroit Lions from 2014-2017. Todd Bowles served as head coach of the New York Jets from 2015-2018. Hue Jackson served as head coach of the Cleveland Browns from 2016-2018. Vance Joseph served as head coach of the Denver Broncos from 2017-2018. Steve Wilks served as head coach of the Arizona Cardinals during the 2018 NFL season (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Head Coaches of Color Hired Since Start of 2012 NFL Season



Five current NFL head coaches have been hired since the day following Super Bowl LIII (February 4, 2019). Three of these five head coaches are first-time NFL head coaches (Joe Judge, Matt Rhule and Kevin Stefanski). Kevin Stefanski was most recently the offensive coordinator of the Minnesota Vikings. Joe Judge was most recently the special teams coordinator and wide receivers coach of the New England Patriots. Matt Rhule most recently served as the head football coach at Baylor University.

The other two recently hired head coaches are serving as NFL head coaches for the second time (Mike McCarthy and Ron Rivera). Mike McCarthy and Ron Rivera both most recently served as head coaches of another NFL team prior to their current head coach position. Mike McCarthy coached the Green Bay Packers from 2006-2018, and Ron Rivera coached the Carolina Panthers from 2011-2019. Mike McCarthy took a year away from coaching in order to spend time with his family during the 2019 NFL season before accepting the opportunity to coach the Dallas Cowboys commencing with the 2020 NFL season.

Three of the five recently hired head coaches have previous experience as an offensive coordinator (Mike McCarthy and Kevin Stefanski) or defensive coordinator (Ron Rivera) at the NFL level. Neither Matt Rhule nor Joe Judge have any prior experience as an offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator at the NFL level.

It is important to note that, as of February 22, 2020, all five of the head coaches that were fired during or shortly after the 2019 NFL season subsequently received a new head coach opportunity or earned a coaching opportunity in a key pipeline position such as offensive coordinator or tight ends coach. For instance, Ron Rivera was offered and accepted the head coach position with Washington. Jason Garrett, Jay Gruden and Pat Shurmur each earned the opportunity to once again serve as NFL offensive coordinators. Freddie Kitchens was named tight ends coach of the New York Giants.

In addition, among the five teams that hired a new head coach, 20 total interviews were conducted—men of color participated in seven of the 20 interviews and represented four of the 15 total prospective head coach candidates during the interview process (see Figure 4). Eric Bieniemy (offensive coordinator of the Kansas City Chiefs) interviewed with three teams, and Marvin Lewis (former NFL head coach and current co-defensive coordinator at Arizona State University) interviewed with two teams. Kris Richard (former NFL defensive coordinator with the Seattle Seahawks) interviewed with one team. Ron Rivera represented the fourth head coach candidate of color.

Figure 4: Individuals Interviewed To Fill Open Head Coaching Positions (2020)

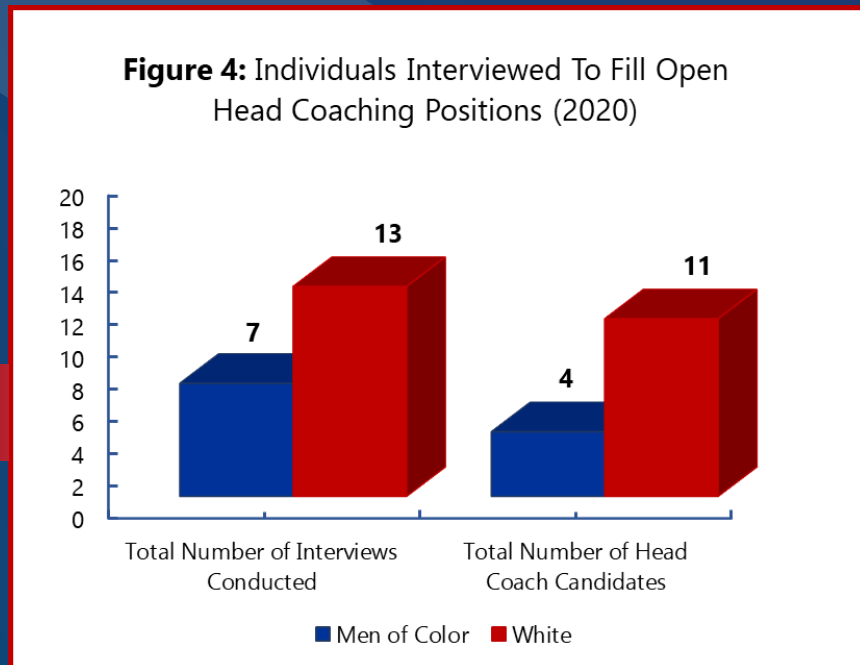
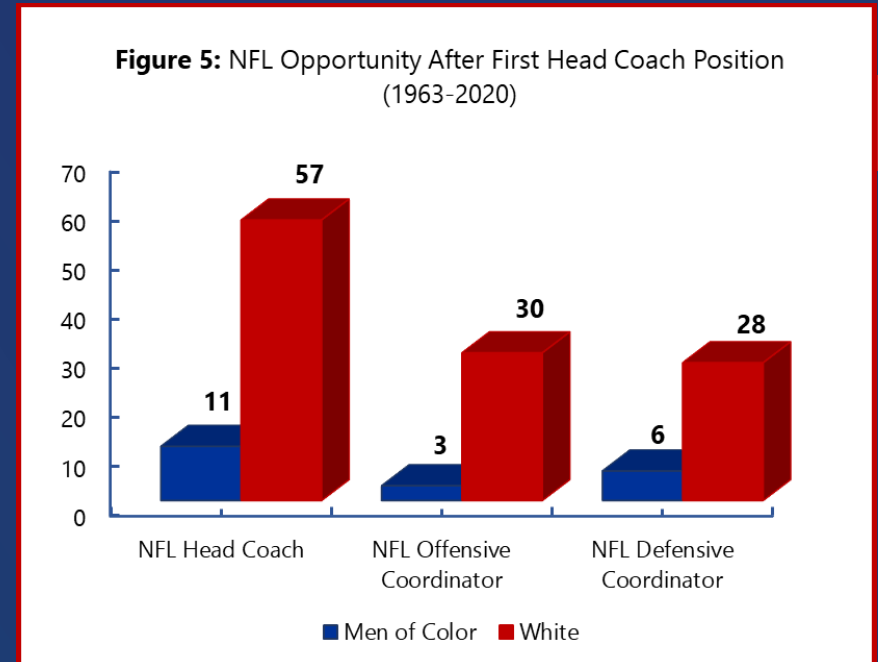


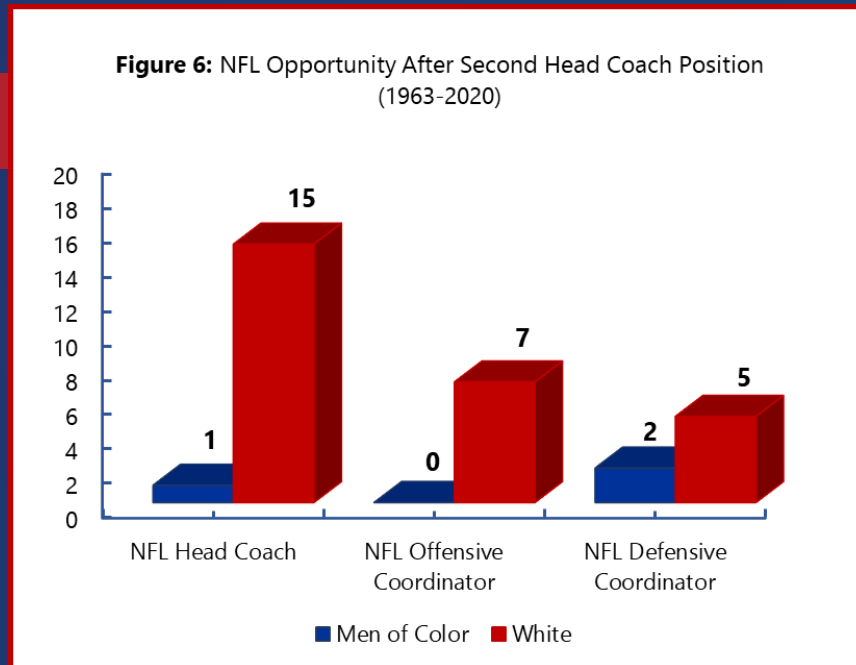
Figure 5: NFL Opportunity After First Head Coach Position (1963-2020)



As illustrated in Figure 5, after separating from a first head coach position, 11 different coaches of color (50% of the 22 total head coaches of color from 1963-2020) have received (and accepted) a second head coach opportunity in the NFL since 1963. For example, Ron Rivera recently earned a second NFL head coach opportunity with Washington. After separating from a first head coach position, 57 White individuals have received (and accepted) a second head coach opportunity since 1963. For example, Mike McCarthy recently earned a second NFL head coach opportunity with the Dallas Cowboys.

"Among the five teams that hired a new head coach in early 2020, 20 total interviews were conducted—men of color participated in seven of the 20 interviews and represented four of the 15 total prospective head coach candidates during the interview process."

Figure 6: NFL Opportunity After Second Head Coach Position (1963-2020)



As illustrated in Figure 6, after separating from a second head coach position, only one coach of color, Tom Flores, has received (and accepted) a third opportunity to be the head coach of an NFL team. Fifteen White coaches have received a third opportunity to be the head coach of an NFL team. For example, in January 2018 Jon Gruden was named head coach of the Raiders. This is Gruden's second head coach stint with the Raiders and third overall head coach opportunity; Gruden previously served as head coach of the Raiders (1998-2001) and Tampa Bay Buccaneers (2002-2008). In addition, two White coaches (Bill Parcells and Marty Schottenheimer) earned a fourth opportunity to be the head coach of an NFL team. Not a single person of color has earned a fourth opportunity to be the head coach of an NFL team.

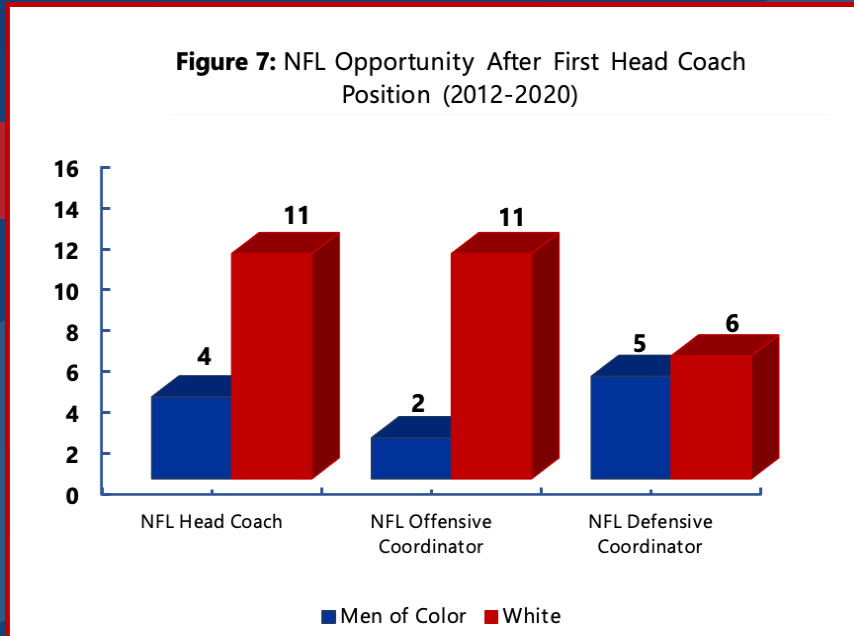
As also depicted in Figure 6, after separating from a second head coach position, seven White individuals have received the opportunity to serve as an NFL offensive coordinator (as compared with zero men

of color). For example, Pat Shurmur was recently named offensive coordinator of the Denver Broncos after previously serving as head coach of the Cleveland Browns (2011-2012) and New York Giants (2018-2019). Similarly, Gary Kubiak was recently named offensive coordinator of the Minnesota Vikings after previously serving as head coach of the Houston Texans (2006-2013) and Denver Broncos (2015-2016). Figure 6 also illustrates that, after separating from a second head coach position, five White individuals have received the opportunity to serve as an NFL defensive coordinator (as compared with two men of color). For example, Jack Del Rio was recently named defensive coordinator with Washington after previously serving as head coach of the Jacksonville Jaguars (2003-2011) and the Raiders (2015-2017).

"I think where we are right now, is not where we want to be, not where we need to be. We need to take a step back and look at what's happening with our hiring processes. The first thing we'll do as part of our diversity committee is really review this past season's hiring cycle and make sure we understand what went on and talk to the people involved both on the owner's side, management's side as well as the people that were interviewed."

- Art Rooney II, Team Owner of Pittsburgh Steelers

Figure 7: NFL Opportunity After First Head Coach Position (2012-2020)



As illustrated in Figure 7, between the beginning of the 2012 NFL regular season (September 5, 2012) and Super Bowl LIV (February 2, 2020), 11 White individuals and four men of color received a second head coach opportunity after separating (that is, being fired or promoted, resigning, retiring or otherwise “parting ways”) from a first head coach position during this time period. John Fox, Mike Mularkey and Jon Gruden are the only three coaches who received a third NFL head coach opportunity during this same time period.

During this same time period between the beginning of the 2012 NFL regular season (September 5, 2012) and Super Bowl LIV (February 2, 2020), 11 White individuals and two African American individuals received an opportunity to be an offensive coordinator after separating from a first head coach position. In January 2020, former first-time NFL head coach Jay Gruden was named offensive coordinator of the Jacksonville Jaguars after previously serving as head coach of Washington.

Also, in January 2020, former first-time NFL head coach Jason Garrett was named offensive coordinator of the New York Giants after previously serving as head coach of the Dallas Cowboys. Since 1963, after separating from a first head coach position, 30 White individuals have held offensive coordinator positions and 28 White individuals have held defensive coordinator positions (see Figure 5).⁹

Also, during this same time period, six White individuals and five African American individuals received an opportunity to be an NFL defensive coordinator after separating from a first head coach position. For example, in February 2020, former first-time NFL head coach Raheem Morris was named defensive coordinator of the Atlanta Falcons after previously working as head coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers (2009-2011). Since 1963, after separating from a first head coach position, three coaches of color (Tom Fears, Jim Caldwell and Hue Jackson) have held the offensive coordinator position and six coaches of color (Raheem Morris, Romeo Crennel, Leslie Frazier, Todd Bowles, Vance Joseph and Steve Wilks) have been defensive coordinators (see Figure 5).

Findings in the current research study also revealed that 18 African American individuals have been head coaches in the NFL since 1963; in addition, four different Latino Americans—including recently hired Ron Rivera and current Miami Dolphins head coach Brian Flores—have served as head coaches in the NFL since 1963. Based on internal NFL research data, NFL teams hired 93 head coaches during the previous fifteen-year period from 2006-2020—only 13 of these 93 head coach vacancies (14%) were filled by men of color.

Seven different African American individuals have held interim head coach positions (that is, these individuals were head coaches for a part of an NFL season) but were not offered the head coach position for the following full NFL season. In January 2015, Todd Bowles became the first African American leader named to a head coach position after

⁹ Chan Gailey and Mike Nolan are not included/considered as new additions to the data set for this 2020 report because each of these current NFL team coordinators previously served as an offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator following a head coach stint but prior to their current coordinator position (for example, this is Chan Gailey’s second offensive coordinator position since coaching the Buffalo Bills from 2010-2012, and Mike Nolan is in his fourth defensive coordinator position since coaching the San Francisco 49ers from 2005-2008). As a result, Gailey and Nolan were previously included in the calculation of this data point within prior reports.

previously serving as an interim head coach earlier in his career; Bowles served as interim head coach for three games with the Miami Dolphins during the 2011-2012 NFL season. In January 2017, Anthony Lynn became the second African American leader named to a head coach position after previously serving as an interim head coach earlier in his career; Lynn served as interim head coach for one game with the Buffalo Bills during the 2016-2017 NFL season.

Perry Fewell has served as an interim head coach twice—with the Buffalo Bills in 2009 and the Carolina Panthers in 2019—but has not yet received an opportunity to be an NFL head coach for at least one full NFL season.

Only eight NFL teams have hired two different African American and/or Latino American head coaches from 1963-2020. For example, in January 2018, Steve Wilks became the second African American head coach in the history of the Arizona Cardinals; Dennis Green was the head coach of the Cardinals from 2004-2006. Similarly, in January 2016, Hue Jackson became the second African American head coach in the history of the Cleveland Browns; Romeo Crennel was the head coach of the Cleveland Browns from 2005-2008. Also, with the hiring of Lovie Smith in 2014, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers became the first NFL team to hire three African American head coaches (Tony Dungy, Raheem Morris and Lovie Smith). The Buccaneers fired Smith in January 2016. In addition, the Indianapolis Colts became the first (and only) NFL team to hire African American head coaches back-to-back when the Colts hired Jim Caldwell to succeed Tony Dungy in 2009.

"The thing I think we have to look at is back when the Rooney Rule was passed and put in effect in 2003, there was a period there where we did see an increase in minority hiring at the head coaching position. And I think over a period of time there were 10 or 12 minority coaches hired. Since then that trend seems to reverse itself particularly in the last few years. We need to study what's going on and understand better what's going on and really decide how we improve the situation. If we changed that rule last year, obviously we have to look at what we can do differently now. Perhaps even expand the Rooney Rule into some of the lower levels, perhaps the coordinator level. Just to make sure the minority opportunities are there."

- Art Rooney II, Team Owner of Pittsburgh Steelers

Offensive and Defensive Coordinator Mobility Patterns, and Coordinator Career Opportunities Following NFL Head Coach Experience

Table 2: Offensive Coordinator Mobility Patterns (2019-2020)

Team	Name of Former Offensive Coordinator	Race of Former Offensive Coordinator	Next Opportunity for Former Offensive Coordinator	Name of New Offensive Coordinator	Race of New Offensive Coordinator	Previous Position of New Offensive Coordinator
Carolina Panthers	Norv Turner	White	[No New Position]	Joe Brady	White	Passing Game Coordinator and Wide Receivers Coach, LSU
Chicago Bears	Mark Helfrich	White	[No New Position]	Bill Lazor	White	Offensive Coordinator, Cincinnati Bengals (2017-2018)
Cleveland Browns	Todd Monken	White	Offensive Coordinator, University of Georgia	Alex Van Pelt	White	Quarterbacks Coach, Cincinnati Bengals
Denver Broncos	Rich Scangarello	White	Senior Offensive Assistant, Philadelphia Eagles	Pat Shurmur	White	Head Coach, New York Giants
Jacksonville Jaguars	John DeFilippo	White	Quarterbacks Coach, Chicago Bears	Jay Gruden	White	Head Coach, Washington
Los Angeles Chargers	Ken Whisenhunt	White	[No New Position]	Shane Steichen	White	Quarterbacks Coach, Los Angeles Chargers
Los Angeles Rams	[Vacant Position]	[Not Applicable]	[Not Applicable]	Kevin O'Connell	White	Offensive Coordinator, Washington
Miami Dolphins	Chad O'Shea	White	Wide Receivers Coach and Passing Game Coordinator, Cleveland Browns	Chan Gailey	White	Offensive Coordinator, New York Jets (2015-2016)
Minnesota Vikings	Kevin Stefanski	White	Head Coach, Cleveland Browns	Gary Kubiak	White	Assistant Head Coach/Offensive Advisor, Minnesota Vikings
New York Giants	Mike Shula	White	Quarterbacks Coach, Denver Broncos	Jason Garrett	White	Head Coach, Dallas Cowboys
Philadelphia Eagles	Mike Groh	White	Wide Receivers Coach, Indianapolis Colts	[Position Not Filled]	[Not Applicable]	[Not Applicable]
Washington	Kevin O'Connell	White	Offensive Coordinator, Los Angeles Rams	Scott Turner	White	Quarterbacks Coach, Carolina Panthers

Date range for data: February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) to February 2, 2020 (date of Super Bowl LIV)

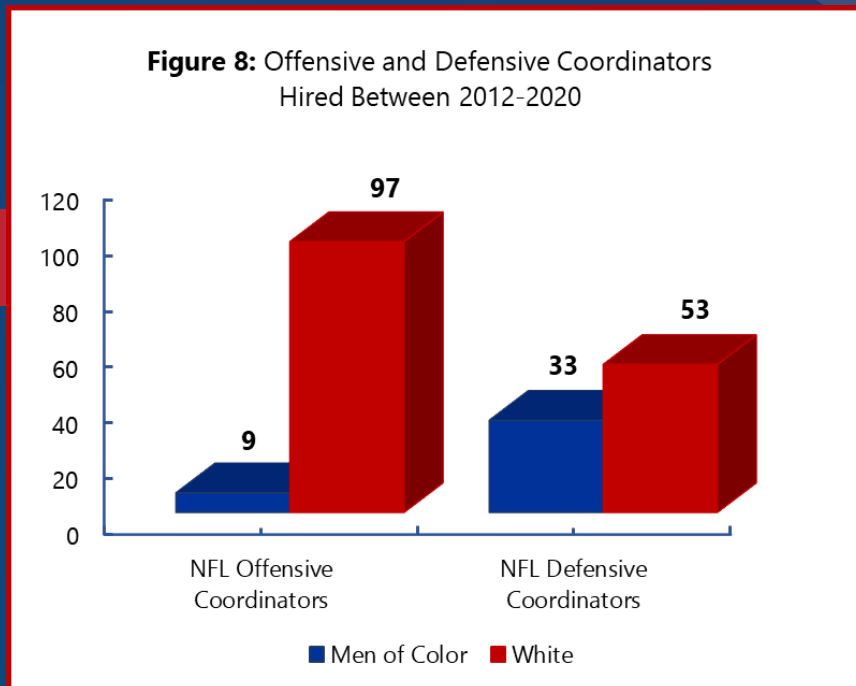
Table 3: Defensive Coordinator Mobility Patterns (2019-2020)

Team	Name of Former Defensive Coordinator	Race of Former Defensive Coordinator	Next Opportunity for Former Defensive Coordinator	Name of New Defensive Coordinator(s)	Race of New Defensive Coordinator(s)	Previous Position of New Defensive Coordinator(s)
Atlanta Falcons	[Vacant Position]	[Not Applicable]	[Not Applicable]	Raheem Morris	African American	Assistant Head Coach and Secondary Coach, Atlanta Falcons
Carolina Panthers	Eric Washington	African American	Defensive Line Coach, Buffalo Bills	Phil Snow	White	Defensive Coordinator, Baylor University
Cleveland Browns	Steve Wilks	African American	[No New Position]	Joe Woods	African American	Defensive Backs Coach and Passing Game Coordinator, San Francisco 49ers
Dallas Cowboys	Rod Marinelli	White	Defensive Line Coach, Las Vegas Raiders	Mike Nolan	White	Linebackers Coach, New Orleans Saints
Detroit Lions	Paul Pasqualoni	White	[No New Position]	Cory Undlin	White	Defensive Backs Coach, Philadelphia Eagles
Houston Texans	Romeo Crennel	African American	Advisor to Coaching Staff, Houston Texans	Anthony Weaver	African American	Defensive Line Coach, Houston Texans
Los Angeles Rams	Wade Phillips	White	[No New Position]	Brandon Staley	White	Outside Linebackers Coach, Denver Broncos
Miami Dolphins	Patrick Graham	African American	Defensive Coordinator and Assistant Head Coach, New York Giants	Josh Boyer	White	Defensive Passing Game Coordinator and Cornerbacks Coach, Miami Dolphins
Minnesota Vikings	George Edwards	African American	Senior Defensive Assistant, Dallas Cowboys	Andre Patterson Adam Zimmer	African American White	Defensive Line Coach, Minnesota Vikings Linebackers Coach, Minnesota Vikings
New York Giants	James Bettcher	White	[No New Position]	Patrick Graham	African American	Defensive Coordinator, Miami Dolphins
Tennessee Titans	Dean Pees	White	[Retired]	[Position Not Filled]	[Not Applicable]	[Not Applicable]
Washington	Greg Manusky	White	[No New Position]	Jack Del Rio	White	Head Coach, Raiders (2015-2017)

Date range for data: February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) to February 2, 2020 (date of Super Bowl LIV)

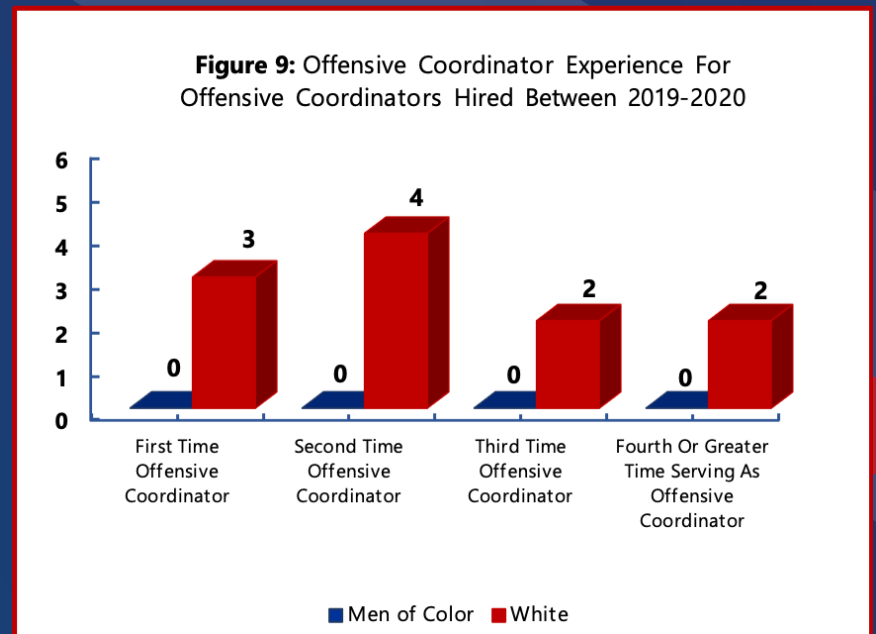
As Table 2 and Table 3 illustrate, between February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) and February 2, 2020 (day of Super Bowl LIV), NFL teams hired 11 White offensive coordinators and zero offensive coordinators of color. During the same approximate one-year time period, NFL teams hired seven White defensive coordinators and five defensive coordinators of color. Between the start of the 2012 NFL season (September 5, 2012) and Super Bowl LIV (February 2, 2020), NFL teams hired 97 White offensive coordinators and nine offensive coordinators of color. During that same time period, NFL teams hired 53 White defensive coordinators and 33 defensive coordinators of color (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Offensive and Defensive Coordinators Hired Between 2012-2020



Three of the 11 offensive coordinators hired between February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) and February 2, 2020 (day of Super Bowl LIV) are currently holding an NFL offensive coordinator position for the first time (Joe Brady, Shane Steichen and Scott Turner). Scott Turner briefly served as interim offensive coordinator of the Carolina Panthers in December 2019. Four of the 11 offensive coordinators hired during this time period are serving as an NFL offensive coordinator for the second time (Alex Van Pelt, Jason Garrett, Jay Gruden and Kevin O’Connell). Two offensive coordinators hired during this time period are serving as an NFL offensive coordinator for the third time (Gary Kubiak and Bill Lazor). One offensive coordinator hired during this time period is serving as an NFL offensive coordinator for the fourth time (Pat Shurmur). And, one offensive coordinator hired during this time period is serving as an NFL offensive coordinator for the sixth time (Chan Gailey) (see Figure 9).

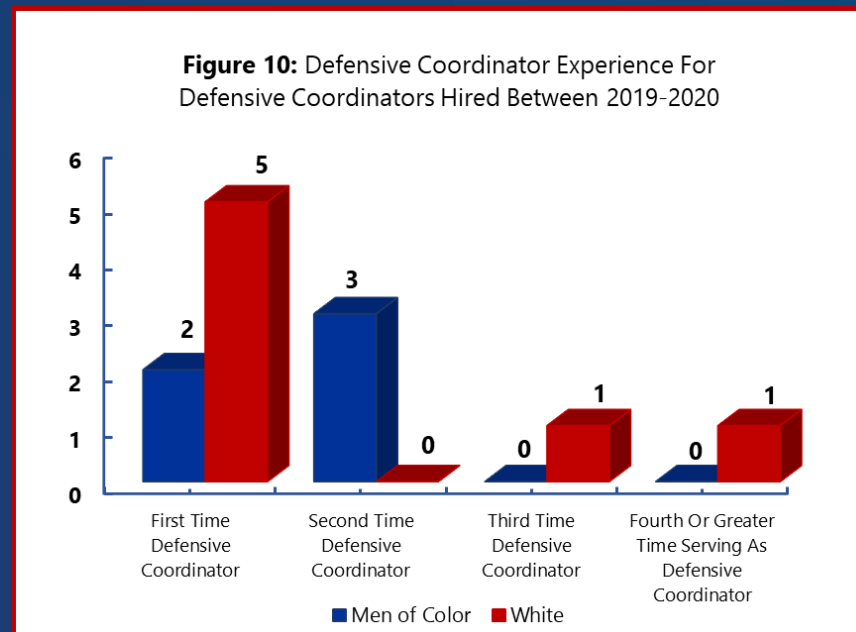
Figure 9: Offensive Coordinator Experience For Offensive Coordinators Hired Between 2019-2020



Three of the 11 offensive coordinators hired between the day following Super Bowl LIII (February 4, 2019) and kickoff at Super Bowl LIV (February 2, 2020) served as the head coach of a different NFL team immediately before being named offensive coordinator of their current NFL team (Jason Garrett, Jay Gruden and Pat Shurmur). Three of the 11 offensive coordinators hired during this same time period held the quarterbacks coach position with either a different NFL team or their current NFL team immediately before being hired as (or promoted to) offensive coordinator of their current NFL team (Alex Van Pelt, Shane Steichen and Scott Turner). One of the 11 offensive coordinators hired during this same time period held the offensive coordinator position with a different NFL team immediately before being named offensive coordinator of their current NFL team (Kevin O’Connell)—it is important to note that Chan Gailey most recently served as offensive coordinator of the New York Jets (2015-2016) before recently being named offensive coordinator of the Miami Dolphins, and Bill Lazor most recently served as offensive coordinator of the Cincinnati Bengals (2017-2018) before recently being named offensive coordinator of the Chicago Bears. Gary Kubiak served as assistant head coach / offensive advisor for the Minnesota Vikings before being promoted to the offensive coordinator position with the Vikings, and Joe Brady served as the passing game coordinator and wide receivers coach for LSU (College Football Playoff champions for 2019-2020 season).

Seven of the 12 defensive coordinators hired between February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) and February 2, 2020 (day of Super Bowl LIV) are currently holding an NFL defensive coordinator position for the first time (Josh Boyer, Andre Patterson, Phil Snow, Cory Undlin, Brandon Staley, Anthony Weaver and Adam Zimmer). Three of the 12 defensive coordinators hired during this time period are serving as an NFL defensive coordinator for the second time (Patrick Graham, Raheem Morris and Joe Woods)—it is important to note that Raheem Morris briefly served as defensive coordinator of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers before being promoted to lead the team as its head coach in January 2009 when Jon Gruden was relieved of his head coach duties. One defensive coordinator hired during this time period is serving as an NFL defensive coordinator for the third time (Jack Del Rio). And, one defensive coordinator hired during this time period is serving as an NFL defensive coordinator for the eighth time (Mike Nolan) (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Defensive Coordinator Experience For Defensive Coordinators Hired Between 2019-2020



Four of the 12 defensive coordinators hired between February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) and February 2, 2020 (day of Super Bowl LIV) served as defensive back (secondary) coaches with either a different NFL team or their current NFL team immediately before being hired as (or promoted to) defensive coordinator of their current NFL team (Josh Boyer, Raheem Morris, Cory Undlin and Joe Woods). Three of the 12 defensive coordinators hired during this same time period served as linebackers coaches with either a different NFL team or their current NFL team immediately before being hired as (or promoted to) defensive coordinator of their current NFL team (Mike Nolan, Brandon Staley and Adam Zimmer). Two of the 12 defensive coordinators hired during this same time period served as defensive line coaches with their current NFL team immediately before being promoted to defensive coordinator (Andre Patterson and Anthony Weaver). One of the 12 defensive coordinators hired during this same time period held the defensive coordinator position with a different NFL team immediately before being named defensive coordinator of their

current NFL team (Patrick Graham). Phil Snow worked alongside new Carolina Panthers head coach Matt Rhule as the defensive coordinator at Baylor University before being named the defensive coordinator of the Carolina Panthers. Jack Del Rio most recently served as head coach of the Raiders (2015-2017) before recently accepting the defensive coordinator position with Washington.

Figure 11: NFL Offensive Coordinator Mobility Patterns (2012-2020)

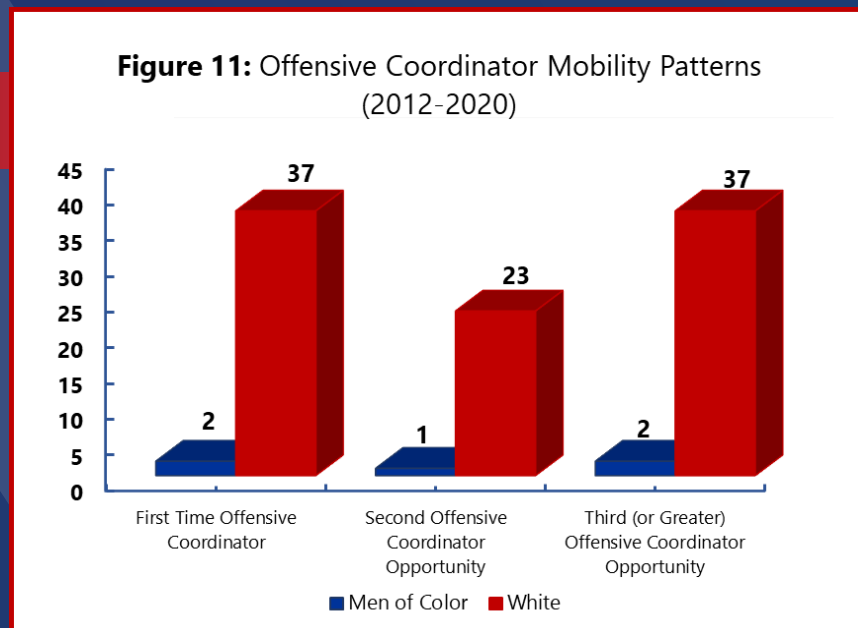
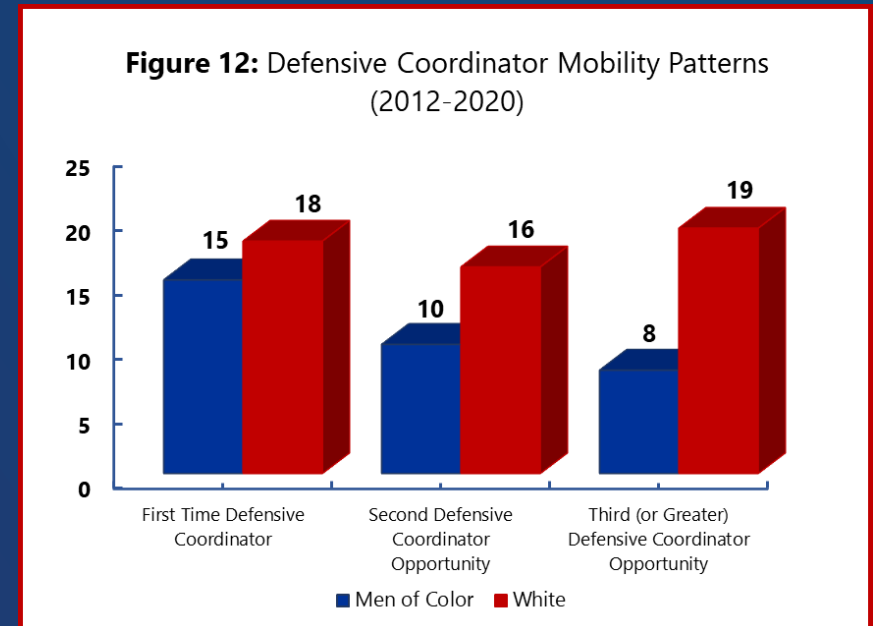


Figure 12: NFL Defensive Coordinator Mobility Patterns (2012-2020)



As illustrated in Figure 11 and Figure 12, between the beginning of the 2012 NFL regular season (September 5, 2012) and Super Bowl LIV (February 2, 2020), 39 White individuals have received a second opportunity to work as an offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator of an NFL team. During this same time period, only 11 men of color received a similar “second-chance” opportunity to be an offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator. In addition, during this same time period, 56 White individuals received a “third or greater chance” to work as an offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator of an NFL team, whereas only ten men of color received a similar “third or greater chance” to be an offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator.

General Manager Mobility Patterns

Table 4: General Manager Mobility Patterns (2019-2020)

Team	Name of Former General Manager	Race of Former General Manager	Name of New General Manager	Race of New General Manager	Previous Position of New General Manager
Cleveland Browns	John Dorsey	White	Andrew Berry	African American	Vice President of Football Operations, Philadelphia Eagles
Houston Texans	Brian Gaine	White	Bill O'Brien	White	[Not Applicable]
New York Jets	Mike Maccagnan	White	Joe Douglas	White	Vice President of Player Personnel, Philadelphia Eagles
Washington	Bruce Allen	White	[Position Not Filled]	[Not Applicable]	[Not Applicable]

Date range for data: February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) to February 2, 2020 (date of Super Bowl LIV)

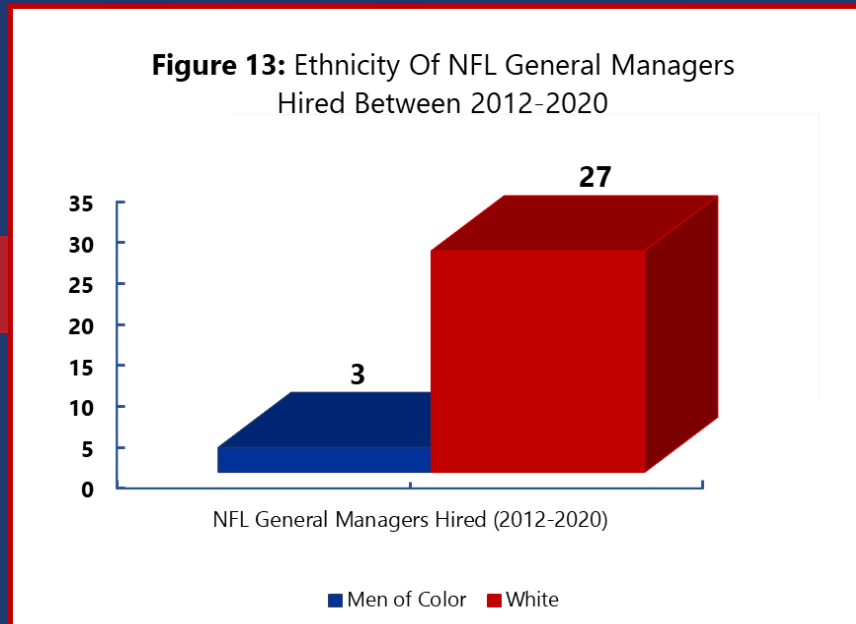
As Table 4 illustrates, between February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) and February 2, 2020 (day of Super Bowl LIV), NFL teams fired four White general managers and subsequently hired two White general managers. During that same time period, one African American general manager was hired (Andrew Berry). Washington decided not to fill its general manager vacancy—as a result, head coach Ron Rivera now functions as the primary football executive for Washington. In addition, Houston Texans head coach Bill O'Brien will now also function as the team's general manager commencing with the 2020 NFL season. It is also important to note that, in December 2019, the Jacksonville Jaguars fired then-current executive vice president of football operations Tom Coughlin.

"The Rooney Rule provides a point of entry, but to solve the long-term conundrum of opportunities versus the number of teams that can provide those opportunities, development of highly qualified individuals is imperative."

- Troy Vincent, NFL Executive Vice President of Football Operations

Between the beginning of the 2012 NFL regular season (September 5, 2012) and Super Bowl LIV (February 2, 2020), NFL teams hired 30 general managers—27 of the 30 general managers (90%) hired during this time frame are White individuals (see Figure 13). In January 2020, Andrew Berry was hired as general manager of the Cleveland Browns. It is important to note that Andrew Berry served as vice president of player personnel for the Cleveland Browns from 2016-2018. Chris Grier, who is African American, was hired as general manager of the Miami Dolphins in January 2016. Ray Farmer, who is African American, was hired as general manager of the Cleveland Browns in February 2014—Farmer was later fired by the Browns in January 2016. As of February 22, 2020, Andrew Berry and Chris Grier remained as the only two African American general managers of an NFL team. Former NFL general manager Rick Smith and former NFL front office executive Louis Riddick were two leaders of color who interviewed for (but were ultimately not offered) one of the recently filled general manager positions.

Figure 13: Ethnicity Of NFL General Managers Hired Between 2012-2020



Additional Key Research Findings Based on NFL Internal Data Collection & Analysis

Internal research by the NFL league office found that first-time NFL coaches hired during the eleven-year period between 2006-2016 who had less than five years of coordinator experience succeeded at a rate of 19% (that is, six of the 31 coaches had a career coaching record above .500 or coached in the playoffs more than once). This NFL research study also found that first-time NFL coaches hired between 2006-2016 who had five or more years of coordinator experience succeeded at a rate of 73% (that is, 11 of the 15 coaches had a career coaching record above .500 or coached in the playoffs more than once).

Eight NFL head coaches were hired between the day following Super Bowl LII (February 5, 2018) and kickoff at Super Bowl LIII (February 3, 2019). Six of these eight head coaches were hired as first-time NFL head coaches (Vic Fangio, Brian Flores, Kliff Kingsbury, Freddie Kitchens, Matt LaFleur, and Zac Taylor). Only two of the eight NFL head coaches hired during this same time period (Bruce Arians and Adam Gase) had prior NFL head coaching experience. Five of the six first-time head coaches hired during this same time period had two years or less of NFL coordinator experience before earning the opportunity to coach an NFL team.¹⁰ Vic Fangio spent 19 seasons serving as the defensive coordinator of five different NFL teams before earning his first NFL head coach opportunity.

Based on this internal research by the NFL league office discussed above, Fangio was better prepared and positioned to succeed as a first-time NFL head coach as compared with the other first-time head coaches as a result of Fangio’s extensive prior experience as

¹⁰ During the 2018 NFL season, Brian Flores was responsible for defensive play-calling for the New England Patriots; the Patriots did not officially hire a new defensive coordinator when Matt Patricia left the organization in order to accept the head coach position with the Detroit Lions.

an NFL coordinator. During the 2019 NFL regular season, the teams coached by Flores (Dolphins: 5-11 record), Kingsbury (Cardinals: 5-10-1 record), Kitchens (Browns: 6-10 record), Taylor (Bengals: 2-14 record) and LaFleur (Packers: 13-3 record) combined for 31 wins, 48 losses and 1 tie (39% combined winning percentage). LaFleur coached the Packers to the NFC championship game, whereas Freddie Kitchens was fired following one NFL season as head coach of the Browns. Conversely, Fangio coached the Denver Broncos to a 7-9 record (44% winning percentage) during the 2019 NFL season.

Each of the three first-time head coaches recently hired during or shortly after the 2019 NFL regular season (Judge, Rhule and Stefanski) have two full seasons or less of NFL coordinator experience before earning the opportunity to coach an NFL team—in fact, Judge and Rhule do not have any NFL coordinator level experience. Conversely, each of the two second-time head coaches (McCarthy and Rivera) accumulated six seasons of prior NFL coordinator experience before earning the opportunity to coach an NFL team. Again, based in part on the research by the NFL league office discussed above, McCarthy and Rivera are better prepared and positioned to succeed as NFL head coaches as compared with the first-time NFL head coaches with zero to minimal prior experience as an NFL offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator.

Research by the NFL league office also found that, during the eleven-year period between 2006-2016, second-time head coaches who had combined winning records during their first stint as an NFL head coach succeeded at a rate of 45%. Conversely, second-time head coaches who had combined losing records during their first stint as an NFL head coach only succeeded at a rate of 33%.

Two of the five NFL head coaches hired during or shortly after the 2019 NFL regular season are second-time NFL head coaches. Mike McCarthy, recently named new head coach of the Dallas Cowboys,

previously coached the Green Bay Packers to a combined 125-77-2 record from 2006-2018. The NFL research discussed above predicts a 45% success rate for McCarthy in his new head coach position. Ron Rivera, recently named new head coach of Washington, previously coached the Carolina Panthers to a combined 76-63-1 record from 2011-2019. Again, the NFL research discussed above predicts a 45% success rate for Rivera in his new head coach position.

"Findings in the current research study indicate that 18 African American individuals have been head coaches in the NFL since 1963; in addition, four different Latino Americans—including recently hired Ron Rivera and current Miami Dolphins head coach Brian Flores—have served as head coaches in the NFL since 1963. Based on internal NFL research data, NFL teams hired 93 head coaches during the previous fifteen-year period from 2006-2020—only 13 of these 93 head coach vacancies (14%) were filled by men of color."

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS: PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Coordinator Access Barriers and “The Reshuffling Effect”—Limiting the Leadership Talent Pipeline

Findings in the current research study indicate two of the five recently hired head coaches previously served as an NFL head coach. Similarly, eight of the 11 recently hired offensive coordinators previously served at least one prior stint as an NFL offensive coordinator for one or more full NFL seasons. In addition, five of the 12 recently hired defensive coordinators have previously served as an NFL defensive coordinator (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Previous NFL Experience For Head Coaches, Offensive Coordinators, and Defensive Coordinators Hired Between 2019-2020

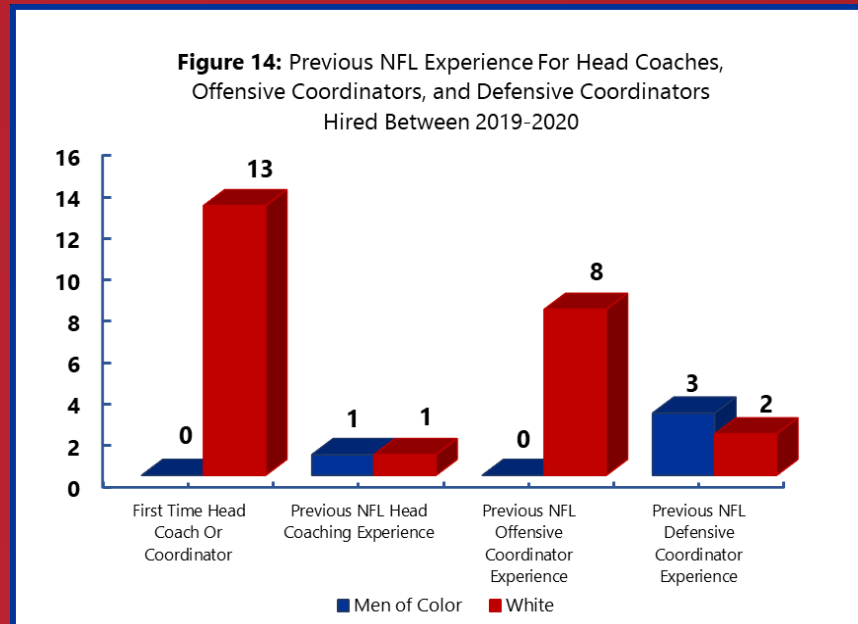
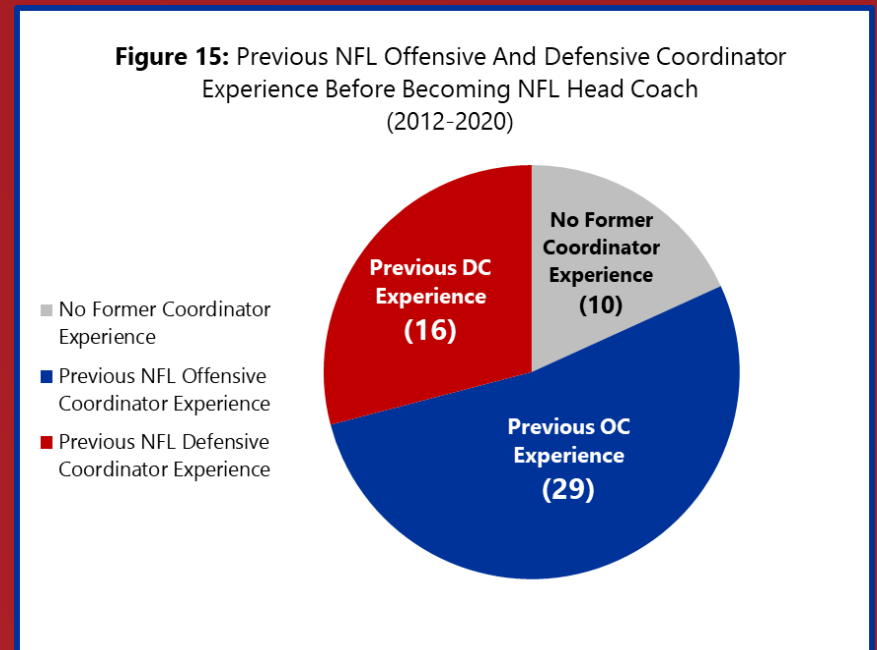
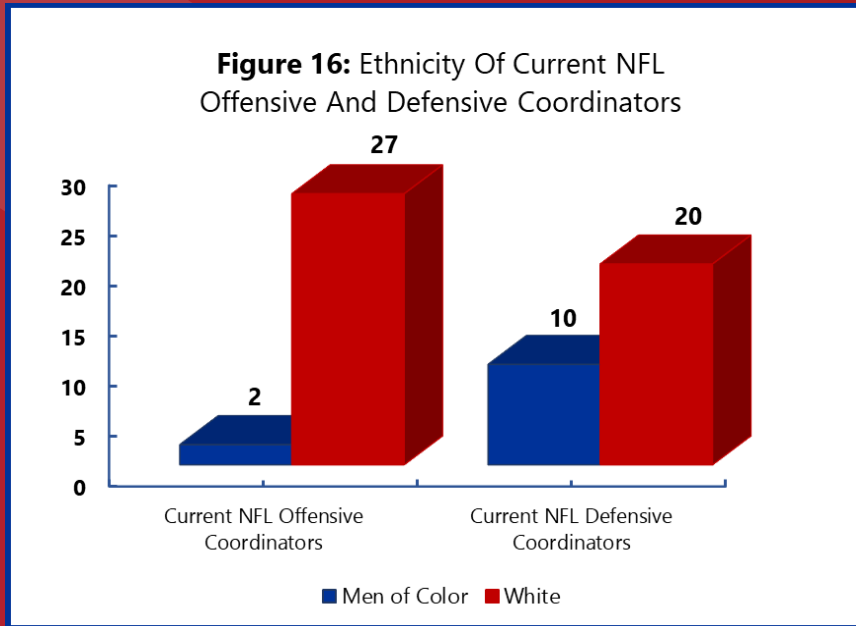


Figure 15: Previous NFL Offensive And Defensive Coordinator Experience Before Becoming NFL Head Coach (2012-2020)



Findings in the current research study also indicate 29 out of the 55 head coaches hired since the start of the 2012 NFL regular season were previously an offensive coordinator in the NFL for one or more full NFL seasons before earning a head coach opportunity. Sixteen of the 55 head coaches hired since the start of the 2012 NFL regular season were previously a defensive coordinator in the NFL before earning a head coach opportunity. As a result, 45 of the 55 head coaches hired since the start of the 2012 NFL regular were previously an NFL level offensive or defensive coordinator—recent head coach hires Matt Rhule and Joe Judge do not have any previous NFL level coordinator experience (see Figure 15).

Figure 16: Ethnicity Of Current NFL Offensive And Defensive Coordinators



These findings indicate that the offensive coordinator position is historically (but not always) the primary pipeline for aspiring first-time NFL head coaches, whereas defensive coordinator can be viewed as the next most viable pipeline for prospective first-time NFL head coaches. Professor Christopher Rider and colleagues (2016) studied NFL head coach changes from 1985-2012 and found that approximately 70% of all head coach promotions involved coaches who were promoted from a coordinator position. The empirical study by Rider and colleagues combined with the results of this research report reiterate the importance of men of color earning an opportunity to serve as an NFL offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator, as these two leadership positions function as viable springboards to NFL head coach opportunities. NFL coordinator experience is often viewed as essential with respect to NFL head coach prospects—especially for candidates of color. However, a primary occupational mobility access barrier for coaches of color exists at the coordinator level—only two of the 29 current NFL offensive coordinators are men of color, and only ten of the 30 current NFL defensive coordinators are men of color (see Figure 16).¹¹

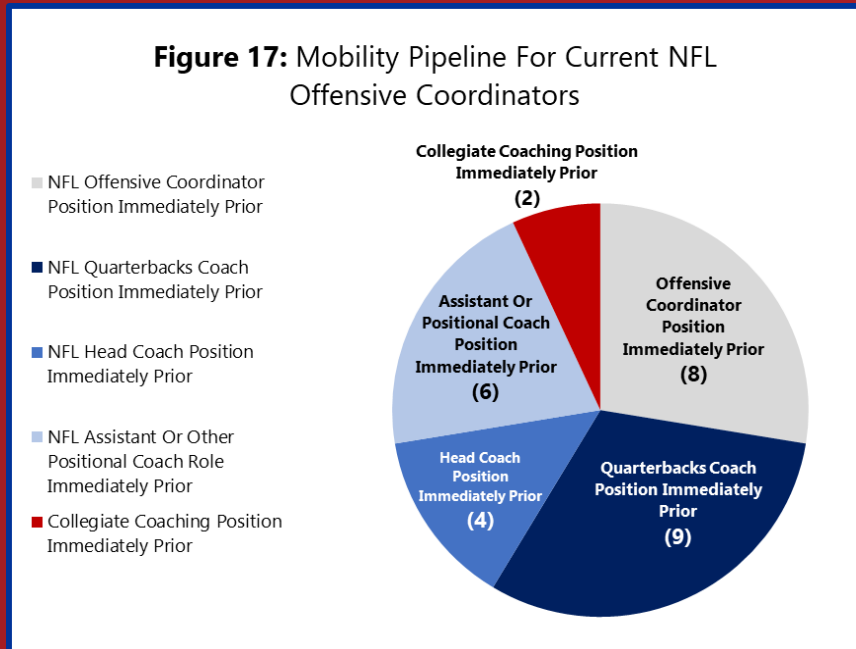
"Two of the five recently hired head coaches previously served as an NFL head coach. Eight of the 11 recently hired offensive coordinators previously served at least one prior stint as an NFL offensive coordinator for one or more full NFL seasons. Five of the 12 recently hired defensive coordinators have previously served as an NFL defensive coordinator."

Nine of the 29 current offensive coordinators of NFL teams held the quarterbacks coach position with either a different NFL team or their current NFL team immediately before being hired as (or promoted to) offensive coordinator of their current NFL team. Eight of the 29 offensive coordinators of NFL teams served as offensive coordinators of another NFL team immediately prior to being named offensive coordinator of their current team. Four of the 29 current offensive coordinators of NFL teams served as head coaches of another NFL team immediately prior to being named offensive coordinator of their current team. The remaining eight current NFL offensive coordinators served in the following positions immediately before being named to their current offensive coordinator position: tight ends coach (prior position of two current offensive coordinators), assistant head coach and offensive advisor (prior position of one current offensive coordinator), assistant head coach and tight ends coach (prior position of one current offensive

¹¹ As of February 22, 2020, the Arizona Cardinals, Philadelphia Eagles and San Francisco 49ers did not officially have an offensive coordinator on the coaching staff. Three head coaches are responsible for primary offensive play calling duties (Kliff Kingsbury, Doug Pederson and Kyle Shanahan). Also, as of February 22, 2020, the Baltimore Ravens, New England Patriots and Tennessee Titans did not officially have a defensive coordinator on the coaching staff; however, the Minnesota Vikings now employ two co-defensive coordinators.

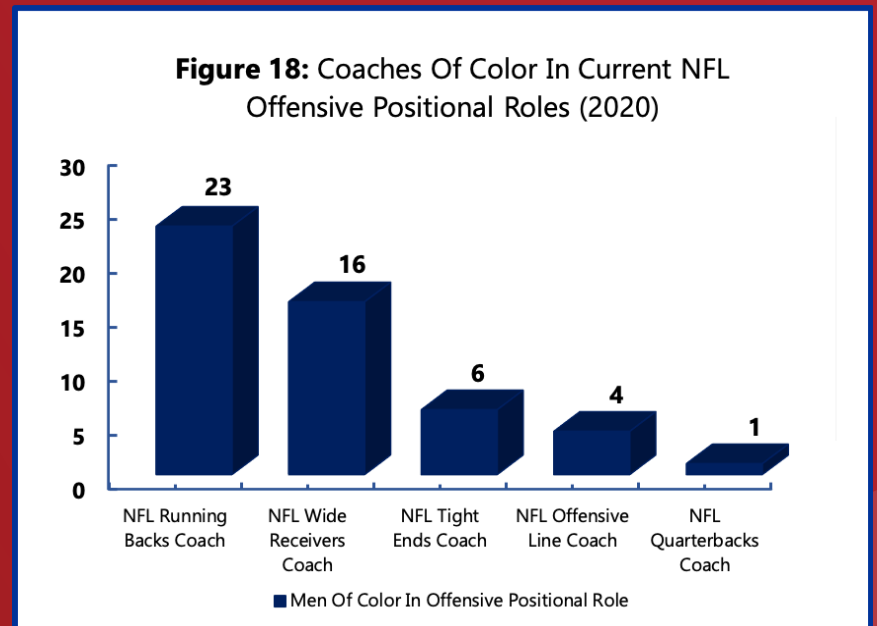
coordinator), wide receivers coach (prior position of one current offensive coordinator), running backs coach (prior position of one current offensive coordinator), college level offensive coordinator (prior position of one current offensive coordinator) and college level passing game coordinator and wide receivers coach (prior position of one current offensive coordinator) (see Figure 17). Notably, nine of the 29 current NFL offensive coordinators earned internal promotions with their current team from coaching positions such as quarterbacks coach, tight ends coach and running backs coach.

Figure 17: Mobility Pipeline For Current NFL Offensive Coordinators



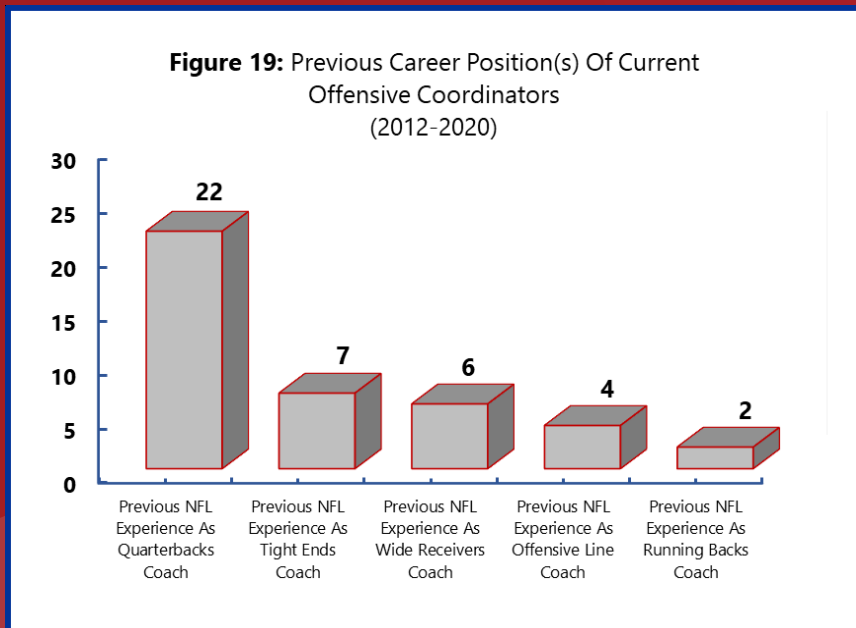
The vast majority of men of color serving as offensive position coaches oversee running backs (23 current men of color serving as NFL running backs coaches as of February 6, 2020) or wide receivers (16 men of color currently serving as NFL wide receivers coaches as of February 6, 2020), whereas only one African American coach (Marcus Brady) currently holds the quarterbacks coach position, which functions as a primary pipeline to become an offensive coordinator—it is important to note that Jim Caldwell was unable to serve as the quarterbacks coach of the Miami Dolphins during the 2019 NFL season due to medical/health challenges. In addition, as of February 6, 2020, four men of color served as offensive line coaches and six men of color served as tight ends coaches for NFL teams (see Figure 18).

Figure 18: Coaches Of Color In Current NFL Offensive Positional Roles (2020)



Twenty-two of the 29 current NFL offensive coordinators have prior experience as quarterbacks coaches at the NFL level. Seven current offensive coordinators have prior experience as NFL tight ends coaches. Six current offensive coordinators have prior experience as NFL wide receivers coaches. Four current offensive coordinators have prior experience as NFL offensive line coaches. And, only two current offensive coordinators have prior experience as NFL running backs coaches (see Figure 19).

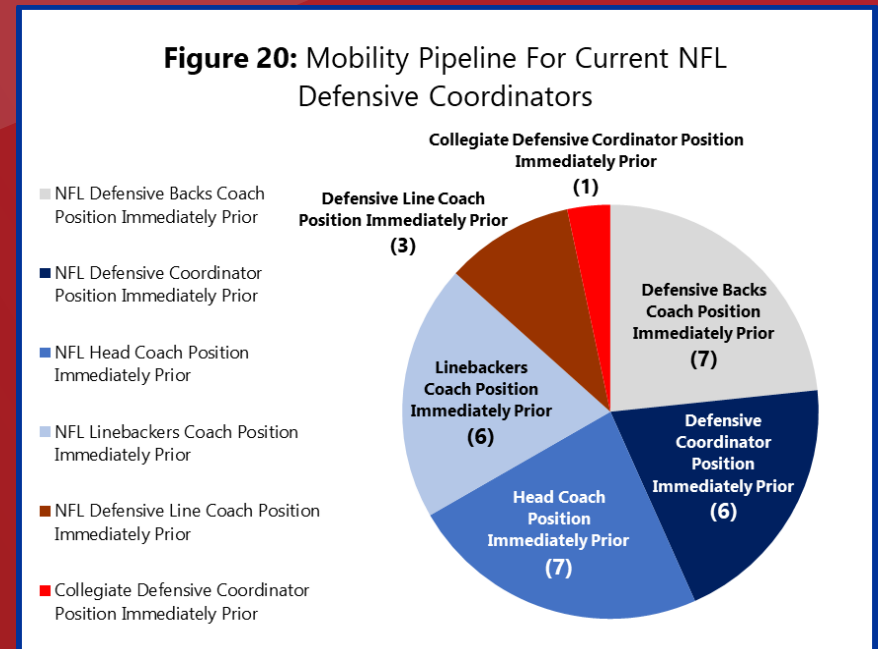
Figure 19: Previous Career Position(s) Of Current Offensive Coordinators (2012-2020)



The occupational mobility patterns for NFL defensive coordinators show more potential and promise for men of color to break into this key head coach pipeline position. Seven of the 30 current defensive coordinators of NFL teams served as head coaches of another NFL team as their most recent full-time position in the NFL prior to being named defensive coordinator of their current team. Seven of the 30 current NFL defensive coordinators held the defensive backs (secondary) coach position with either a different NFL team or their current NFL team immediately before being hired as (or promoted to)

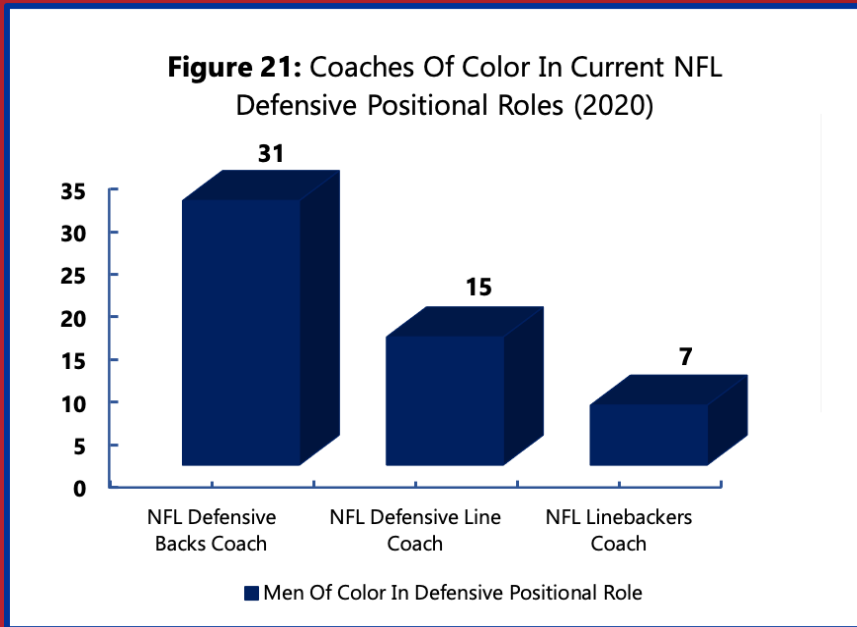
defensive coordinator of their current NFL team. Six of the 30 current defensive coordinators served as defensive coordinators of another NFL team immediately prior to being named defensive coordinator of their current team. Six of the 30 current NFL defensive coordinators held the linebackers coach position with either a different NFL team or their current NFL team immediately before being hired as (or promoted to) defensive coordinator of their current NFL team. Three of the 30 current NFL defensive coordinators held the defensive line coach position with either a different NFL team or their current NFL team immediately before being hired as (or promoted to) defensive coordinator of their current NFL team. And, one current NFL defensive coordinator worked as a college level defensive coordinator immediately prior to being named defensive coordinator of their current team (see Figure 20). Notably, seven of the 30 current NFL defensive coordinators earned internal promotions with their current team from coaching positions such as defensive line coach and linebackers coach.

Figure 20: Mobility Pipeline For Current NFL Defensive Coordinators



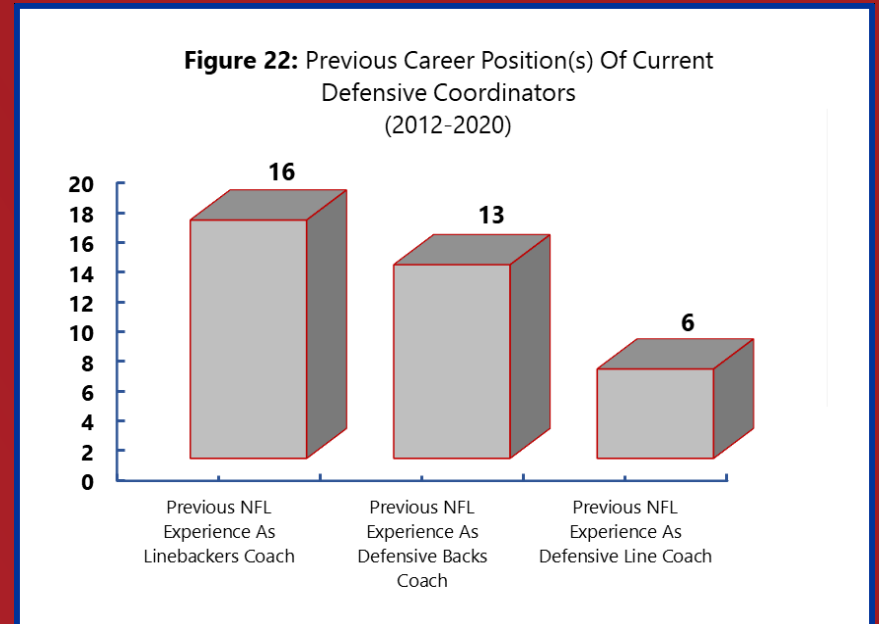
The majority of men of color serving as defensive position coaches oversee defensive backs (31 current men of color serving as NFL defensive backs (secondary) coaches as of February 6, 2020—representing approximately 70% of all defensive backs (secondary) coaches). In addition, as of February 6, 2020, 15 men of color served as NFL defensive line coaches and seven men of color served as linebackers coaches (see Figure 21). The defensive backs (secondary) and defensive line coach positions presently function as two of the more viable occupational mobility paths for coaches of color in the NFL.

Figure 21: Coaches Of Color In Current NFL Defensive Positional Roles (2020)



Sixteen of the 30 current NFL defensive coordinators have prior experience as linebackers coaches at the NFL level. Thirteen current defensive coordinators have prior NFL experience as defensive back (secondary) coaches. And, six current defensive coordinators have prior NFL experience as defensive line coaches (see Figure 22).

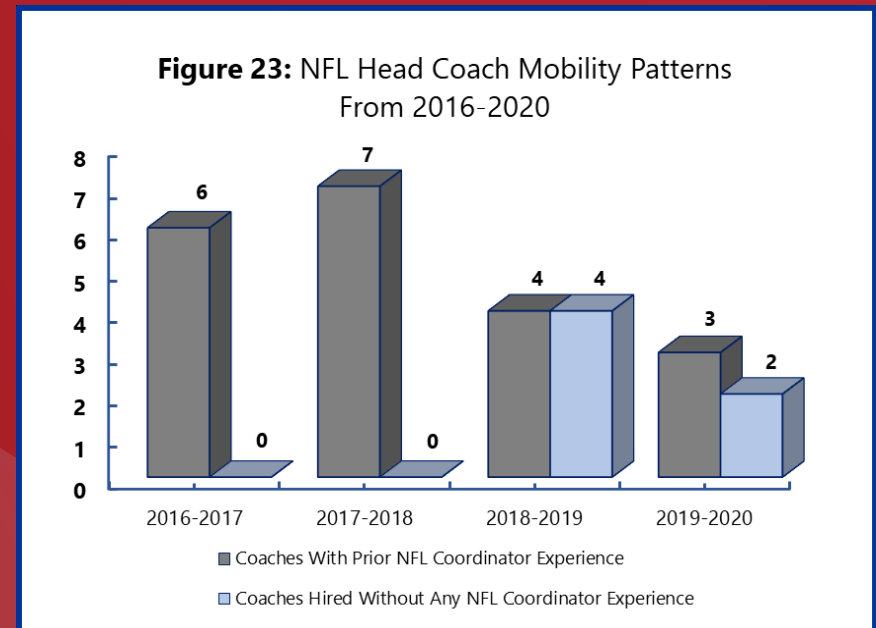
Figure 22: Previous Career Position(s) Of Current Defensive Coordinators (2012-2020)



Two out of the five head coaches hired between February 4, 2019 (day following Super Bowl LIII) and February 2, 2020 (day of Super Bowl LIV) have extensive offensive coaching backgrounds (including NFL offensive coordinator experience) (Mike McCarthy and Kevin Stefanski), as compared with only one recently hired head coach with an extensive defensive coaching background (including NFL defensive coordinator experience) (Ron Rivera). Matt Rhule and Joe Judge both have offensive and defensive position coach experience at the college and NFL levels; however, neither of these two recently hired head coaches previously served as an offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator at the NFL level. For comparison purposes, six of the eight head coaches hired between February 5, 2018 (day following Super Bowl LII) and February 3, 2019 (day of Super Bowl LIII) had offensive coaching backgrounds (including NFL offensive coordinator experience) as compared with only two coaches with a defensive coaching background (including NFL defensive coordinator experience); notably—similar to Matt Rhule and Joe Judge—four of these eight NFL head coaches (Brian Flores, Kliff Kingsbury, Freddie Kitchens and Zac Taylor) did not previously officially serve as an NFL level coordinator for at least one NFL season.¹² Conversely, all seven of the head coaches hired between the day following Super Bowl LI (February 6, 2017) and kickoff at Super Bowl LII (February 4, 2018) had previous NFL level coordinator experience (four as offensive coordinators and three as defensive coordinators). In addition, all six head coaches hired during the approximate one-year period from the day following Super Bowl 50 (February 8, 2016) to kickoff at Super Bowl LI (February 5, 2017) had prior NFL coordinator experience (four as offensive coordinators and two as defensive coordinators) (see Figure 23).

¹² Although Brian Flores' official title with the New England Patriots was "linebackers coach," Flores was responsible for defensive play-calling for the New England Patriots during the 2018 NFL season. In addition, Zac Taylor and Freddie Kitchens each had experience serving as interim offensive coordinators in the NFL for part of one or more seasons; Taylor was also the offensive coordinator for one season at the University of Cincinnati. Kliff Kingsbury had no prior NFL level experience before being hired as head coach of the Arizona Cardinals.

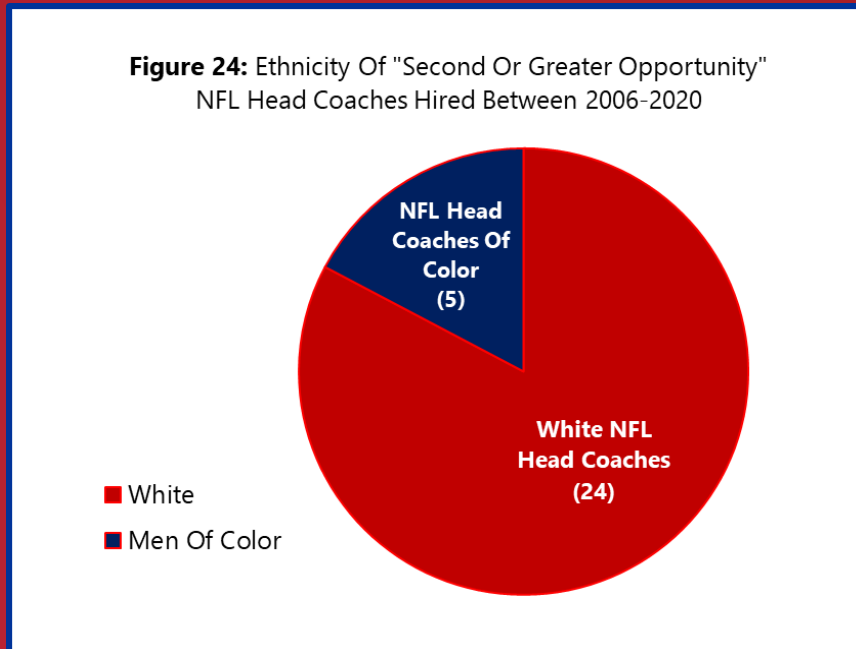
Figure 23: NFL Head Coach Mobility Patterns From 2016-2020



"Hurried hiring processes typically do not produce optimal outcomes. The hiring process needs to evolve, as does the thought process of many hiring managers. In addition to increasing the number of qualified candidates of color who interview for each open coordinator, head coach and general manager position, it is imperative to ensure that these qualified candidates are perceived as being 'qualified' by the individuals who make the hiring decisions. A candidate's job prospects will be impacted by intangible factors such as trust and perceived competence in addition to tangible factors such as actual performance in past coaching or coordinator position(s)."

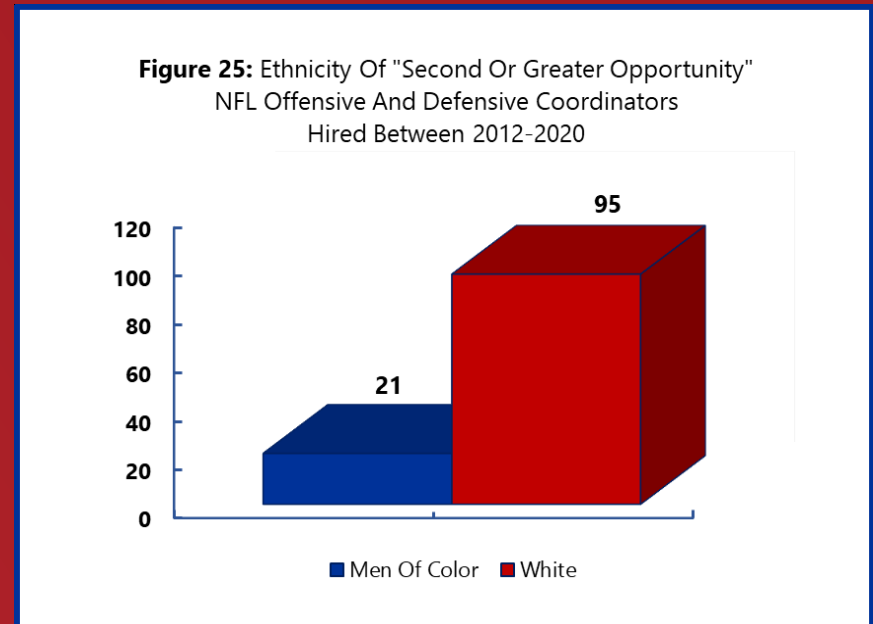
Recent combined research by the NFL league office and the authors of this report revealed 29 out of 93 NFL head coaches hired during the fifteen-year period from 2006-2020 were former NFL head coaches. Five of these 29 “second or greater opportunity” head coaches hired during this fifteen-year period were men of color (see Figure 24). Similarly, since 1963, 11 different coaches of color (50% of the 22 total head coaches of color from 1963-2020) have received a second head coach opportunity in the NFL. These findings demonstrate that in order to be hired as a head coach in the NFL, sometimes the perceived most valuable career background is previous experience as an NFL head coach. Overall findings in this research study once again reveal a troubling “reshuffling effect” in which recently “separated” (i.e., promoted, fired, resigned, retired or otherwise parted ways) head coaches, offensive coordinators and defensive coordinators immediately received a new coaching opportunity in a key “head coach pipeline position” such as quarterbacks coach and defensive line coach, thereby limiting the overall number of opportunities for prospective first-time NFL head coaches.

Figure 24: Ethnicity Of "Second Or Greater Opportunity" NFL Head Coaches Hired Between 2006-2020



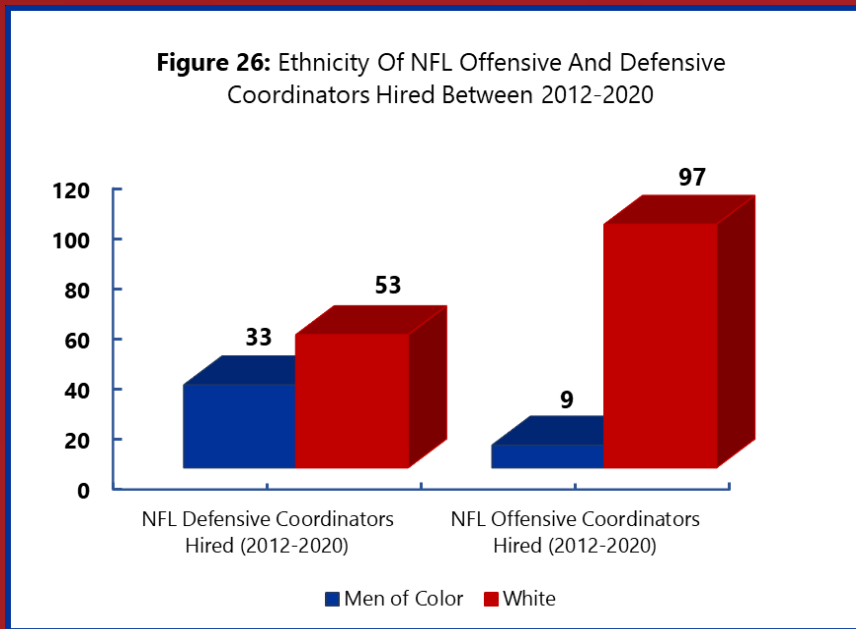
Findings in this research report also indicate a prevalence of the reshuffling effect with respect to the same individuals repeatedly hired for NFL team coordinator positions, which prevents new talent from entering key head coach pipelines. For example, between the beginning of the 2012 NFL regular season (September 5, 2012) and Super Bowl LIV (February 2, 2020), 95 White individuals have received at least a second opportunity to work as an offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator of an NFL team. Only 21 men of color have received a similar “second or greater” opportunity during the same time period; notably, 18 of these 21 “second or greater chances” have been for men of color hired as defensive coordinators with only three men of color receiving a “second or greater chance” to serve as an NFL offensive coordinator (see Figure 25).

Figure 25: Ethnicity Of "Second Or Greater Opportunity" NFL Offensive And Defensive Coordinators Hired Between 2012-2020



While it is somewhat encouraging that 38% (33 out of 86) of the defensive coordinators hired since the start of the 2012 NFL regular season are coordinators of color, only 8.5% (9 out of 106) of the offensive coordinators hired during this same time period have been coordinators of color (see Figure 26). In addition, although it is likewise encouraging that Raheem Morris, Patrick Graham and Joe Woods each recently earned another opportunity to serve as an NFL defensive coordinator, the hiring of these three “second chance” defensive coordinators nonetheless prevents new prospects of color from entering the head coach pipeline.

Figure 26: Ethnicity Of NFL Offensive And Defensive Coordinators Hired Between 2012-2020



Social Capital and Implicit Bias—The Importance of Trust and Perceived Competence

During the most recent hiring cycle, eleven teams collectively interviewed approximately 20 candidates for open offensive coordinator positions—only one candidate of color (Marcus Brady) was extended an opportunity to interview for one of the open offensive coordinator opportunities. Despite Marcus Brady being provided with the opportunity to interview, no men of color were ultimately offered one of the eleven recently filled offensive coordinator positions. Based on internal NFL data, seven of the 11 teams with vacant offensive coordinator positions did not interview multiple candidates.

During the most recent hiring cycle, eleven teams collectively interviewed approximately 20 candidates for open defensive coordinator positions—six different candidates of color were extended the opportunity to interview for one of the open defensive coordinator opportunities (Steve Wilks was the only defensive coordinator candidate of color who was ultimately not offered one of the vacant defensive coordinator positions). Based on internal NFL data, seven of the 11 teams with vacant defensive coordinator positions did not interview multiple candidates.

Hurried hiring processes typically do not produce optimal outcomes. The hiring process needs to evolve, as does the thought process of many hiring managers. In addition to increasing the number of qualified candidates of color who interview for each open coordinator, head coach and general manager position, it is imperative to ensure that these qualified candidates are perceived as being “qualified” by the individuals who make the hiring decisions. A candidate’s job prospects will be impacted by intangible factors such as trust and perceived competence in addition to tangible factors such as actual performance in past coaching or coordinator position(s). The findings in the current study reiterate the need to develop and implement bias-lessening processes and procedures with respect to the hiring process for head coaches, offensive coordinators, defensive coordinators and general managers (see Pope, Price and Wolfers, 2018).

The findings in the current study also underscore and uncover the complexity of organizational nuances that may influence final hiring decisions and that may also significantly impact the ability of coaches of color, offensive coordinators, defensive coordinators and general managers to maneuver the hierarchies of leadership positions.

The findings of the current study support the power of social capital and the impact of men of color serving in decision-making leadership positions as well as men of color developing a mentor/mentee relationship with current NFL head coaches and anticipated future head coach candidates. For example, shortly after being fired by the Cleveland Browns in October 2018, Hue Jackson was hired by his close friend and coaching mentor Marvin Lewis to serve as “special assistant to the head coach” with the Cincinnati Bengals. When Hue Jackson was asked about adding value to another NFL team after he was fired by the Browns, Jackson responded: “If there’s somebody who I know and trust and respect, felt like they needed me to help or to do something for them along the lines of assisting in any way that I can to help them be as good as they can be on gameday, I would do that in a heartbeat” (via Adam Schefter podcast).

Joe Judge (newly named head coach of the New York Giants) and Patrick Graham (recently hired defensive coordinator of the New York Giants) worked together from 2012-2015 with the New England Patriots. Kevin Stefanski (newly named head coach of the Cleveland Browns) and Joe Woods (recently hired defensive coordinator of the Cleveland Browns) worked together from 2006-2013 with the Minnesota Vikings. Matt Rhule (newly named head coach of the Carolina Panthers) and Phil Snow (recently hired defensive coordinator of the Carolina Panthers) previously worked together at UCLA, Temple and Baylor.

Bruce Arians (current head coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers) has served as a professional mentor to Todd Bowles ever since Arians coached Bowles when Bowles was a collegiate football student-athlete at Temple University. Arians and Bowles then worked together on the Cleveland Browns coaching staff from 2001-2003. When Arians was named head coach of the Arizona Cardinals in 2013, he promptly hired Todd Bowles as defensive coordinator. In 2015, Bruce Arians made the following comments about Todd Bowles’ coaching abilities: “He was one of the smartest players I’ve ever coached, and then we

had to work together in Cleveland, and I saw how great of a teacher he had become” (via Sports Illustrated). Fast forward to January 2019—shortly after being named the head coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Arians once again hired Bowles to serve as the team’s defensive coordinator. Arians also hired several other men of color who are part of his “coaching tree” including Byron Leftwich (offensive coordinator), Harold Goodwin (offensive line coach and run game coordinator) and Kevin Ross (defensive backs coach). The Tampa Bay Buccaneers are the only NFL team with men of color serving as offensive coordinator and defensive coordinator.

Recent research conducted by the NFL determined that nine of the 32 current head coaches are either the son or father of a current or former NFL coach (including coordinators and position coaches). The same NFL research report also found that 63 total NFL coaches (including coordinators and position coaches) are biologically related or related through marriage—53 of the 63 related coaches are White coaches. For instance, in December 2019, the Carolina Panthers reassigned Norv Turner. Scott Turner, the son of Norv Turner, became the interim offensive coordinator of the Panthers. Scott Turner was recently hired as the new offensive coordinator with Washington. Similarly, Mike Zimmer (head coach of the Minnesota Vikings) recently promoted his son, Adam Zimmer, to serve as the co-defensive coordinator of the Minnesota Vikings. In addition, Steve Belichick (safeties coach for the New England Patriots and son of head coach Bill Belichick) is believed to have been responsible for some of the Patriots’ defensive play-calling during the 2019 NFL season. Bill Belichick also perhaps played a role in the recent Joe Judge hiring by providing a “glowing recommendation” to the New York Giants with respect to the leadership abilities and football knowledge of Joe Judge.

In December 2018, the NFL strengthened the Rooney Rule in part by requiring all NFL teams to interview at least one diverse candidate from the Career Development Advisory Panel list or a diverse candidate not currently employed by the hiring team. Although the Rooney Rule may enable a person of color to earn an opportunity to secure an initial head coach or coordinator position, intangible factors such as trust and perceived competence may have even more of an impact on future occupational mobility (for example, second and third coaching or coordinator opportunities). Rider and colleagues (2016) explained

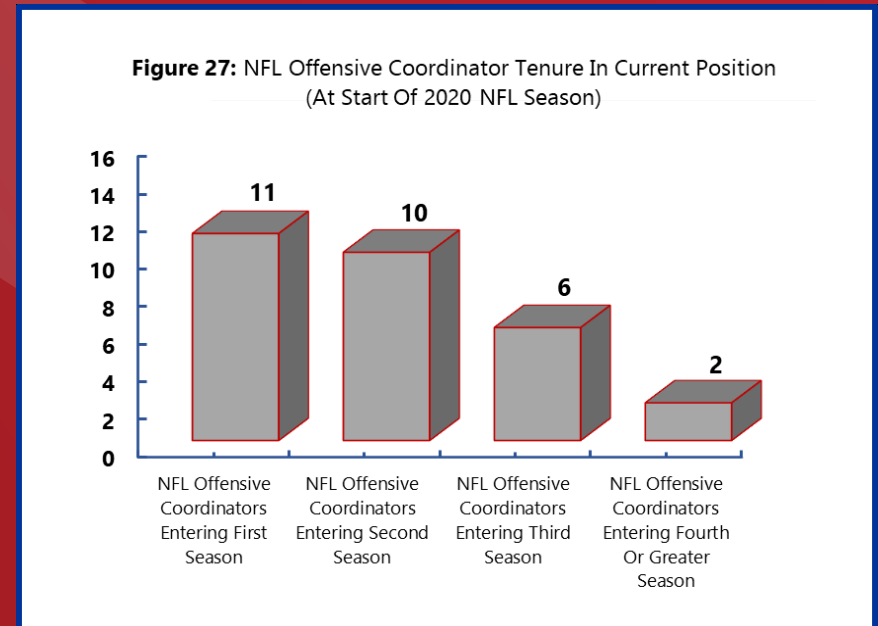
“A decade after the Rooney Rule’s implementation, within-job racial disparity clearly persists” (p. 40). Therefore, in addition to working to increase the number of people of color who make hiring decisions (team owners and general managers), it is imperative to work on improving “the perception of competence” of sport business professionals of color (Shropshire, 1996, p. 129-30). Stated differently, even if there is an increase in general managers of color and team owners of color, negative race consciousness associated with the coaching and coordinating capabilities of candidates of color may still exist and persist (see Shropshire, 1996). Developing and implementing additional, formalized processes to complement the evolving Rooney Rule requirements might further ensure that all interviewees for open head coach, general manager and coordinator positions are truly provided with a meaningful opportunity during the interview process. Simply put, it is essential to develop practical, innovative strategies and implement best practices and processes that provide more highly qualified candidates of color with a realistic opportunity to be a head coach in the NFL. As explained by scholars such as Kilduff and colleagues (2016), Day and McDonald (2010), and Sagas and Cunningham (2005), it is imperative to create a systematic approach that facilitates both strong and weak networking ties amongst leadership candidates of color in addition to increasing opportunities for rising industry stars to develop meaningful connections with “higher status” African American and White leaders within NFL teams and at the NFL league office.

Occupational Mobility and Job Tenure—Change as the Consistent Constant

This research study also analyzed the tenure/stint (that is, length of time in current positions) of all current offensive coordinators and defensive coordinators. For current NFL offensive coordinators, the average length of time is only 1.4 years in the current position. Twenty-seven current NFL offensive coordinators have been in their current position for two NFL seasons or fewer. More specifically, 11 offensive coordinators will be entering their first season in such position during the upcoming 2020 NFL season, ten offensive coordinators will be starting their second NFL season in their current offensive coordinator position, and six offensive coordinators will be starting their third NFL

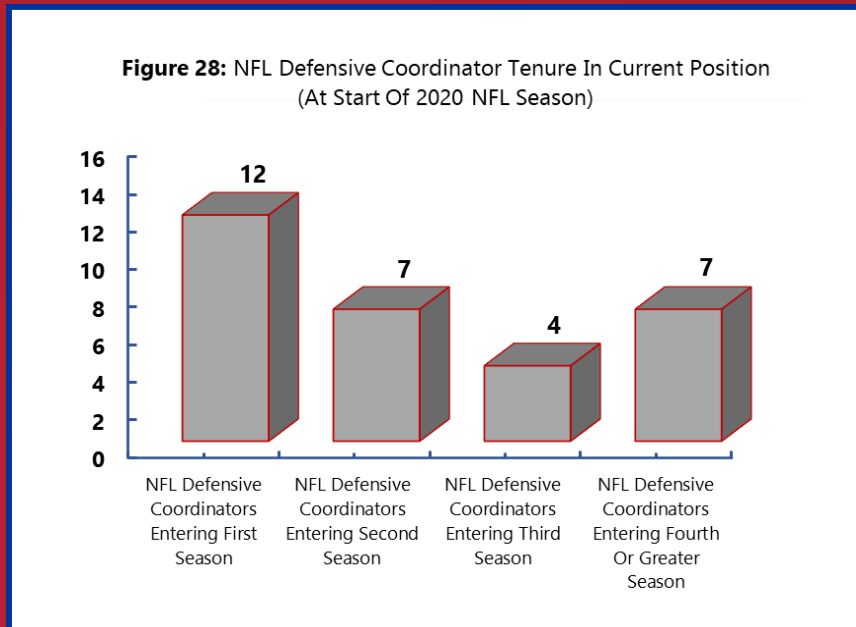
season in their current offensive coordinator position. Only two NFL offensive coordinators have been in their current position for three or more NFL seasons (Pete Carmichael is entering his 12th season as offensive coordinator of the New Orleans Saints and Josh McDaniels is entering his 9th season as offensive coordinator of the New England Patriots) (see Figure 27).

Figure 27: NFL Offensive Coordinator Tenure In Current Position (At Start Of 2020 NFL Season)



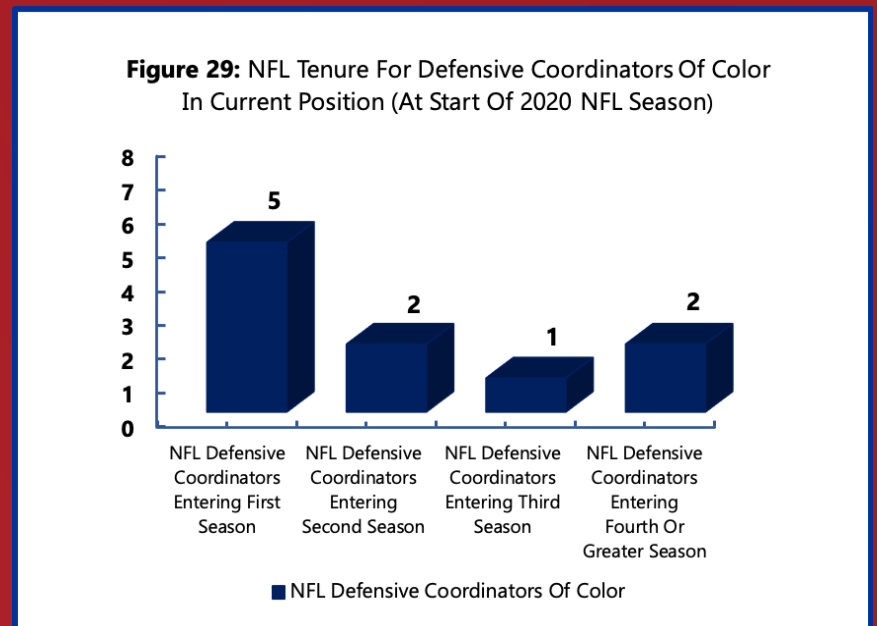
The data is almost identical for the stint/tenure of current NFL defensive coordinators; the average length of time is approximately 1.4 years in the current position. Twenty-three current NFL defensive coordinators have been in their current position for two or fewer NFL seasons. More specifically, 12 defensive coordinators will be entering their first season in such position during the upcoming 2020 NFL season, seven defensive coordinators will be starting their second NFL season in their current defensive coordinator position, and four defensive coordinators will be starting their third NFL season in their current defensive coordinator position. Only seven NFL defensive coordinators have been in their current position for three or more NFL seasons (Keith Butler, Dennis Allen, Jim Schwartz, Leslie Frazier, Todd Wash, Gus Bradley and Robert Saleh) (see Figure 28). Seven NFL teams made changes at both the offensive coordinator and defensive coordinator positions during the most recent hiring cycle (2019-2020).

Figure 28: NFL Defensive Coordinator Tenure In Current Position (At Start Of 2020 NFL Season)



The average tenure/stint in the current position for the two men of color in NFL offensive coordinator positions is 1.5 years. Eric Bieniemy will be starting his third NFL season as offensive coordinator of the Kansas City Chiefs, and Byron Leftwich will be entering his second season as offensive coordinator of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. The average tenure/stint in the current position for the ten current men of color in defensive coordinator positions is less than one year—no current defensive coordinator of color has served in their current defensive coordinator position for more than three NFL seasons. Five defensive coordinators of color will be starting their first NFL season in their current defensive coordinator position, two defensive coordinators of color will be starting their second NFL season in their current defensive coordinator position, one defensive coordinator of color will be entering his third NFL season in his current defensive coordinator position and two defensive coordinators of color will be starting their fourth NFL season in their current defensive coordinator position (see Figure 29).

Figure 29: NFL Tenure For Defensive Coordinators Of Color In Current Position (At Start Of 2020 NFL Season)



Recommendations for Pipeline Development & Hiring Process Programs

Key NFL stakeholders are encouraged to examine the potential impact of creating new best practice guidelines or formal league policies related to the head coach and general manager search and hiring processes that focus both on hiring and retention. For example, one proposed new guideline/policy would further develop the Rooney Rule concerning head coach hires to require that all NFL teams interview at least one candidate of color with previous NFL level experience (including at least interim offensive coordinator or defensive coordinator experience) who also is not currently employed by the hiring team. Since 2012, NFL teams have hired only two head coach candidates who did not have any previous NFL level experience (the Cardinals hired former college football head coach Kliff Kingsbury, and both the Eagles and 49ers hired former college football head coach Chip Kelly)—Matt Rhule accumulated one year of NFL level experience in 2012 when he served as an assistant offensive line coach with the New York Giants. In early 2018, the Raiders interviewed University of Southern California (USC) offensive coordinator Tee Martin and Raiders tight end coach Bobby Johnson in order to comply with the technical requirements of the Rooney Rule. However, neither of these men of color were considered strong or serious candidates for the Raiders head coach position. Martin remained the offensive coordinator at USC and Johnson accepted an assistant offensive line coach position with the Indianapolis Colts. Adding this additional “prior NFL coordinator experience” requirement to the Rooney Rule process could help ensure that the most prepared and compelling candidates of color are provided with a meaningful opportunity to interview.

In addition, the NFL could consider making the hiring process even more transparent with an instrument or scorecard called the “Transparent Performance Scale” that might encompass key components that answer the question of what aspects are most important in terms of a person becoming a head coach in the NFL. Key components might include the following checklist with subjective and objective factors that each decision-maker on an NFL team would rank and complete: (1) level of trust in candidate; (2) level of perceived risk associated with hiring candidate; (3) candidate’s previous win/loss record and coaching success; (4) relationships with decision-makers at the team

with which the candidate is interviewing; (5) how the coach was referred to the team; and (6) a comparison to other candidates previously interviewed by the team for the position. Improving a process usually results in improving corresponding outcomes—outcomes that are merit-based and reflect increased, fair competition for open positions.

Recommendations for Future Research and Strategic Innovation

This research study relied on data provided by the NFL along with publicly available data as reported by NFL teams. Researchers did not have access to NFL team notes and records from job candidate interviews, which would have provided more extensive insight with respect to the hiring decision-making process. In addition, this research study did not track the entire career trajectory of each individual coach, coordinator and general manager examined in the study. The following recommendations for future research are made based on the findings in this research study.

Future research should examine the nuances of career mobility and interview “timing” strategies. Detailed data on the career experience (and social capital) of each person of color that interviews for head coach, coordinator and general manager positions would provide insight on the perceived requisite prior experience essential for these leadership positions. This information would in turn assist aspiring head coaches of color to better understand when their “career body of work” might be viewed as most competitive for open positions, as Eric Bieniemy recently interviewed with three of the five teams that hired a new head coach but ultimately was not hired by any of these three teams. Future research should also specifically focus on optimal strategies with respect to preparing highly qualified candidates of color for the head coach interview process.

Additional research should analyze similarities and differences in occupational mobility patterns with respect to former NFL players as compared with coaches who never played in the NFL. Future research should analyze key performance factors/indicators of coaches (for example, overall performance of offense and overall performance of players at position coached such as linebackers) to further determine

whether coaching performance or other variables drive “the reshuffling effect.” In addition, future research should also further examine additional potential “untapped” pipelines and “hidden” talent (for example, creating an extensive database of exemplary coaches of color at the collegiate level or in the XFL) in addition to expanding the research in this report on occupational mobility patterns for key head coach pipeline positions. Future research should also analyze the occupational mobility patterns of individuals who hold coaching positions such as “special teams assistant,” “assistant running backs coach” or “assistant linebackers coach” to determine the impact of social capital and other applied theoretical constructs on the career prospects of these position coaches.

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Future research should examine strategies to improve the overall hiring and decision-making process in order to expand the length of tenure (“opportunity to prove themselves”) for head coaches, coordinators and position coaches. For example, the Cleveland Browns recently fired Freddie Kitchens after his first season serving as the team’s head coach, and the New York Giants recently fired Pat Shurmur after his second season serving as the team’s head coach. Similarly, in December 2018, the Arizona Cardinals fired head coach Steve Wilks after his first season serving as the team’s head coach; similarly, in December 2018, the Denver Broncos fired head coach Vance Joseph after his second season serving as the team’s head coach. Overall, NFL teams have made 60 total changes at the offensive coordinator position during the previous five NFL seasons. Four offensive coordinators (John DeFilippo, Todd Monken, Chad O’Shea and Rich Scangarello) were recently fired during their first season serving as offensive coordinator (or otherwise decided to seek employment elsewhere). In addition, NFL teams have made 47 total changes at the defensive coordinator position during the previous five NFL seasons. For example, Steve Wilks and the Cleveland Browns recently parted ways following Wilks’ first season serving as the team’s defensive coordinator. Similarly, Eric Washington and the Carolina

Panthers parted ways following Washington’s second season serving as the team’s defensive coordinator. This extremely high turnover rate in key team leadership roles is not ideal from a player development or career trajectory/sustainability perspective.

Future research should further examine the “downward mobility” patterns of former NFL head coaches, general managers, and offensive and defensive coordinators of color in order to determine the impact and extent of minority vulnerability thesis implications within the NFL.¹³ For example, in January 2020, Eric Washington experienced a downward occupational mobility shift when he accepted the defensive line coach position with the Buffalo Bills after serving as the defensive coordinator of the Carolina Panthers. George Edwards experienced a similar downward occupational mobility shift during the same month, as Edwards transitioned from working as the defensive coordinator of the Minnesota Vikings to accepting a senior defensive assistant position with the Dallas Cowboys.

Future research should also further analyze data related to the NFL’s partnership with historic black colleges and universities in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) and Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC). Data collection and analysis should examine success stories involving former coaches and administrators at MEAC and SWAC institutions of higher learning who are now employed with an NFL team.

Future research should also examine the feasibility and potential impact of increasing diversity with respect to the NFL Workplace Diversity Committee and the NFL Career Development Advisory Panel. In addition, future research should evaluate the overall impact of the head coach candidate list and other recommendations developed by the Career Development Advisory Panel. For instance, the Career Development Advisory Panel created a list of 23 prospective candidates

¹³ In a recent empirical research study, Day (2018) explained that, historically, African American workers have been more vulnerable to downward occupational mobility because of their segregation into racialized jobs and networks combined with decision makers’ cognitive biases and particularistic manipulation of performance criteria and (un)desirable employee characteristics. Day (2018) also noted that “scholars have recommended that employers can overcome such biases through the formalization of the hiring, promotion and firing process” (p. 11).

concerning the recent head coach hiring cycle—three candidates of color on the list (Eric Bieniemy, Marvin Lewis and Kris Richard) received interviews with one or more teams but were not offered a head coach position.

Future research should also attempt to examine the conversations and other communications / correspondence that take place between hiring managers (for example, team owners and general managers), “interview influencers” and job candidates in addition to the required interview list disclosures. Investigating this type of discourse beyond the formal interview process could shed unique and enlightening insight into the many intangible and difficult to quantify variables that result in candidates securing head coach and coordinator positions.

Future research should examine strategies to create additional career development programming and resultant coaching opportunities for women who are rising talents and aspiring head coaches such as Katie Sowers, Lori Locust and Jennifer King.

Future research should examine the occupational mobility patterns of men of color and women working in non-coaching positions within the football operations staff (scouting, player personnel, player development and similar leadership positions).

Finally, future research should systematically evaluate the effectiveness of revisions to the Rooney Rule along with any other complementary initiatives created to improve diversity and inclusion at the NFL team and league levels.

"Despite all of the practical training and development programs recently implemented by the NFL to develop and strategically position candidates of color for coordinator, head coach and general manager opportunities, the hiring metrics in this current occupational mobility report demonstrate marginal—but certainly not exceptional—progress from an inclusive hiring perspective. Therefore, the hiring approach (i.e., mindset) of the hiring managers likewise needs to evolve in order to genuinely embrace hiring and supporting men of color. Team owners and other key decision-makers involved in the hiring process need to focus on hiring people that NFL players relate to and respect—not necessarily those job candidates team owners can relate to and believe in."

- Dr. C. Keith Harrison, Lead Investigator and Researcher of Occupational Mobility Report Series

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"In order to reach our intended goals, we must acknowledge our shortcomings and use that data and information to examine, analyze, and revitalize the entire hiring system at both the Club and League levels. It is time to develop a new strategy built upon education, league policies, club policies, and the Rooney Rule that addresses both intent and accountability."

- Troy Vincent, NFL Executive Vice President of Football Operations

BIOS OF RESEARCH TEAM & AUTHORS OF REPORT

Dr. C. Keith Harrison is an Associate Professor at UCF as well as Associate Chair / Chief Academic Officer of the DeVos Sport Business Management Graduate Program and founding director (2006-2014) of the Sport Business Management Undergraduate Program at UCF. In addition to his role as Faculty and Innovative Curriculum Coordinator of the Sport Business Management Programs, Dr. Harrison also served as Interim and Acting DeVos Chair in the College of Business during the Fall 2014 semester. As Senior Faculty/Associate Chair of the DeVos Graduate Sport Business Management Program, Dr. Harrison has contributed in the area of academic innovation and scholarship over the last decade to one of the most prestigious graduate sport business management programs. Dr. Harrison has taught leadership, diversity and sport marketing at the graduate level, and currently teaches diversity as well as co-teaches with Reggie Saunders (Director of Global Marketing, Jordan Brand) innovation and entrepreneurship in sport and entertainment at the undergraduate level. Dr. Harrison also served as an Adjunct Associate Professor at Emory University's Goizueta Business School from 2013-2015. Dr. Harrison has over two decades of university research, teaching and service experience at the community college level (Cerritos, Fullerton and Cypress) and university level (Washington State University, Indiana University, University of Michigan, Arizona State University, and UCF). A former NCAA scholar-athlete that was a center on the football team and graduated from West Texas A&M University, Harrison went on to earn his graduate degrees at California State University (Dominguez Hills) and the University of Southern California. Dr. Harrison has numerous peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters that all disseminated from the Paul Robeson Research Center for Academic and Athletic Prowess established in Ann Arbor at the University of Michigan (1998).

Dr. Harrison was Co-Editor of the Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics (2009-2011) housed at the University of North Carolina (Chapel-Hill). He is currently Editor of the Journal of Higher Education Athletics & Innovation housed at Oklahoma University. He also wrote and co-edited a book with Scott Bukstein on Sport Business Analytics published by Taylor & Francis (2016). Dr. Harrison's career focus is in a few areas: the identity of the student-athlete and professional athlete experience; diversity and inclusion issues related to gender and race relations in education, business, sport and entertainment; and the marketing of emerging multicultural demographics in the global environment in terms of fan engagement. Dr. Harrison's brief list of clients/partnerships past and present include the NFL, the Minnesota Vikings, Oakland / Las Vegas Raiders, Miami Dolphins, University of Oregon, Jordan Brand, Boise State University, UCLA's School of Education, Wharton Sports Business Academy, UC-Boulder's Business of Sport Certificate Program, Florida Citrus Sports and numerous intercollegiate athletic departments through his co-founded non-profit Scholar-Baller. Since 2012, Dr. Harrison has been the principal investigator/researcher and co-author with Bukstein for the NFL's "Good Business" series in terms of diversity and inclusion initiatives within the NFL as well as on female spectators and influencers of the NFL brand. Harrison also served as the lead educational consultant and special/senior advisor for the Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality (RISE), which is a not-for-profit organization founded by Miami Dolphins team owner Stephen Ross. Harrison and Bukstein developed and implemented a comprehensive academic curriculum focused on diversity, inclusion, respect and equality in sport along with creating marketing and branding content for RISE. Harrison is a guest columnist for the SportsBusiness Journal in the area of cultural innovation in sport business and entertainment management.

Scott Bukstein is the Director of the Undergraduate Sport Business Management Program within the College of Business Administration at the University of Central Florida (UCF). Bukstein is also the Associate Director of the DeVos Graduate Sport Business Management Program at UCF. In addition, Bukstein has served as an Adjunct Assistant Professor within the Goizueta Business School at Emory University (2013-2015) and the Graziadio Business School at Pepperdine University (2018-2019). Bukstein currently serves as an Adjunct Instructor within the College of Business at the University of South Florida (2014-present) and a Lecturer at the Graduate School of Education at UCLA (2020-present). Bukstein's research focus is on the intersection of sport and the law, collective bargaining in professional sports, business analytics in sports, the business of college athletics and professional sports, the perceptions and academic performance of college student-athletes, mobility patterns and career paths of coaches and other executives, and leadership and diversity/inclusion issues in the sport industry. Bukstein has authored books on the business and governance of college sports, sports business analytics, collective bargaining in the NFL and NBA, and intellectual property in sports and entertainment.

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**DIVERSITY
& INCLUSION**

A report presented by the National Football League.