

**SWAG Initiative
Presents**



Galen Duncan, PhD

**Game Plan
Series**

Tuesday, September 6th, 2022



Dr. Galen Duncan, PhD, LMSW, is the first-ever Senior Associate Director of Athletics over Health and Wellness with the University of Illinois Chicago. Before joining UIC, he worked with the Sacramento Kings as the VP of Kings Academy and Professional Development. He spent ten years as Senior Director of Player Development with the Detroit Lions. He also worked as a treating clinician for the NFL’s Program for Substance Abuse, providing one-on-one and group therapy for players. Dr. Duncan’s expertise includes character evaluation for draft-eligible players, rookie transition to professional leagues, and helping players experiencing grief/loss, performance anxiety, and personal relationship issues.

Dr. Duncan graduated from Lake Superior State University, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Human Services in 1994. He would earn a Master of Social Work with a concentration in Mental Health and a graduate certificate in Alcohol and Drug Abuse studies from Wayne State in 1997. In 2006, he gained a PhD in Health Psychology from Walden University in Minneapolis, Minn. He returned to Walden as its commencement speaker in 2019.

At UIC, Dr. Duncan provides leadership for all aspects of student-athlete wellness and performance, including athletic training, athletic medicine, mental health, nutrition, and data analytics, and works with HR Tactics on matters related to player health and development in the NFL and NBA.

Dr. Duncan arrived in Chicago after four years as Vice President of Kings Academy and Professional Development for the NBA's Sacramento Kings. He was directly responsible for implementing a player-centric curriculum that aligned organizational philosophies and ideals to help athletes mature into well-rounded professionals. During his time in Sacramento, he created an organization-wide mental health awareness and treatment program.

He continues to be integrally involved in the NBA Rookie Transition Program. This immersive experience is on-the-job training with industry professionals to help the league's newcomers learn to navigate the areas of newfound wealth and the professional standards required to be successful in the NBA. Not only are the rookies provided resources and mentored by current and former NBA players, but also by mental health professionals on how to help them be the best they can be.

Dr. Duncan served as the Senior Director of Player Development for the NFL's Detroit Lions for over a decade. He helped NFL players with financial education, internships, professional development opportunities, and mental health counseling. He oversaw an intensive rookie transition program, which included education on financial literacy, business etiquette, social media branding, and more. He served as a liaison between the NFL's league office and the NFL Players' Association and as a Player Development Steering Committee member.

Dr. Duncan has also worked as a consulting therapist and counselor for Wayne State and Detroit Mercy college athletics departments. For 12 years, from 2001-13, he was a Captain with the United States Army Reserves Neuropsychology Team in Southfield, Michigan. He provided stress and anxiety training to soldiers around job-related issues. Dr. Duncan is a retired U.S. Army Reserves officer.