



**MAIA CHAKA – FIRST GENERAL SESSION SPEAKER
NYSAAA 39th ANNUAL ATHLETIC DIRECTORS CONFERENCE
Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 2:45 p.m.
Saratoga Hilton & Conference Center
Saratoga Springs, NY**

Maia Chaka is a multi-faceted, goal-oriented individual with a passion for breaking glass ceilings and being an example for young women worldwide. Originally from Rochester, New York, Chaka grew up with a family first mentality, carrying that with her through her schooling and career. Immediately following her graduation from Norfolk State University, Chaka began her profession in education, focusing on at-risk youth, developing programs and implementing procedures to increase school attendance and retention rates. In 2008, she founded G.E.M.S. (Girls with Empowering Minds and Spirits), a club designed to promote self-esteem, academic achievement, and educational encouragement. While she continued making waves in the classroom, earning awards and accolades such as Teacher of the Year, Chaka was simultaneously making her mark on the field, officiating for the PAC 12, Conference USA and XFL. In March 2021, Chaka made history as the 1st black woman to join the on field officiating staff in the National Football League. As only the 2nd woman to join the on field officiating staff, Chaka continues to be an agent for change by devoting her time to pouring into the communities that helped nurture her growth.