



Use the Student-Athlete Voice!

As you promote your institution, don't forget your biggest advocates – your student-athletes! There are no greater ambassadors than your student-athletes. They're continuously involved with your campus and your community, and when they participate in conference and national championships, they represent your institution on an even larger stage. Their reach on your behalf is extensive!

Here's what student-athletes are saying about their Division II experience:

Division II athletes are well balanced – that's what makes Division II unique, because we don't have to spend all of our time pursuing our sport. That balance builds character, which makes us who we are.

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Division II is not a barrier to excellence. Being at a Division II school doesn't mean you can't excel to the highest level in your sport, even being an Olympic athlete.

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Many Division II student-athletes received offers to play at Division I schools but made a purposeful choice to excel at their sport in a college setting that allows them to pursue other aspects of college life and prepare for a career in something other than sports. For example, I knew I wanted to be a doctor, and I knew that the smaller class sizes and more access to faculty would benefit me without compromising my desire to excel at the highest level athletically.

Tip

Think about it: Regardless of the category, be it academic achievement, community engagement, campus leadership, university ambassadorship – however you rank your student body, student-athletes will almost certainly populate the top tier. Anyone within your institution (in the athletics department or otherwise) who interacts with your student-athletes knows this firsthand and should advocate that fact to colleagues and other campus constituents who may doubt athletics' positive influence on the university as a whole.

Making Their Voices Heard!

Your Student-Athlete Advisory Committee can help promote your institution! Your institutional SAAC is the conduit to your campus and community, and it is part of a national communication chain that strengthens the student-athlete voice across the country.

Division II is intentional when it comes to giving student-athletes the opportunity to engage in how the division benefits them:



Involvement in Governance

- ▶ Division II National SAAC voting at the NCAA Convention and voting representation on several governance committees, including the Management Council.
- ▶ Division II also has established “super region conventions” to enhance student-athlete participation in the governance structure and enable student-athletes and administrators to better understand issues affecting Division II student-athletes. Be sure your SAAC takes advantage of these conventions when they’re in your region!

Effective Communication

- ▶ The Division II SAAC network offers a quarterly newsletter and information-sharing resource to link national SAAC and NCAA SAAC liaisons with the SAAC president and SAAC advisor at every Division II institution. The network provides information and comment on issues relevant to Division II student-athletes. The interactive network also allows campus SAACs to share best practices and ask for suggestions from peers.

Community Engagement

- ▶ Through the Division II SAAC, institutional and conference SAACs enjoy tremendous partnerships with Make-A-Wish® and Team IMPACT®.

Focus on student-athlete health and safety

- ▶ The Division II SAAC continually focuses on issues that affect student-athlete health and safety. The group currently is urging institutional and conference SAACs to raise awareness regarding best practices that can enhance student-athlete mental health and well-being.