



**REPORT OF THE NCAA DIVISION III
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION WORKING GROUP
OCTOBER 8, 2020, TELECONFERENCE**

ACTION ITEM.

- None

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome and Roster.** The chair, Gerard Bryant, commenced the Division III Diversity and Inclusion Working Group teleconference at 12:02 p.m. Eastern time Thursday, October 8, 2020.
2. **Report of July 9, 2020, Teleconference.** The working group reviewed the report and had no edits or corrections.
3. **NCAA Strategic Plan.** Staff provided an update on the Board of Governor's (BOG) work related to the Association's strategic plan. Over the course of the past two years, the BOG embarked on a strategic planning initiative. This initiative involved developing a shared roadmap for all three divisions. 2020 has presented a very different reality for higher education and intercollegiate athletics. America and the world are battling a deadly virus that almost certainly will alter the traditional forums for education. The pandemic has also spawned a financial crisis within the NCAA membership. At the same time, America is "facing up" to a level of systemic racism and other forms of social injustice that will likely engage every campus and athletics program across the nation.

As a result, the BOG has suspended fully introducing and executing the draft strategic plan. While the way forward is not clear for any segment of American enterprise, including higher education, it is certain that intercollegiate athletics must not and will not suspend its core values – commitment to student-athlete well-being, governance, promoting and demonstrating diversity and inclusion, financial stability, legal constraints, government relation, acting with integrity, leading by example, and engaging respectfully. These are the day-to-day practices and behaviors that will sustain intercollegiate athletics as an integral part of higher education. The NCAA's focus will be on the next 12 to 24 months, detailing priorities to be the most impactful during this critical time.

Athletics Diversity and Inclusion Designee Updates. Staff provided an update on the newly created athletics diversity and inclusion designation, and specifically the creation of resources to support this designation. The NCAA Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee met recently and anticipates creating and releasing resources to the membership in the coming months. Staff also highlighted the NCAA diversity social media campaign, Oct. 27-29. The campaign will serve as a platform for student-athletes, administrators, coaches and fans across the country to start the discussion, create dialogue, speak out on and promote diversity and inclusion as key elements of student-athlete success via social media engagement. The goal of the campaign is to use social media to create a dialogue surrounding diversity and inclusion and to communicate the need and benefit of creating inclusive environments.

4. **Division III Graduation Rate Data.** Staff noted that Research recently completed its inaugural collection of the Division III student-athlete graduation rates. Staff anticipates releasing this information to the membership in November.

The Division III Management Council approved the working group's request to examine specific football data via the National Student Clearinghouse (NCS) research study. Staff will send the data to the NCS and ask these key questions:

- a. When did the student-athlete leave their school?
- b. When did they enroll in another institution?
- c. Did they receive a degree?

Research is currently preparing a request to Division III institutions to provide the date of birth of its football student-athletes. Once Research obtains this data, it will send it to the NCS and then will report the results to the working group and the Councils (anticipate Jan.).

Staff noted that research has successfully used this process with Division I and some Division II institutions.

5. **Division III Diversity Recruiting and Retention Strategies.** The working group tabled this discussion to its February teleconference.
6. **Division III SAAC Racial Inequality Discussions.** The working group's national SAAC representative noted that SAAC has three working group priorities this year, including diversity and inclusion. SAAC is developing resources and using social media to spread the word on the importance of voter registration. It also is using social media to support the Black Lives Matter movement and the NCAA's diversity social media campaign.

While the Division I SAAC successfully forwarded legislation to have Nov. 3 free of countable athletically related activities, Division III, at this time, didn't submit a legislative proposal as it felt that Division III student-athletes had more flexibility to find time to vote.

7. **Additional Business.** Staff requested volunteers to serve on this year's Student Immersion Program selection committee. Currently there are 97 applications and 43 completed nominations. Staff also noted that with a virtual format, it anticipates accepting a larger cohort than the traditional 40 students. Gerard Bryant, Dan Schumacher and Nicole Wood volunteered to serve on this year's selection committee.

The working group also discussed the group's composition and during a future teleconference, it will discuss adding members.

8. **Next Steps.** On its next teleconference, the working group will receive an update on the NCS research study, receive the Division III student-athlete graduation rate data, discuss diversity recruiting and retention strategies, receive an update on the diversity and inclusion designation resources, review the Student Immersion Program cohort and discuss its composition.

9. **Future teleconferences.** The next teleconference is slated for January 21, 2021, at 1 p.m. Eastern time.

10. **Adjournment.** The call adjourned at 12:53 p.m. Eastern time.

*Staff Liaisons: Louise McCleary, Division III Governance
 Niya Blair, Office of Inclusion
 Jarett Gerald, Division III Governance*

NCAA Division III Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Teleconference date: October 8, 2020	
Attendees:	
Gerard Bryant, John Jay College of Criminal Justice.	
Javier Cevallos, Framingham State University.	
Jason Fein, Bates College.	
Cat Lanigan, Juniata College.	
Joe Onderko, Presidents Athletic Conference.	
Dan Schumacher, University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire.	
Nicolle Wood, Salem State University.	
Absentees:	
Jason Verdugo, Hamline University.	
Natalie Winkelfoos, Oberlin College.	
NCAA Staff Support in Attendance:	
Niya Blair, Louise McCleary.	
Other in Attendance:	
Jarett Gerald.	