



Inclusion's Best Practices

Building on a
Rich History
of **Athletic Struggle**



NCAA Inclusion Statement

As a core value, the NCAA believes in and is committed to diversity, inclusion and gender equity among its student-athletes, coaches, and administrators. We seek to establish and maintain an inclusive culture that fosters equitable participations for student-athletes and career opportunities for coaches and administrators from diverse backgrounds. Diversity and inclusion improve the learning environment for all student-athletes and enhance the excellence within the Association.

The Office of Inclusion will provide or enable programming and education, which sustains foundations of a diverse and inclusive culture across dimensions of diversity including, but not limited to **age, race, sex, class, national origin, creed, educational background, disability, gender expression, geographical location, income, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation and work experience.**

Adopted by the NCAA Executive Committee, April 2010

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NCAA web page for this and other Inclusion resources: www.ncaa.org

CWA and MOIC Statement of Support

“The Committee on Women’s Athletics (CWA) and the Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee (MOIC) endorse the publication of this best practices document. CWA provides leadership and assistance to the association in its efforts to provide equitable opportunities, fair treatment and respect for all women in all aspects of intercollegiate athletics. The committee promotes governance, administration and conduct of intercollegiate athletics at the institutional, conference and national levels that are inclusive, fair and accessible to women. MOIC reviews issues related to the interests of ethnic minority student-athletes, NCAA minority programs and NCAA policies that affect ethnic minorities. MOIC champions the causes of ethnic minorities by fostering an inclusive environment, thereby creating a culture that promotes fair and equitable access to opportunities and resources.”

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Letter from **NCAA Chief Inclusion Officer**

From the desk of the NCAA Chief Inclusion Officer:

Inclusive excellence is an aspiration we desire to achieve. It is recognized that diversity and inclusion matter and that they improve the learning environment and enhance excellence within the Association. As we seek to establish, maintain and enhance intercollegiate athletics departments that foster equitable participation experiences for student-athletes; and provide access to career opportunities supportive of the retention and advancement of coaches and administrators from diverse backgrounds we must stand together.

Since the inception of the Office of Inclusion in 2010 significant progress has been made on many of the strategic initiatives introduced following the Inclusion Summit in 2011. The Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee (MOIC) and the Committee on Women's Athletics (CWA) through their Association-Wide committee efforts developed three subcommittees to further analyze issues specific to women of color, student-athletes with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgendered and questioning communities (lgbtq). The NCAA Inclusion Forum has also been positioned as a platform where intercollegiate athletics uses inclusion to connect people, ideas, and perspectives around key issues within higher education.

The NCAA inclusion staff continues to look at the five key areas of inclusion: race and ethnicity, women, student-athletes with disabilities, LGBTQ, and international student-athletes; and seeks to develop programming and resources while effectively using roundtable conversations to convene key groups to address critical issues of concern.

Partnerships and collaborations have been developed with various national organizations including: National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE), Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), American Council on Education (ACE), Diverse Issues in Higher Education, National Association of Collegiate Women Athletics Administrators (NACWAA) and the Minority Opportunities Athletic Association (MOAA); as we continue to expand our reach beyond the 1,200 member institutions, conference offices and over 460,000 student-athletes we currently serve.

The NCAA internal inclusion efforts remain an important aspect of our agenda as we move forward to better prepare national office staff members to use inclusion as a means to support and educate one another as well as create a respectful, collaborative national office environment so they may better serve the membership.

This best practice resource has been developed in partnership with Diverse Issues in Higher Education to take an introspective look back on the rich history of athletic struggles that have brought us this far; but also introduces contemporary membership best practice profiles which serve as a positive catapult for change moving us forward. As we remain diligent in the work we seek to accomplish, we need your continued support in your respective leadership roles to continue to be successful as we address our many diverse and challenging landscapes.

Moving Forward,



Dr. Bernard Franklin
Executive Vice President, Chief Inclusion Officer

Intercollegiate athletics continues to be one of the most visible and recognizable aspects of post-secondary education. Some of the most significant social and human rights breakthroughs have unfolded among and within the athletics departments of the nation's colleges and universities.

Intercollegiate athletics served as a catalyst for social change on these fronts. In many instances the long overdue breakthroughs were pioneered by examples set by athletics teams. After a series of "firsts" on these teams, the entire campus community came to see that diversity and inclusion worked for the betterment of all.

Today many intercollegiate athletics programs have set high goals and standards in their relentless pursuit of inclusive environments. In doing so, they have demonstrated that despite many challenges this goal is achievable. Along the way they have become highly visible role models for diversity and inclusion on their campus communities and among their colleagues around the nation. As a result individual athletics departments have resorted to unilateral initiatives. These efforts are to a large degree still in their infancy and while yet promising have met with varying degrees of success. They hold the promise for leading the way in the ongoing struggle to fully immerse diversity and inclusion into every aspect of society.

Introduction

NCAA Historical Context

The foundations of today's intercollegiate inclusion efforts have been in the making for well over 100 years. Over those years a plethora of hard fought struggles for access to careers and an equal opportunity to participate in intercollegiate athletics have initiated and waged. Some came to successful fruition while others only served to crush the spirit of those brave souls who dared to challenge the status quo. To be sure, the vision and reality of a true meritocracy played itself out more in the field of intercollegiate athletics than many other sectors. The competitive nature of the athletics enterprise fostered the need to let the best man or woman participate. The alternative was to suffer certain defeat at the hands of one's competitors who early on embraced inclusiveness.

But from each historical success or failure the takeaways have served succeeding generations right on up to our day. Not only can African Americans and other historically denied groups benefit from becoming familiar with these inspiring stories, but the entire intercollegiate athletics community can reap great rewards by doing so. In so doing the ideals of true meritocracies unfold. Behind each episode a deeper appreciation of the historic struggle emerges. Given today's contentiousness surrounding these very issues, understanding the historical context is a must if inclusion is to become a reality.

The following profiles offer a few representative areas:



Diversity and Inclusion of

International Student-Athletes: Bringing the World to Campus**Exemplar: Dr. Leroy Walker**

North Carolina Central University was among the nation's pioneering colleges to recruit international student-athletes. Under the leadership of then-president Dr. Leroy Walker, a legendary track and field coach, who later became NCCU's president, the Historically Black College gathered student-athletes from around the world. While participation by international student-athletes on intercollegiate teams is increasingly common today, that was not the case when NCCU recruited Edwin Roberts from Trinidad and Tobago in the 1960s. The later arrival of future Olympians Julius Sang and Robert Ouko, from Kenya, started a pattern that continues to this day.

The community outreach aspects of having international student-athletes on the NCCU campus provided enormous benefits to the predominantly Black Durham community. One of Dr. Walker's innovative events was the staging of what amounted to a mini Olympics, featuring star student-athletes from around the world. Marketed as the USA vs. Pan Africa Games, the meet featured U.S. athletes competing against African, European, and other athletes from around the world. Over the course of two days it attracted a crowd of more than 40,000, putting North Carolina on the global map as an epicenter of track & field talent. The success of the meet also led to a cooperative agreement between the NCCU and Duke University teams to travel together.

The number of international student-athletes participating on NCAA teams has increased dramatically in the past decade. This influx of different cultures onto intercollegiate teams has brought noteworthy benefits for domestic student-athletes, coaches, administrators and communities.

The U.S. tradition of infusing athletics and higher education doesn't exist in all parts of the world. This can make it difficult to recruit international student-athletes — those whose academic preparation may be deficient — through the NCAA academic and amateurism certification process. Once that's done, there are the additional challenges of helping these student-athletes adapt to college life and helping the campus community learn about and embrace different cultures.

The NCCU experience is just one example of how international student-athletes can be a welcome addition to an NCAA athletics team. But coaches and staff must be prepared to take on the additional work that comes with recruiting and retaining these students.

Practices that yield positive results include:

1. Familiarizing staff and coaches with the academic and immigration requirements for NCAA eligibility, which are outlined in the NCAA Guide to International Academic Standards for Athletics Eligibility.
2. Establishing relationships with on-campus personnel who deal with international student issues, (e.g. immigration, admission and eligibility requirements, financial aid, etc.).
3. Establishing relationships with staff at the NCAA Eligibility Center who are knowledgeable of international student-athlete eligibility issues and requirements.
4. Helping international student-athletes connect with other international students on campus.
5. Developing orientation content that specifically addresses the needs and concerns of international student-athletes.
6. Facilitating the dietary and academic transitions international student-athletes often face when adjusting to life on campus.
7. Preparing administrators, coaches, trainers and other athletics personnel to coach and train internationally diverse teams.
8. Encouraging international student-athletes to pursue leadership opportunities on and off the playing field.
9. Preparing to deal with local fans' reactions (pro and con) to the presence of international student-athletes.
10. Developing recruitment and retention procedures and practices that enable the flow of international student-athletes to be sustained over time.

Exemplar: Nevin Caple

When Nevin Caple played power forward on Fairleigh Dickinson University's Division I women's basketball team (1999-2003), few resources were available to help intercollegiate athletics programs promote respect for and inclusion of student-athletes of different sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions. Instead, individual coaches and athletics administrators relied on personal experiences and beliefs to fashion policies governing the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgendered, and questioning (LGBTQ) student-athletes. Many coaches had no policies at all and remained silent in response to anti-LGBTQ beliefs and actions on and off the field.

Caple spent years in the closet before finally coming out to a teammate. She left basketball after graduation, only to return years later and find little had changed. Today, she is co-founder and executive director of Br[ac]he the Silence: A Campaign for LGBTQ Voices, Role Models and Allies in Women's Sports. She is especially focused on transforming the culture of intercollegiate athletics and works with the NCAA on a variety of LGBTQ inclusion initiatives.

While progress is being made, many intercollegiate athletics departments have yet to address LGBTQ inclusion in their programs. Such inaction can perpetuate a climate where LGBTQ student-athletes, coaches, and administrators hide their identities to avoid discrimination or harassment.

Transforming this environment is challenging, but not impossible. Bates College, Bowdoin College, Bucknell University, Columbia University, Indiana University, Ithaca College, Kennesaw State University, New York University, Stanford University, and Whitman College were among the NCAA member institutions deemed the "Best of the Best" in a recent edition of Campus Pride's "Out to Play" ranking of the top 10 LGBTQ-friendly colleges and universities. These institutions offer examples of what can be done to ensure LGBTQ student-athletes, coaches, and administrators aren't left on the bench when it comes to inclusion in NCAA programs.



Among the practices employed by NCAA institutions that have strong LGBTQ inclusion programs are:

1. Modeling, at senior levels of the department, the inclusion of LGBTQ student-athletes and staff.
2. Exposing student-athletes and staff to programs that raise awareness about LGBTQ issues in athletics.
3. Orientating new coaches and staff on LGBTQ issues in athletics.
4. Expecting staff to respect the confidentiality and privacy rights of LGBTQ student-athletes or staff who may come out to them, since these persons may not yet be ready to come out to others.
5. Including LGBTQ issues in anti-hazing policies, and making student-athletes, staff and fans aware that anti-LGBTQ actions, slurs, jokes and other behaviors are not tolerated.
6. Treating all student-athletes and staff fairly and respectfully, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.
7. Subjecting LGBTQ student-athletes and coaches to the same standards expected of others within the department.
8. Identifying community and on-campus advocacy and support resources that are dedicated to the specific needs and interests of LGBTQ students and staff.
9. Encouraging LGBTQ staff and student-athletes to pursue leadership opportunities on and off the playing field.
10. Identifying community partners (on and off campus) that can assist the athletics department in developing and maintaining team cultures that promote the inclusion of LGBTQ student-athletes.

Diversity and Inclusion of Race & Ethnicity: A Proactive Strategy

Exemplar: Lou Tepper



When Lou Tepper was named the head coach at the University of Illinois during the 1991 season, he immediately decided to employ what he calls “basic simple steps” to foster racial diversity and interaction among his football student-athletes.

For Tepper, who grew up in the racially segregated town of Keystone, Pennsylvania, the only inequities that he saw as a youngster was between rich and poor. “I always felt that I wasn’t accepted because I was not as affluent as others,” he said. By the time he began his coaching career at the University of Pittsburgh in the late 1960s, racial strife had already taken hold of the country as fierce resistance to racial integration escalated.

But Tepper knew that there was “something about football that was able to bring everyone together on the same plane.” During his years at Pittsburgh and later as head coach at Illinois where he oversaw the football program, he says that he felt “compelled to foster an environment where my players got to know one another and their backgrounds.”

He recalled walking into the team room early on in his career to announce that he had created a seating chart where student-athletes were to sit. It included being seated next to someone else of a different race. That kind of forced integration continued as his student-athletes traveled on buses and whenever the team were assigned hotel rooms.

Passionate about the issue of racial understanding, he continually reinforced to his student-athletes that they “needed to depend on the 11 other guys on the field no matter what their culture is,” said Tepper, who spent 11 years in Division II after exiting Illinois and is now the defensive coordinator for the Buffalo Bills.

But even he acknowledges that the importance of one-on-one contact to foster racial understanding has become increasingly difficult in the wake of booming technology, such as smartphones and other devices that “allow these young people to plug into their electronics.” That requires additional and aggressive efforts, he says, on the part of coaches and administrators to find new and innovate ways to build community and racial solidarity among their student-athletes.



Among the practices NCAA members deploy to promote racial diversity and inclusion are:

1. Provide programming for incoming student-athletes in collaboration with campus orientation.
2. Conduct ongoing diversity seminars, programming and workshops for student-athletes and staff.
3. Host diversity forums.
4. Create a designated campus facility such as a diversity center to promote diversity issues and provide support for underrepresented students and student-athletes.
5. Incorporate student-athletes and athletics staff into programming with regard to diversity.
6. Foster collaboration between the department of athletics and the institution’s multicultural office on programming, education and events.
7. Create a diversity council within the department of athletics.
8. Apply for grants and use funds to provide diversity education.
9. Encourage ethnic minority participation on the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC).
10. Encourage ethnic minority student-athletes to pursue leadership opportunities on and off the field.

Student-Athletes with Disabilities: Competitive Hearts

Exemplar: Timothy J. Nugent

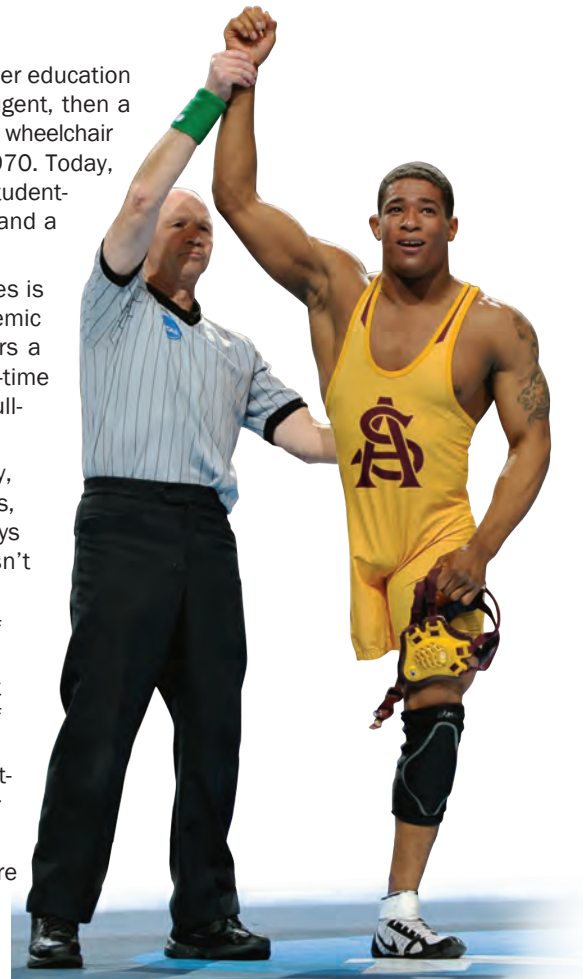
The University of Illinois started the world's first comprehensive program of higher education for individuals with disabilities in 1948. That effort was led by Timothy J. Nugent, then a 24-year-old doctoral student of educational psychology who introduced men's wheelchair basketball to the university in 1949. Women's wheelchair basketball was added in 1970. Today, the University of Illinois continues to be a leader in post-secondary education for student-athletes with disabilities, offering wheelchair track and field for women and men, and an adapted sports education program in addition to its basketball program.

Key to the success of their adapted sports program for individuals with disabilities is its Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) unit. In addition to academic support and helping students find accessible living accommodations, DRES offers a campus-wide accessible transportation system, a fully equipped gym with a full-time physical therapist skilled at working with student-athletes with disabilities, and a full-time learning disabilities specialist, among other services.

Though the University of Illinois' adapted sports program is widely respected today, this wasn't always the case. During a 2011 speech to the Lincoln Academy of Illinois, Nugent recalled a time when the program's future was uncertain. "There's always resistance when you start something without precedence. But if someone doesn't accept that risk for good reasons, nothing good shall happen on this earth."

In addition to the University of Illinois, the University of Alabama, University of Arizona, University of Central Oklahoma, Edinboro University, University of Missouri, Oklahoma State University, University of Oregon, Penn State University, Southwest Minnesota State University, University of Texas at Arlington, and the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater are among institutions that have adapted sports programs. Additionally, many NCAA programs have worked to successfully accommodate student-athletes with education-impacting disabilities, and/or physical disabilities into their existing programs.

These trailblazing programs should serve as a beacon for all NCAA members that are working to strengthen diversity and inclusion in their athletics programs.



Some of the best practices employed by institutions that run strong inclusion programs for student-athletes with disabilities include:

1. Institutional leaders and administrators model the inclusion of student-athletes with disabilities.
2. Student-athletes with disabilities are included in the expectation of high achievement standards for all student-athletes.
3. Athletic facilities and equipment are accessible to individuals with disabilities, including locker rooms, training and conditioning facilities, competition and scrimmage/practice facilities and spectator areas.
4. Accessible housing accommodations are available for student-athletes with disabilities.
5. Coaches, administrators, and staff are trained to work with student-athletes with disabilities.
6. Consideration is given to the academic support student-athletes with education-impacting disabilities might require.
7. Competitive scholarships are offered to attract student-athletes with disabilities.
8. The athletics department establishes a relationship with the campus-wide office serving students with disabilities and seeks opportunities to partner on programs and events.
9. Opportunities are created to nurture the leadership capacity of student-athletes with disabilities, both on and off the playing arena.
10. Strategic efforts are made to develop the fan base for the adapted sports program.

Diversity and Inclusion of Women: Just Let Me Play

Exemplar: Pat Summitt



When Title IX was signed into law in 1972, Patricia Sue Head was a 20-year-old sophomore at the University of Tennessee at Martin where she was an All-American player on the school's first women's basketball team. Pat's three older brothers had all attended college on athletic scholarships, but when she entered UT-Martin as a freshman in 1970, there were no scholarships for female student-athletes. So her family had to pay her way.

Title IX came too late to help Pat finance her education, but it did open a new world of professional opportunities for her in sports. After co-captaining the first ever U.S. women's Olympic basketball team to a silver medal winning performance in 1976, she took full advantage of those new opportunities. Pat Head Summitt became the first U.S. Olympian to win a basketball medal and then coach a medal-winning team (1984). By the time she retired as head coach of the University of Tennessee's Lady Vols basketball team in 2012, she was the all-time winningest coach in NCAA basketball history (men's or women's basketball, any division). Never losing sight of her role as an educator, Summitt made sure every Lady Vol who completed eligibility under her watch earned a degree.

Summitt's achievements on the court were the product of a team effort led by Lady Vols director of athletics Joan Cronan. Cronan spent her tenure (1983-2011) expanding the women's program from 7 sports to 11, increasing annual giving from \$75,000 to \$2 million and, over a 13-year span, growing the overall budget from \$1.2 million to \$5.2 million. Cronan's leadership also spurred the team's home-game attendance figures to swell from the dozens to an average of more than 14,400 in 2012, making it the NCAA leader in home-game fan support.

In 2012, Cronan oversaw the merger of the University of Tennessee's women's and men's athletics programs. As interim vice chancellor/director of athletics, she was the first woman to head an entire athletics department in the Southeastern Conference (SEC).

The Summitt/Cronan story is just one example of how Title IX's impact on intercollegiate athletics is transforming opportunities for women in athletics. Not only are more women participating in intercollegiate sports today, more NCAA institutions are hiring women athletics professionals and fielding women's teams



Among the practices NCAA members deploy to promote gender equity and inclusion are:

1. Modeling gender inclusion throughout the athletics department.
2. Promoting policies and programs that encourage gender inclusion and discourage behaviors, policies and practices that thwart it.
3. Dedicating significant financial resources to recruiting and developing female talent on and off the playing surface.
4. Encouraging women's enrollment and participation in intercollegiate athletics by offering competitive athletic scholarships.
5. Building strong relationships with the campus-wide offices of diversity and gender inclusion and looking for opportunities to partner on various programs and events.
6. Creating opportunities for female student-athletes to make connections with the surrounding community, especially with local youth and community leaders.
7. Creating leadership opportunities for female student-athletes both on and off the playing field.
8. Including gender equity and inclusion among the professional development and training opportunities provided for athletics department staff and coaches.
9. Developing a strategic plan for growing the local fan base for women's athletics.
10. Seeking opportunities for men's and women's teams to partner on various activities on and off the court.



Award for Diversity and Inclusion



The Award for Diversity and Inclusion represents a partnership formed by the NCAA Office of Inclusion and the Minority Opportunities Athletic Association (MOAA) to recognize and celebrate initiatives, policies and practices of institutions, athletics departments and/or conference offices that foster diversity and inclusion across the intercollegiate athletics community. Community service, professional development, hiring practices and/or programming activities that enhance opportunities for people of diverse cultures, backgrounds and experiences are among the characteristics of an award winner. The 2014 NCAA Convention marks the second presentation of the Award for Diversity and Inclusion selected by membership representatives from MOAA, the NCAA Committee on Women's Athletics and the NCAA Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee.



Contemporary Best Practices Profiles



The following pages offer a representative sampling of best practices in exemplary Diversity & Inclusion programs. This listing showcases some of the best practices being employed by fellow NCAA member institutions. They serve as examples of what can be achieved on the diversity and inclusion front.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

“Anti-Bullying” Video Campaign
Atlantic 10 Conference (A-10), NCAA Division I



PROGRAM ASSETS

Clear Mission and Executive-Level Leadership

The Atlantic 10 Conference Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), which started in 1996, is comprised of one student-athlete from each member institution. The group meets in person at an annual weekend gathering at the conference office and during the rest of the year keeps up to date by way of periodic conference calls. Among other things, the group reviews proposed legislation and other issues that involve student-athlete welfare. After discussing the proposals and issues with their respective campus SAACs, the members of the group provide feedback and recommendations. A member of the group, who is the conference’s representative on the NCAA Division I SAAC, uses the group’s recommendations when asked for a position on proposals and issues at the national meetings.

With the goal of promoting diversity and inclusion on their respective campuses, the A-10 SAAC launched an “Anti-Bullying” Video Campaign, which took place during the spring 2012 term and was designed to provide a national forum for A-10 athletes to create compelling messages of hope, compassion and strength. “We decided to go with an anti-bullying theme this year for the video campaign because we wanted to do our part as student-athletes to address a major issue in today’s society,” says Alex Dadds, who at the time was a junior cross country student-athlete from George Washington who first introduced this year’s theme to the group. “As student-athletes we are in a position of influence and I think it’s important to realize nothing is going to change if we don’t speak up.”

Aimed at combating bullying, particularly among the LGBTQ community, the campaign has been a success, with George Washington University creating a video which showed the support of the student-athlete community to those in the LGBTQ community, many of whom have struggled through life constantly being bullied.

Supportive Infrastructure

Aside from the anti-bullying theme, student-athletes were restricted only by suggested time parameters and the requirement that all videos must be student-produced (no staff-created submissions would be accepted). While the approach to the project varied from institution to institution, the universal message was clear: A-10 student-athletes do not tolerate bullying.

The innovative and unique aspect of the video campaign is that student-athletes were able to use their creativity in producing the videos, engage in friendly competition while helping to bring to light an issue that impacts so many people, especially younger kids. Often at the root of bullying is perceived differences; whether they be appearance (size, weight, or clothing), intellect, socioeconomics, ethnic or religious affiliation or sexual orientation.

Evaluation, Assessment and Outcomes

The results were incredible, as the video campaign generated excitement and interest to produce over 16,000 online votes. Each institution had a staff member serve as an advisor. Patrick Nero, the director of athletics at George Washington University represented the institution in this capacity. “As members of competitive Division I athletics departments and rigorous academic institutions, our A-10 student-athletes have serious responsibilities. However, as member of the larger community, while at school and home, they must be asked to do more, to take on more, to meet greater responsibilities, to think outside their own small world,” says Nero. “The

A-10 SAAC Anti-Bullying themed video campaign clearly demonstrates their ability and desire to meet these additional expectations, committing to a community that tolerates nothing less than an environment of inclusion and diversity.”

Institutionalization

With its success, the conference hopes that the anti-bullying campaign will become an annual event and will eventually become a project that other conference offices and institutions who are not A-10 members, might also consider adopting as well.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Diversity Dialogues

University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), NCAA Division I



PROGRAM ASSETS

Clear Mission and Executive-Level Leadership

The University of California, Santa Barbara’s Diversity Dialogues program is the athletics department’s response to Chancellor Henry T. Yang’s vision that all divisions on the campus live into the mission of increasing “both the quality and diversity of UC Santa Barbara’s academic programs and student body.”

The Diversity Dialogues program aims to foster a culture within the athletics department that celebrates diverse backgrounds and beliefs, and is safe, inclusive, supportive and productive for all student-athletes, coaches, and administrators. The programs goals include: educating student-athletes, coaches, and administrators about how various “isms” (racism, sexism, classism, etc.) are formed and perpetuated; create opportunities for coaches and staff to listen to each other talk about their thoughts and feelings about diversity issues in a respectful environment; and formulate plans to make UCSB’s athletics department a more inclusive and diverse workplace.

Supportive Infrastructure

In its fourth year, UCSB’s Diversity Dialogues program is an ongoing sequence of facilitated discussions that guide large and small groups of student-athletes, coaches, and administrators through thoughtful conversations and training about diversity and inclusion in the context of intercollegiate athletics. Department administrators work with a campus-wide committee to identify discussion topics, invite guest facilitators/speakers, and coordinate the events.

In addition to the ongoing dialogue series, the program hosts a variety of special events, many of which coincide with Black History Month and Hispanic Heritage Month. These activities include print and video testimonials by African-American student-athletes, special event soccer matches featuring UCSB student-athletes, and events with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The department also works with the local Univision affiliate to feature Spanish-speaking UCSB student-athletes on local TV programs.

Evaluation, Assessment and Outcomes

With four years of Diversity Dialogues programming under its belt, the UCSB athletics department has created a safe environment for coaches and staff to actively listen and discuss issues that previously were considered “taboo.” Differing viewpoints are now respectfully shared and department personnel have acquired new terminologies and language that allow for more effective conversations on sensitive issues. Because these issues have been “named” in a public and in respectful environment, strategies can now be crafted to address them. UCSB Athletics reports a better “team spirit” within the department and an increased awareness of how the attitudes and practices of staff and coaches impact student-athletes. In the coming years, the intention will focus on dismantling elements of the athletics department and programs that support or perpetuate oppression.

Institutionalization

Diversity Dialogues has become a model program on the UCSB campus, one that other departments have begun to follow.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Georgia Regents University (GRU), NCAA Division II

2014 Award Winner



PROGRAM ASSETS

Clear Mission and Executive-Level Leadership

The mission of Georgia Regents University’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion is to promote an inclusive environment and to foster practices and systems that optimize the contributions of all employees and students. Over the years, the unit has worked closely with the athletics department to build a culture where all student-athletes feel valued, welcomed and respected.

Contemporary Best Practices Profiles

Diversity and inclusion is one of six core strategic priorities at GRU. President Ricardo Azziz actively participates in Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) events and activities throughout the year. ODI reports directly to the provost and works closely with the campus Office of Employment Equity. “The opportunity to be inclusive is an opportunity to transform,” says vice president of Diversity and Inclusion Kent Guion. His work with director of athletics Clint Bryant has produced an array of programs designed to instill a commitment to and appreciation for diversity and inclusion in all GRU student-athletes, coaches and administrators.

Supportive Infrastructure

ODI employs a staff of 13 and its director is advised by an 11-member Academic Diversity Alignment Committee. This group helps the director prioritize opportunities to address diversity and inclusion issues in a variety of academic areas including: recruitment, curricular and co-curricular activities, service and outreach, scholarship and faculty development.

Beyond helping campus units develop systems and practices that promote diversity and inclusion, ODI's activities include: providing cultural competency training for athletics coaches and staff; programs to broaden awareness about different cultures; events to help international student-athletes learn about support services related to their visa status; a Safe Zone program to promote gender and LGBTQ inclusion; Healthy Respect program to promote civility; and a retention/degree-completion program targeting African-American males. Not all of these programs are exclusively for members of the athletics department, but they often address specific needs and interests of diverse groups within athletics. ODI's annual Diversity and Inclusion Summit attracts business and community leaders from across the region, giving GRU students, faculty and staff an opportunity to view diversity and inclusion in a larger context.

Evaluation, Assessment and Outcomes

ODI's diversity and inclusion efforts have won national recognition and continue to transform the campus culture while also enriching the educational experience of GRU student-athletes. The Healthy Perspectives cultural competency training program has attracted thousands of students, faculty and staff to participate.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

Great Northeast Athletic Conference (GNAC), NCAA Division III



PROGRAM ASSETS

Clear Mission and Executive-Level Leadership

The Great Northeast Athletic Conference has focused its conference-wide diversity and inclusion efforts in two target areas: expanding diversity among intercollegiate athletics administrators, and broadening gender diversity in athletics officiating. These efforts were spearheaded by conference commissioner Joe Walsh, who has spent his career practicing and advocating for diversity and inclusion in athletics, and who has led the GNAC since 2005.

Supportive Infrastructure

The GNAC advances its diversity and inclusion priorities through an internship program for aspiring athletics administrators; through a basketball official certification initiative for women; and through the recruitment of diverse participants from member institutions to attend professional development programs.

The GNAC provide interns with intensive real-world exposure to intercollegiate athletics administration. GNAC interns are given significant responsibilities and career networking opportunities, and often work closely with the conference commissioner.

Upon researching the barriers deterring women from pursuing and achieving certification as basketball officials, the GNAC, in collaboration with the local basketball officiating association, recruited and trained nine female officials. Once the newly trained officials passed certification, the GNAC immediately placed them in paid jobs with a Boston summer league. Throughout the summer, the new officials were paired with seasoned referees to officiate the league's college and high school-level games. This combination of training with a cohort and on-the-job mentorship aimed to reinforce retention.

The GNAC is an enthusiastic supporter of efforts by the NCAA and the Minority Opportunities Athletic Association (MOAA) to recruit and encourage people of color to pursue careers in athletics administration. The GNAC's recruitment and sponsorship of these emerging athletics professionals to NCAA and MOAA professional development sessions creates needed opportunities for those who might not otherwise have a chance to participate in such programs. It also helps cultivate talent within intercollegiate athletics.

Evaluation, Assessment and Outcomes

The GNAC's efforts are making a small but significant contribution to the NCAA's diversity and inclusion agenda by growing the ranks of women and people of color pursuing careers in intercollegiate athletics.

Institutionalization

With the strength of the conference behind them, the GNAC's diversity and inclusion activities help cultivate talent from within the conference. Such leadership fortifies the efforts of individual institutions and sends a message to diverse athletics administrators that these institutions are eager to welcome them.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Gender Equity and Diversity Subcommittee
University of Kansas (KU), NCAA Division I



PROGRAM ASSETS

Clear Mission and Executive-Level Leadership

The University of Kansas' Gender Equity and Diversity Subcommittee was developed to create a paradigm in which diversity and inclusion are an integral component of the educational experience of student-athletes. The mission of the subcommittee is to develop well-rounded graduates who are better prepared for the diverse workforce they will face after they leave the university.

University of Kansas Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little has openly expressed her commitment to diversity and inclusion. Enhancement of diversity among the faculty, staff and students also is explicitly stated in the university's strategic plan. Such strong support from senior institutional leaders creates a campus environment that values and encourages the work of the athletics department's Gender Equity and Diversity Subcommittee.

Supportive Infrastructure

Though the Gender Equity and Diversity Subcommittee at KU is a program staffed and coordinated by the athletics department, it involves the participation of staff from other departments as well, including the Office of Diversity and Equity and the Emily Taylor Center for Women and Gender Equity.

Unfolding in six-week sessions, the program engages student-athletes during their off-competition season. Employing a dynamic model of large and small group interaction, the training sessions use a combination of guest speakers, technology and interactive activities to keep participants engaged. The interactive nature of the sessions gives participants a chance to express their thoughts about the perceptions that are attributed to different segments of the population and to dispel inaccurate generalizations and prejudices.

Evaluation, Assessment and Outcomes

Each participant in the Gender Equity and Diversity Subcommittee programs is charged with conducting a self-assessment. The data collected through these assessments are used to develop future diversity and inclusion education and awareness sessions. The athletics department staff is pleased with the extent to which the program is influencing positive change within KU athletics teams. The subcommittee's work on this program has attracted the positive recognition from across the university community, resulting in welcomed accolades for student-athletes beyond their athletic achievements.

Institutionalization

While the Gender Equity and Diversity Subcommittee's work specifically targets student-athletes, it is part of a broader effort at the university to promote diversity and inclusion. As campus leaders, KU student-athletes are in a unique position to model positive diversity and inclusion behavior, reinforcing the message that diversity and inclusion are important institutional and life values.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Women's Workshop
Lone Star Conference (LSC), NCAA Division II



PROGRAM ASSETS

Clear Mission and Executive-Level Leadership

The Women's Workshop of the Lone Star Conference is a broad-based, professional development opportunity for female athletics administrators within the conference. The goal of the annual workshop is to bring programming to those who may not otherwise have an opportunity to attend professional development programming. The Women's Workshop supports the conference's long-term mission of achieving greater gender equity and diversity by helping to prepare more women to serve in administrative positions throughout the conference.

The Women's Workshop has won enthusiastic support from the conference commissioner and from the presidents of member institutions.

Supportive Infrastructure

The Women's Workshop is held as part of the LSC Administrative Summit and is coordinated by the conference commissioner. For two days, participants engage in a variety of interactive activities and discussions, while also hearing from seasoned female athletics administrators. The programming gives women a chance to gain valuable insights about how to: advance within the industry; understand the importance

Contemporary Best Practices Profiles

of finding and asserting one's voice; be firm in one's decisions; ask tough questions; and stay informed about national policies and practices that impact intercollegiate athletics. Participants include women from a range of administrative experiences, athletics expertise, and cultural and social orientations. In addition to providing a unique opportunity for women in the LSC to deepen their professional knowledge, the workshop features social activities that allow participants to nurture quality professional relationships. LSC leaders recognize the benefits that can accrue from giving emerging women professionals a chance to meet and learn from veteran female role models.

Evaluation, Assessment and Outcomes

While participation by all full-time female athletics staff from member institutions has not yet been achieved, efforts are underway to make this a reality. Noting that opportunities of this type often are typically available only to senior women administrators, the conference has encouraged member institutions to send "teams" of full-time women administrators to the workshop. These participants may include head coaches, assistant coaches, athletics directors, compliance officers, and other full-time athletics administrators and support staff. Workshop coordinators observe that the broader the representation is among participants, the richer the experience for all involved. Broader representation also enhances networking opportunities, creating greater synergy among women within the conference and opening the doors for them to create and take advantage of new opportunities.

Institutionalization

The Women's Workshop was developed to expand the depth of female administrative talent working throughout the Lone Star Conference. By emphasizing the importance of professional development for women athletics administrators, LSC expects to accelerate its diversity and inclusion momentum.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Branch Rickey Initiative

North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC), NCAA Division III
2013 Award Winner



PROGRAM ASSETS

Clear Mission and Executive-Level Leadership

Launched in 2008, the Branch Rickey Initiative aims to advance diversity and inclusion across the North Coast Athletic Conference by promoting the hiring and retention of coaches who bring racial diversity to the athletic staffs of member institutions. The program is named in honor of Branch Rickey, a former Ohio Wesleyan University baseball student-athlete and manager who went on to become the first major league baseball executive to sign an African American (Jackie Robinson) to his team (Brooklyn Dodgers). Rickey remained an advocate for racial inclusion throughout his long sports career.

The NCAC Presidents' Council has consistently made diversity and inclusion a conference priority. Under the Branch Rickey Initiative, member institutions are expanding the ranks of underrepresented candidates eligible for vacant coaching positions and are endeavoring to observe best practices in creating diverse hiring pools. In 2011-12, NCAC leadership widened the scope of the program to include athletics administration and sports information personnel. Also, the Branch Rickey Mentoring Program matches veteran NCAC athletics administrators and coaches with underrepresented students of color and female students who aspire for careers in intercollegiate athletics.

Supportive Infrastructure

The NCAC offers a variety of resources, training opportunities and recognition programs throughout the year to support and encourage member involvement in the Branch Rickey Initiative. The conference website, for instance, dedicates a full page to tools and links designed to expand members' awareness of best practices and knowledge about diversity and inclusion. The program infrastructure also has supported: promotion of the conference's commitment to inclusive hiring, evaluation and analysis of member's efforts to promote diversity in light of national trends; and recognition of exceptional efforts by member institutions and programs. NCAC also sponsors a symposium for athletics administrators on hiring practices and the importance and benefits of diversity and inclusion.

Evaluation, Assessment and Outcomes

Over the years, ongoing evaluation and analysis of NCAC member efforts to promote diversity have led to adjustments of the Branch Rickey Initiative. These adjustments have allowed the program to yield significant outcomes. In 1999, the conference had only one senior-level athletics director who was a person of color, today there are three. In 1999, the conference also lacked racial diversity among its head coaches, today several of the coaches are people of color. As recently as 2003, there were no women directing athletics programs within the conference, today there are four.

Institutionalization

The Branch Rickey Initiative has put the NCAC in a position to grow its own talent. In addition to accelerating the recruitment of diverse coaches, athletics administrators, and sports information personnel across its member institutions, the program's conference-wide training efforts are helping to create more inclusive work environments for its diverse professionals and students.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Sooner Athletics

University of Oklahoma (OU), NCAA Division I



PROGRAM ASSETS

Clear Mission and Executive-Level Leadership

The University of Oklahoma's history of diversity and inclusion dates back more than 50 years, when a handful of OU student-athletes stood against unequal opportunity and experiences. OU's commitment to equity continues to this day, as Sooner Athletics places diversity and inclusion high among its core values. "Our sense of community is enriched by the collective cultural differences and backgrounds of the individuals we bring to this campus," says director of athletics Joe Castiglione.

Supportive Infrastructure

Sooner Athletics demonstrates its commitment to diversity and inclusion through the deployment of its human and institutional resources. Since 2004, its Athletics Diversity Council (ADC) has played a leading role in nurturing inclusion. Overseen by a full-time staff member, the ADC includes four graduate assistants, another full-time staffer and several faculty members. ADC's mission is to create a culture where issues of diversity can be discussed comfortably while respecting differing opinions and views.

The ADC Graduate Assistantship program prepares graduate students for careers as intercollegiate athletics administrators. Open to women and students of color, the program selects prospective graduate students who demonstrate a commitment to diversity and a desire to pursue careers in intercollegiate athletics administration. The two-year assistantships give students real-world administrative experience while they earn a stipend and academic credit towards a master's degree. In turn, their presence and contributions enrich the experience of student-athletes and department staff.

Sooner Athletics strengthens the cultural competency of its staff through the Diversity Education Program. Each term, one staff member from each athletics unit is chosen to participate in a monthly series of facilitated dialogues. These conversations explore various aspects of diversity and invite participants to examine their own attitudes and experiences as well as how these dynamics manifest in the workplace.

The athletics department also sponsors a support program run by and for African-American student-athletes, many of whom are first-generation college students. This Bridge Builders program provides academic and social support for African-American student-athletes while also involving them in community service.

Evaluation, Assessment and Outcomes

Employing over 200, Sooner Athletics educates entry-level and middle management athletics professionals on the importance of diversity to the success of an athletics department and the enhancement of the student-athlete experience. These professionals then continue their careers with a solid foundation in the value of embracing diversity.

Institutionalization

The diversity programs of Sooner Athletics not only promote and celebrate diversity throughout the University of Oklahoma — benefiting students-athletes, coaches, and administrators — but they underscore the importance of diversity and cultural competency for the future of intercollegiate athletics nationwide.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" Programming

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU), NCAA Division II



PROGRAM ASSETS

Clear Mission and Executive-Level Leadership

Southern New Hampshire University's commitment to diversity and inclusion dates back more than 50 years ago when the first varsity athletic team took to the court three months after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his rousing "I Have a Dream" speech before the nation.

In the years since, SNHU has used its athletics program as a vehicle to help educate and promote a culture of inclusion and diversity with the premise that student-athletes are viewed as natural leaders on campus. "I am very proud of the Athletics Department and how they have embraced the role of helping the Diversity Office in their quest to promote equality and to educate everyone about cultural awareness," says director of athletics Anthony Fallacaro. "I think our initiatives do a tremendous job of supporting that and making it an enduring process from the start of the school year until the end."

Contemporary Best Practices Profiles

Supportive Infrastructure

SNHU Athletics demonstrates its commitment to diversity and inclusion through a variety of innovative programming. For example, to celebrate the 50th anniversary to the start of athletics on campus, the department launched a series of celebratory events to coincide with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech which served as a defining moment for the civil rights movement and the fight for racial equality in this country. A "Hate Free Zone" logo was created and placed on T-shirts and student-athletes were encouraged to wear them in pre-game warm ups to promote the institution's commitment to diversity efforts. Administrators placed the logo posters on their office doors and a website was created to rally students, alumni and community members.

The programming was organized in concert with the Office of Diversity and LGBTQ initiatives. At a coaches and staff retreat held on August 15, 2013, it was decided that each athletics team would be celebrating throughout the year at one specific game, the historical milestone which had great significance for SNHU in particular and the nation in general. Moreover, it was an ideal way for athletics to integrate educational awareness and history into the celebration. The end goal was to involve not only student-athletes, coaches, and administrators but also campus classrooms, faculty, alumni, and the community.

Evaluation, Assessment and Outcomes

SNHU athletics utilized their student-athletes as ambassadors to promote diversity across campus, with a particular focus on issues that impact students of color and the LGBTQ community. Moreover, the department found a way to partner with other entities on campus. The buy-in that they received was enormously important in carrying out such a monumental year-long campaign like the 50th anniversary celebration.

Institutionalization

The diversity programs that have been implemented at SNHU not only promote and celebrate diversity on campus — benefiting all students and staff — but they serve as an important model for other universities looking to find creative ways to promote and encourage diversity dialogue on their campuses.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Civility Leadership Team

Western New England University (WNE), NCAA Division III



PROGRAM ASSETS

Clear Mission and Executive-Level Leadership

The Civility Leadership Team's primary mission is to spread awareness of Western New England University's Commitment to Civility, Diversity and Global Citizenship statement. The Team was initiated in 2010 by the WNE vice president for student affairs as the administration was about to unveil a new "Commitment to Civility and Diversity Statement" and "Bias Response Protocol." The vice president envisioned a student committee that supports these initiatives by creating awareness about diversity and inclusion, and encouraging civil, respectful behavior on campus. Ultimately, the goal was to unify the student body.

The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee was among the first to respond to the vice president's invitation and student-athletes have maintained a prominent leadership role in the group ever since. The WNE president has publicly praised the Civility Leadership Team for its contribution to advancing the university's diversity and inclusion agenda.

Supportive Infrastructure

With support from staff advisors, the WNE Civil Leadership Team is governed by students for the betterment of the entire WNE community. The group also enjoys enthusiastic support from the president and vice president of student-affairs.

Evaluation, Assessment and Outcomes

The WNE Civility Leadership Team has had a positive impact on the WNE campus in a relatively short time. Its on-campus achievements include drafting a Civility Pledge and encouraging more than half the campus community (including senior staff) to sign; creating a video and providing peer training to promote a new bystander intervention program; working with campus staff to implement a campus climate assessment, and a diversity and inclusion poster campaign and other initiatives. The Team's annual International Dodgeball Tournament has become a popular campus-wide celebration of cultural diversity. Finally, the group also plays a leading role in the university's anti-bullying campaign.

Off-campus, the Civility Leadership Team is involved in an anti-violence campaign, a neighborhood revitalization program, and a regional celebration of diversity. These activities are creating opportunities for the university to be seen as a leader in these important community efforts to create a safer, more diverse and inclusive environment for all residents in Western New England.

Institutionalization

The Civil Leadership Team's Civility Pledge is now a regular feature of WNE's freshmen orientation program. With student-athletes playing a leading role, the group is an integral part of efforts to advance the university's diversity and inclusion agenda.

Conclusion

History is a clock that people use to tell their political and cultural time of day. It is a compass they use to find themselves on the map of human geography. It tells them where they are, but more importantly, what they must be like.

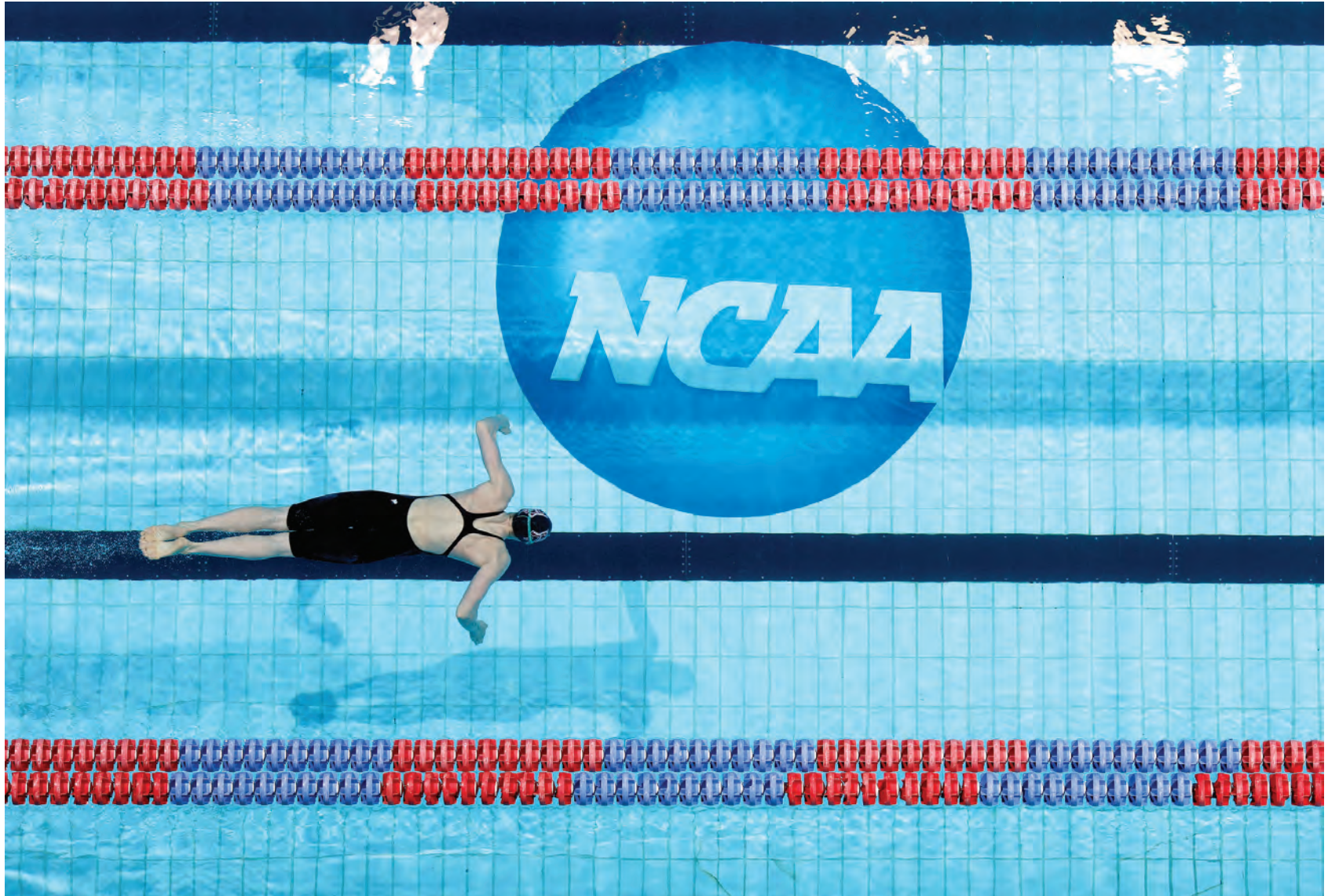
— John Henrick Clark, American Historian



Diversity and inclusion have a long and dramatic history within the NCAA, as the examples highlighted in this publication illustrate. Having already dismantled many of the systems and practices that once barred many student-athletes from competing at the intercollegiate level, our focus now turns to building systems and practices that will deliver diversity among all intercollegiate administrators, coaches, and staff. It isn't enough for our athletics departments to just look diverse; they must embody cultures of diversity and inclusion. Lessons from past struggles, disappointments and triumphs have taught us that the most effective diversity and inclusion efforts:

- **Have a clear mission and enthusiastic support from executive leadership.**
- **Are well resourced and connected to the broader campus infrastructure.**
- **Involve students, coaches, staff, administrators, faculty and — where appropriate — parents and community.**
- **Include evaluation and assessment mechanisms that allow program coordinators to measure progress and make adjustments along the way.**
- **Become embedded in the systems and practices that are integral to the institutional culture.**

The NCAA salutes the athletics departments highlighted here for their courage, commitment and vision, and we hope their leadership inspires others to follow. Diversity and inclusion are about more than just atoning for past wrongs. They are about maximizing our competitive potential, strengthening our institutions, and positioning our student-athletes, coaches, and administrators to discover the best of who they are and hope to be. As our member institutions continue to spearhead the nation's push toward greater diversity and inclusion, the NCAA will support and encourage that initiative every step of the way.



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