

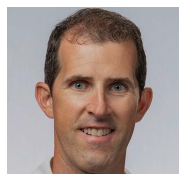
D2 ADACORNER



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Facilities & Community

Partnerships are nothing new in athletics, nor in the world of business or community. The old adage, “if you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together,” definitely holds true.

At Pittsburg State University, we are blessed to have many top-level championship facilities. But those didn't come to fruition by us paddling feverishly upstream alone. It took the vision, resources, and support of an entire community to provide the motor to overcome any rough waters and finish each race. As we operate an institution of approximately 7,000

students, our primary focus is to serve those students. What we provide and how we provide it is at the forefront of all of our decisions. That being said, without our community support, academic and athletics successes would not be possible.

Sharing our facilities with our community is a symbiotic friendship. An institution of higher learning of any size needs input, interest, and attendance from the community to flourish. Without the support of our community, a Saturday afternoon football game with 10,000 screaming fans, the crimson and gold shop windows downtown and Gorilla statues at every corner along the main street would not exist. Taking in the homecoming parade or tailgating with family and friends on game day are staples in the lives of many.

It is important that we engage our community members and that they feel a part of our campus and activities. When we can provide facilities to serve their needs, that bond is strengthened. When our youth are exposed to events on campus at early ages they become Gorilla fans for life. It is amazing how many members of our community grew up here and either never left or have returned because of the experiences they had on campus. Some came here just to go to school, but have stayed to raise a family.

Our own kids have benefitted from having youth practice on the turf at our baseball/softball complex or practicing youth basketball in our arena or even taking in a show at the university planetarium. A local church conducted its annual fundraiser in our Plaster Center for the past couple of years and utilized the spacious surroundings of our 300-meter track and turf field. We have several people who use the indoor track each morning not only to walk, jog, and run, but to socialize with their friends while they exercise. That's community. And that's what we're all about.

Now, opening up your “home” to others comes with some challenges. Scheduling and communication takes a concerted effort and additional usage means additional maintenance and up-keep. It's not easy, but it's worth it. In the big picture, you have to remember that without community, you likely wouldn't have the facilities you have, or at least not as nice as the ones you have.

Many will say that a school and/or commerce of a city is the heartbeat and that the students and residents are the lifeblood. At Pittsburg State, we believe that an engaged community is the additional nourishment and enrichment needed to produce happy, healthy and fulfilling days.

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Mike Racy

MIAA

Commissioner

Using a Facility to Strategically Position your Conference's Brand/Image

Over the past 105 years, the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association (MIAA) has gained the reputation of being one of the top NCAA Division II conferences in the nation. MIAA student-athletes have won 42 NCAA team championships and more than 300 individual national titles during the past four decades. The MIAA currently conducts championships in 10 sports for men and 10 for women.

For the past three years, the MIAA has occupied a 2,000-square-foot office space on the ninth floor in a commercial office building in Downtown Kansas City, Missouri. As we prepared for the expiration of our office lease in December 2018, the MIAA staff began a search for a new home for the conference office.

The MIAA Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament has been played in historic Municipal Auditorium in downtown Kansas City for the past 16 years. In addition, there are more than 100,000 alumni from MIAA member schools in the greater Kansas City area. Obviously, keeping the conference office in Kansas City was a top priority.

After months of searching office locations in downtown Kansas City, we were unable to find reasonably priced office space featuring opportunities to create greater awareness and visibility for the MIAA and our member schools. This was an important part of our move – our ninth floor office space was comfortable and provided a wonderful view of the downtown Kansas City skyline, however, the space offered few opportunities to connect with MIAA alumni, fans and prospective students making choices about where to go to college. We needed an office space that would allow us to strategically position the MIAA brand and market our member institutions to an engaged audience.

In the fall, we began exploring the possibility of relocating to Hy-Vee Arena (formerly Kemper Arena), located just outside downtown Kansas City. Hy-Vee Arena recently completed a \$39 million renovation, and the facility has been converted into the region's premier youth sports

facility and the country's largest multi-level sports complex.

It is estimated that more than 500,000 people will visit Hy-Vee Arena each year for practices, tournaments and skills training. The arena offers 12 full-sized hardwood courts, a 350m track, a fitness center, training facilities, recovery and medical support, shopping, dining, gaming, and wellness spas all under one roof! It is the first-of-its-kind, state-of-the-art sports environment and it will be a hub for hundreds of local, regional and national tournaments each year. The facility has already hosted major volleyball, indoor soccer, wrestling, basketball, gymnastics and track events. Specialty businesses within the facility include speed and agility training, cross-fit, hydrotherapy, golf simulators, esports, dining, retail and commercial office space.

In November, the MIAA CEO council authorized a long-term lease (seven years) for 2,000-square-feet of office space just off of the main concourse in Hy-Vee Arena. For the MIAA office and our 14-member schools, this office space will be a difference-maker in our ability to connect with a young audience and to tell our unique story.