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The beginning of a new school year always brings excitement around campus. I truly love this time of year as the fall sports get underway and our campuses transform to a beehive of activity. I wish everyone the best as they begin the 2019-20 academic year.

It is an honor to serve as the Division I FCS Athletics Directors Association President. People always ask, "What is your favorite part of the job?" There are many things I enjoy, but at the top of the list is watching student-athletes succeed academically, athletically and in their communities. Followed right behind is working side-by-side with smart and dedicated colleagues from across the country who focus on that same outcome. I am excited to build that network during this upcoming academic year and work with many of you in advancing intercollegiate athletics. I believe strongly in the role athletics plays in higher education today.

The Football Championship Subdivision collectively must strengthen our brand and deliver on what we promise. Some of those brand promises include: a top-quality educational and competitive experience for the student-athletes; opportunities for student-athletes to develop skills in leadership and teamwork; and connecting with the various constituencies we serve both on and off campus.

In my experience, building and maintaining a strong brand is backed by a thorough and well-thought-out strategic plan. The strategic planning process can be arduous and at times feel downright painful. However, the process can reveal valuable weaknesses and strengths within the organization and becomes a wonderful resource as we work day-to-day in strengthening the brand.

I currently serve as a member of the NCAA Division I FCS Championship Committee. This group of athletics directors and NCAA staff members focuses on executing a high quality and competitive National Championship event that is memorable for both student-athletes and fans.

The NCAA asked the committee to develop a strategic plan that will guide decisions and branding of the FCS Championship, and in turn

grow the subdivision nationally. With a long-term agreement in place with the city of Frisco, Texas that will keep the FCS National Championship at Toyota Stadium through 2025, the time is perfect to identify the mission, vision and core values along with both short and long-term goals.

Core values include a focus on the safety and well-being of the student-athletes and operating the championship in a fiscally responsible manner. Some goals are as simple and obvious as continuing to improve transparency on the selection process along with driving demand for tickets in the local Frisco market. Some goals are more long term like creating more ancillary events around the championship and continuing to look at emerging digital technology and social media platforms to grow the championship and in turn the subdivision.

I look forward to the committee sharing more widely this completed strategic plan and hearing from the FCS ADA membership on ideas that are working, as we solidify and deliver on the FCS brand. We are all engaged in wonderful work. We are doing great things on campuses around the country. Keep focused on the strengths of the FCS brand and collectively let us work hard to deliver on those brand promises.



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