

N4A



Dr. Kayleigh McCauley

Lewis & Clark College
Associate Dean of Students

In 2019 the N4A Board of Directors announced a new organizational division: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). The DEI Division focuses on providing equitable access to N4A educational opportunities. We recently developed an event planning guide that incorporates universal design concepts to assist conference and Convention planning for all N4A events, for in-person meetings and virtual education offerings. Additionally, the division oversees the N4A Opportunities Scholarship, which provides \$25,000 in professional development scholarship support for members from HBCU, Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI), Indigenous Institutions, Low Resource Institutions (LRI), Two-Year Colleges, and members employed at institutions experiencing financial hardship. The DEI Division also includes two long-standing and highly active committees; the Ethnic Concerns and the LGBTQA+. These

two committees have a history of collaboration and partnership; joining them under this new Division will only strengthen and unite their work.

The Ethnic Concerns Committee (ECC) is led by Chris Evans, Chair - the University of Arkansas and Shanika Mungin, Vice-Chair - Florida State University. Two highlights of 2019-20 are the #ECCRealTalk Twitter Chat and the ECC Institutional Partnership Program (IPP). #ECCRealTalk is an initiative that aims to involve N4A members in online discussions concerning trending topics in our profession. Join the next chat on Twitter using the hashtag #ECCRealTalk. The IPP is an initiative led by Aaron Tillman, Florida State University and the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Involvement Committee. The IPP helps to cultivate community between HBCUs and proximal institutions to exchange resources, in an effort to enhance the student-athlete experience. The LGBTQA+ committee is led by Mindy Reger, Chair - New York University and Michael Anderson, Vice Chair - Louisiana Delta Community College. The LGBTQA+ committee is committed to visible allyship and providing N4A members with educational resources to support LGBTQA+ student-athletes and colleagues.

It is undeniable that over the past two months, our personal and professional worlds have become entrenched in COVID-19 response efforts. Through this incredibly challenging time, it has been critical to keep diversity, equity, and inclusion at the forefront of the decision-making process. As student-athletes moved to remote learning for the spring semester, concerns regarding equitable access to education became more prevalent than ever.

In addition to serving on the N4A Board of Directors as Division Director - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, I am proud to have led N4A's initial response to COVID-19 by creating our community resource document, "Transitioning to Remote Delivery for Student-Athlete Academic Support & Student-Athlete Development Professionals." N4A assembled a "COVID-19 Response Task Force" to assist with continually updating this resource and to support our members during this time. The Task Force was able to offer open office hours for N4A members to provide personalized resources and help problem solve challenging issues. As the Association moves forward in offering virtual professional development opportunities, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) will continue to be an essential thread in our work.

@NAACConnect

NAAC



Tom Mitchell

Purdue University
Associate Athletics Director
for Compliance

The Problem Solvers

As a child, Mister Rogers' Neighborhood was one of my favorite television programs. The show taught me a number of valuable lessons. One lesson that has stuck with me was what to say to children when something tragic or scary is in the news. Mr. Rogers would say, "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'" As an impressionable preschooler, this message was a small spark in my young mind. Over the years, the idea of "looking for the helpers" has evolved for me, as I am now a "helper" - a problem solver for our coaches, staff, and student-athletes.

As compliance professionals, we are all problem solvers. During these unprecedented times, where plans are changed as quickly as they are

made, our problem solving skills have been on full display. We are the problem solvers. We are the ones who see problems as opportunities for success. We are the ones who see solutions.

Yet we are not alone. Each of us is surrounded by amazing and talented individuals from other disciplines: sports medicine, academics, event management, facility operations, student services/life skills, strength & conditioning, sports psychology, sports nutrition, strategic communications, sport administrators, equipment staff ... and the list goes on and on. We must make sure that we are more together than ever before as many of us are forced to be physically apart. So stay connected with your fellow support staff members. Ask to join their video conference team meetings. Call and check-in with them. Set up virtual social engagement with them (e.g., virtual happy hour, virtual trivia, play online board games together). Stay connected with your coaches and student-athletes! Normally, it is the highlight of my day, but now ... now it is so much more. Remember you are not alone but also remember to make a concerted effort to reach out and stay connected.

Now is the time for us to focus our collective gaze on what matters most -problem solving

and finding solutions rather than obstacles. So do not sweat the small stuff or get stuck in the mud (interpretatively speaking). Rather look at things with a student-athlete first mentality that values health and safety above all else, then consider the rest. Avoid the trap of over-thinking or over-planning. While it is important to have contingency plans, it is paramount to have flexibility built into such plans and perspective that those plans will change. Instead, focus on what you can control and be ready to adapt your plans based upon the situation.

In college athletics, there are always people looking for solutions. So remember to look for the problem solvers.