

N4A



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2020-21 President

The N4A exhibited the strength of our membership in the way we rolled up our sleeves and delivered what may have been our best year yet. In the face of the global pandemic and a social justice crisis, we responded in full force to meet the needs of our rapidly expanding membership. Our membership remained our focus, and we lifted as we rose. We did all of this while breaking records: largest total membership with over 2,600 members, record National Convention registration, record number of webinars, new branding, elevated communication efforts, the streamlining of our voice at a national level, and the enhanced and flexible execution of our five year strategic plan.

The N4A recently hosted a stand-alone virtual National Convention, June 22-24. With over 1,700 members in attendance at our virtual

National Convention, we focused on the theme of *United, Resilient, Stronger*. Centered around our theme, we welcomed Abby Wambach as our keynote speaker and Curtis Hill and Jess Weiner as our featured speakers. Each of them in their own style focused on leadership, resilience and growing forward. We hosted 24 concurrent workshops and created space for connection and networking in breakout rooms and happy hours. Although we were virtual, we continued with our important tradition of hosting the N4A HBCU Happy Hour, drawing connections between our HBCU colleagues and the N4A leadership and leaders within our industry. In the face of adversity, the N4A rose to the occasion and as a team came together to provide a robust and dynamic National Convention experience for our membership.

Thank you to Jessica Goerke, Patrice Ayeni, Denise Poole, Ashton Henderson, Jackie Nicholson, Old Hat Creative, Pathable, the National Convention Working Group, Communications Working Group, and the Honors and Awards Working Group for their tireless work to execute our National Convention. Additionally, thank you to those who provided content through presentations

and breakout facilitations, engaged with the platform and our sponsors who continue to support and invest in the future growth of our Association.

As we head into the new academic year, the N4A is excited to participate in the NACDA & Affiliates Convention, July 27-28. The N4A will focus on three key areas – DEI, NIL and the Reacclimating to Campus. We look forward to collaborating with a number of external stakeholders, including the other NACDA Affiliate Associations, in our July sessions.

The N4A will continue to grow under the leadership of incoming President, Ashton Henderson, as we will host two Steve McDonnell Professional Development Institutes (PDI) in November, and are working towards hosting a DEI Summit as well this fall.

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While it was a short voting session for the Division II Business Session compared to previous ones, it was certainly impactful when it comes to Division II Legislative Proposals. Division II adopted legislation permitting schools to provide access to athletics aid and practice to all incoming freshman student-athletes and two-year college transfers, regardless of their initial eligibility status.

Currently (changing August 1, 2021), student-athletes who are nonqualifiers are not permitted to practice or receive athletic aid during their first academic year in residence, unless an initial eligibility waiver is approved. As a compliance director, I have encountered several student-athletes who were impacted by the nonqualifier legislation and can personally attest to the effects it has on them socially and

mentally. This change in legislation should not only improve the well-being of incoming freshmen for the next academic year but also have a positive impact on enrollment for Division II institutions.

Originally there were two proposals to be voted on at the DII Business Session. The second proposal, which addressed Name, Image and Likeness (NIL), was withdrawn from consideration due to ongoing judicial, political and enforcement issues. The proposals for NIL legislation fell into two categories: activities related to student-athlete businesses, and promotion/endorsement of third-party products and services. Some of the activities permitted would include student-athletes promoting their own work product and endorsing/promoting third party products or services (athletically and non-athletically related).

Other permitted activities would allow student-athletes to be paid for autographs (independent of their school), appearances, sale of merchandise/memorabilia, and operating their own camps and clinics. Student-athletes would also be permitted to license their NIL for commercial products unrelated to their work product.

Included in the proposal was administrative framework to ensure that the legislation will be transparent and enforceable. Institutions would be permitted to assist student-athletes on NIL through education and monitoring, but not arranging such opportunities. Student-athletes would be required to obtain approval to use institutional marks and would be prohibited from using their NIL to promote sports wagering, banned substances, and any other products or services not permitted by NCAA legislation. Student-athletes would also be prohibited from missing class to participate in NIL activities. Institutions would be responsible for educating the respective constituents on their campus and reporting NIL activities.

Prospective student-athletes would be permitted to retain agents, tax advisors, marketing consultants and other professional service providers for NIL activities before full-time enrollment at a DII school, but agreements must be terminated prior to initial full-time enrollment. The hiring of an agent to secure a professional opportunity would still be impermissible.

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of DII committees, conferences, institutions, and student-athletes, there is confidence that a resolution is in sight.