

## D2 ADA



### Theresa Hanson

**Simon Fraser University**  
Senior Director, Athletics  
and Recreation

We are certainly living in an interesting time and the journey over the past few years has truly been extraordinary. As we collectively recover from COVID-19, embrace what we in college sport are doing to advance important social issues, and navigate through transformational change across the NCAA to set the path for a better tomorrow, it's important to acknowledge and celebrate the wins along the way.

I've been involved in sport administration for over 25 years, and never before have we seen such dynamic and intentional advancement for women in sport, on the playing field, in the boardroom and in the media. The relevant work being done to advance equity, diversity and inclusion is far from complete, but we are moving the needle in a positive direction. The NCAA Office of Inclusion provides excellent tools, resources and programs with the intention of improving diversity and inclusion in

college sports. It's inherent in our roles as athletics directors to be intentional and meaningful in our work to advance DEI on our campuses.

On my own campus at Simon Fraser University (SFU) in Burnaby, BC Canada, 2022 marks our 10th anniversary as a full member, and only international member, of NCAA Division II. We are very proud of this distinction as we provide a unique opportunity for Canadian student-athletes to stay in Canada, compete in the NCAA and receive an excellent education from one of Canada's top research universities.

SFU is committed to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive community where all feel welcome, safe, accepted and appreciated in learning, teaching, research and work. A live example of striving to address social change through the lens of DEI is our work to choose a new team name.

SFU's varsity team name – "The Clan" – was short for the SFU Clansman, which originated when the university was first created in 1965, and its roots were related to the explorer Simon Fraser, whom the university was named after, and his Scottish ancestry.

At that time the name was used in a positive context to identify closely knit interrelated Scottish families and kinships, which the university community thought would bring people together to support their sports teams. However, the name has subsequently been used in a negative racialized context, for which it was never intended, and this proved to be extremely hurtful and completely inappropriate, especially to our Black student-athletes. A change was needed.

Beginning in 2019 when SFU student-athletes voted 77 percent in favor of initiating a process to change the team name, when Black student-athletes and organizers raised real concerns about anti-Black racism and violence, and when SFU University President Joy Johnson affirmed her strong support to change the name, we initiated a process to select a new varsity team name.

The journey to select a new team name has been one of incredible learning. We are looking forward to bringing this project to a meaningful conclusion, and having a new team name that will inspire unity and be a source of pride across SFU. Stay tuned...

## D2 CCA



### Chris Colvin

**Conference Carolinas**  
Commissioner

Small colleges are facing unprecedented challenges from every direction and the importance of the intercollegiate athletics department in the enrollment strategy for colleges and universities has never been more significant. Many institutions, including public institutions, require coaches to carry rosters that are significantly larger than anyone would have dreamed of 10-15 years ago.

Since taking over as commissioner of Conference Carolinas in 2019, it has been my repeated statement that the primary role of the conference office is to help our institutions use intercollegiate athletics to fulfill their missions.

Conference Carolinas launched a unique plan during the 2021-22 academic year to help our member institutions fulfill their missions by adding Developmental Championships.

Some may call it JV or sub-varsity, but the term "Developmental" seems to capture the role of these programs the best.

These developmental programs provide significant opportunities for additional student-athletes to compete and fine-tune their skills. Conference Carolinas wanted to create a dynamic that provided student-athletes competing at the developmental level with a championship experience while not overburdening the institutions, or the conference, with financial commitments beyond our means.

The plan was to conduct a Developmental Championship in any sport in which at least four institutions declared an intent to participate. Using that guideline, which was recently formally added to the Conference Carolinas bylaws, Conference Carolinas sponsored Developmental Championships in four sports during the 2021-22 academic year: men's soccer, women's soccer, men's basketball and baseball. The Soccer Developmental Championships were held on one day in the same city at two separate venues and featured four teams each. Ten institutions participated in the Men's Basketball Developmental Championship, which was split into two brackets. Each bracket was played on one day and the winners of the two brackets

met the following week for the championship. Five institutions participated in the Baseball Developmental Championship, which was structured similar to basketball with two site winners advancing to a single championship the following week.

Home institutions bore the responsibility for all game management, visiting institutions were responsible for their travel, and the conference office handled the cost of officials and had one staff member present for all championship events. The conference created a championship trophy, awarded a tournament MVP, and provided championship T-shirts for the winning team. The financial investment at the conference level was approximately \$10,000 and much of the planning was coordinated by the conference's year-long intern. All contests were streamed on our Digital Network.

Feedback from the inaugural year was tremendous. Student-athletes had the opportunity to compete for championships and assistant coaches had the opportunity to serve as a head coach in a championship environment. The ultimate goal is to come alongside our institutions to help them maximize the ways that intercollegiate athletics is helping them achieve their missions.