

NAIA TALKING POINTS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS



PRESIDENTIAL TALKING POINTS

CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER

Champions of Character is present throughout the strategic plan. The program's approach to character education is what defines and make the NAIA unique.

Possibly the NAIA's single most important program, *Champions of Character* is grounded in five core values: **respect, responsibility, integrity, servant leadership and sportsmanship.**

STRATEGIC PLAN

Integrity and Accountability:

Member institutions conduct athletics programs in a way that supports the association's dual commitment to high-caliber competition and total student development.

Engagement of NAIA Members:

Presidents have an active leadership role that is critical to strengthen NAIA affiliated conferences.

Communication:

Members are assertive advocates for the NAIA and character-driven intercollegiate athletics; the national office will strengthen its relationships with national media outlets and increase awareness to outside audiences.

Resources:

The national office and Council of Presidents will work together to increase sustained relationships with corporate partners and philanthropic giving.

STRENGTHS

Student-Athletes have dramatically increased opportunities for postseason play

Best value in college sports; athletics budgets half those of similarly situated NCAA institutions.

NAIA athletics programs are part of an association-wide commitment to developing the whole person through character-driven athletics

Association strives to earn a reputation that is as strong in academics as it is in athletics.

The NAIA is committed to uncompromising standards in intercollegiate athletics

There is an emphasis on clear and consistent standards for the ethical conduct of athletics programs; the focus is on institutional accountability, rules compliance and fair play.

The NAIA is taking a niche approach to the world of college sports

Bigger does not equate to better. The NAIA prides itself on close contact and customer service for its members and each member has a much better opportunity to get involved in a substantial way, including participation in governance, policy-making and national championships.

The program is designed to instill an understanding of character in sport and provide student-athletes, coaches and parents hands-on training to know the right thing, do the right thing and value the right thing inside and outside of the sports setting.

The program's immediate focus is to reach and penetrate a broad-based understanding of *Champions of Character* among NAIA coaches and student-athletes.

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What role do college presidents have in the NAIA's Strategic Plan?

The NAIA asks that presidents play an active role in the strategic plan. The plan is designed to strengthen presidential leadership among affiliated conferences to establish strong and effective planning, budgeting and governance.

How does the Strategic Plan address membership trends?

The strategic plan places increased emphasis on the NAIA as a "niche" organization dedicated to character in sports, a common-sense approach to rules and regulations and seamless integration of athletics in campus governance. The plan describes a close partnership between the national office and membership in recruiting and retaining NAIA members, with particular attention to the proactive role of conferences in membership initiatives. Association leadership emphasizes that while the success of the NAIA should not be described by the number of its members, the NAIA experienced a net increase in membership during the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the NAIA's approach to academic standards?

The NAIA's fundamental guiding principle integrates the athletics experience into the institution framework as a whole. Graduation rates of collegiate athletes have been a focus of abuses in the entertainment model of NCAA Division I. The NAIA requires that student-athletes make progress towards a degree and sets consequences to the "short-term" athlete.

What is the NAIA doing to brand and enhance its image?

There is an ongoing effort to secure a place for the NAIA in the wide world of college athletics. With staff committed to generating heightened interest in the NAIA the association has made progress in gaining national recognition in the competitive realm. The NAIA staff is focused on cultivating relationships with major media markets and has a stronger line of communication with constituents in higher education. Many more resources are going towards public/media relations and communications. Also, studies indicate that local and regional media outlets base publicity and coverage primarily on participation of local athletes and winning programs. As a result, NAIA and member institutions need to work together to capitalize on this trend.

What is the average operational cost for NAIA athletics programs?

Average costs for operating programs that regularly appear in NAIA championships is far less than that of comparable successful NCAA Division II programs. Any accurate comparison of expenses associated with championship participation in the NAIA and NCAA must take into account overall operating expenses. Federal research shows NAIA institutions' (comparing top-performing NAIA and NCAA programs) average expenditures are less than half those of NCAA Division II programs.

A 30 SECOND TIME OUT (NAIA ELEVATOR SPEECH)

The NAIA is an association of close to 300 member colleges and universities.

As the athletics governing body for these institutions, we promote character-driven intercollegiate competition.

In other words, our members believe in building the whole person, and athletics is a wonderful vehicle to teach life lessons that extend well beyond the sports arena.

NAIA QUICK FACTS

- A distinctive model for college sports
- Over 45,000 student-athletes and nearly 300 colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada
- Young men and women competing in 23 collegiate national championship events in 13 sports
- Millions of dollars awarded through athletic aid to eligible student-athletes
- Standards that value athletic participation as a piece of the total education process
- Programs based on simplified rules, economic value, commitment to character education and competitive environments to further student life and personal growth
- Championship experiences and partnerships designed for the complete student-athlete