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Knight Commission recommends bold governance change for big-time college sports

Alberto Ibarguen, Knight Foundation [web@knightfoundation.org]

Sent: Thursday, December 03, 2020 3:16 PM

To: [Steve Johnston](#)

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Dear Sarah,

Today, the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics recommended a transformation in the governance of Division I sports that would make college athletes' education, health, safety and success its highest priority.

The commission's key recommendation is to create a governing structure for top-tier football—a growing, multibillion dollar enterprise—separate from the National Collegiate Athletic Association, which currently shares the costs of the sport but less of the proceeds. The NCAA would continue to govern all other sports, and both entities would prioritize athletes' academic success.

The recommendations have been affirmed by the voices of key leaders and administrators. Earlier this year, the Commission released a survey that found nearly 80 percent of Division I campus and sports leaders favor "big solutions" over incremental change for reforming D-I governance, and those leaders also believe the crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic presents the "perfect time" to address serious governance shortcomings.

[You can read the recommendations here.](#)

Knight Foundation has supported the Knight Commission since its founding in 1989, giving it the freedom to act independently. For Knight, supporting the Commission is an expression of our mission to foster informed and engaged communities. We encourage dialogue on critical issues, including free expression, trust, media and democracy. The Knight Commission has been an important platform for the discussion of values and ethics in our diverse society — and that includes American values of fairness, racial and gender equity, and education, converging — and sometimes conflicting — in college athletics.

In a moment of profound disruption in our system of higher education, which has rippled through every facet of colleges and universities nationwide, today's recommendations continue in this bold, independent tradition.

Sincerely,

Alberto Ibargüen
President and CEO
Knight Foundation




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