



UNITED STATES OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE

USOPC COLLEGIATE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE June 29, 2020

U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee Collegiate Advisory Council assesses COVID-19 impact to national team training

The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee Collegiate Advisory Council convened via video conference June 29, 2020 to review progress against the USOPC's collegiate pathway, alignment and messaging initiatives.

During the meeting, the council reviewed collegiate partnerships research regarding the impact of COVID-19 to Team USA national team student-athletes. There are currently 544 athletes from 30 sports who are training or planning to train at 133 unique schools. The council committed to work collaboratively across the collegiate and USOPC landscapes to support athlete training, while prioritizing athlete health and safety. In addition to the national team training support plans, the council was also updated on USOPC operational efforts to expand international prize money access across college-centric national governing bodies through the NCAA Operation Gold grant exception, which is expected to be piloted with winter sports in January 2021.

"This important work will smoothen impediments faced by national team student-athletes, which have been magnified in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic," said Bob Bowsby, Big 12 commissioner. "Now more than ever, we must seek proactive and safe training alternatives to support athletes and leverage untapped financial resources to do so in this financially strained environment."

The council also heard about the USOPC's Collegiate Athlete Thought Leaders group, a 13-member team that will explore collegiate national team athlete needs in areas of alignment, pathway and messaging. The thought leaders will serve as a subset of the USOPC CAC's alignment effort and formalize athlete ties between the collegiate and USOPC landscapes. The council also discussed the evaluation of a USOPC CAC seat structure and governance codification.

"During these incredibly uncertain and extremely challenging times, the robust intercollegiate community in concert with its longstanding partner, the USOPC, must elevate our terribly unique union in order to successfully navigate this ever-evolving landscape," said Kevin White, USOPC CAC chair and Duke University vice president and director of athletics. "Together, our symbiotic relationship must lead with pristine clarity and unqualified hope, and in the same breath, further align our collective strategies to absolutely ensure that elite athletes, not unlike all athletes, have the very best chance to harvest their full aspirations as they grow and develop via sport."

The council also reviewed opportunities to help national team athletes advocate for their sports, which will be amplified through the recalibration of the *Olympians Made Here and Paralympians Made Here* collegiate solidarity campaigns. The renewed campaign activation timeline will be released this summer and includes increased emphasis on athlete and coach voices to champion the holistic value of our sports.

"Through the campaigns, we've built a foundation of partners who are ready to activate during the upcoming school year," said Sandy Barbour, Pennsylvania State University vice president for intercollegiate athletics. "We're excited to celebrate the value of Olympic and Paralympic sports in our country, and infusing athlete and coach voices will only strengthen this narrative."

The council, which meets quarterly, is scheduled to reconvene this fall in Colorado Springs.

About the CAC

The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee Collegiate Advisory Council was formed in October 2017 and is chaired by USOPC board member Kevin White (Duke University). The 10-member council is charged with increasing collaboration with NCAA member institutions and conferences to elevate national engagement and support of Olympic and Paralympic sport opportunities on campus. The council is comprised of:

- Sandy Barbour, Pennsylvania State University vice president of intercollegiate athletics
- Bob Bowlsby, Big 12 Conference commissioner
- Greg Byrne, University of Alabama athletics director
- Bubba Cunningham, University of North Carolina director of athletics
- Bernard Muir, Stanford University athletic director
- Rob Mullens, University of Oregon athletic director
- Chris Plonsky, University of Texas executive sr. associate athletics director/chief of staff
- Gene Smith, The Ohio State University senior vice president and athletic director
- Scott Stricklin, University of Florida athletic director
- Kevin White, Duke University vice president and athletic director