

**STATEMENT OF MYLES BRAND, NCAA PRESIDENT**  
**BEFORE THE**  
**HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, TRADE AND**  
**CONSUMER PROTECTION**  
**February 28, 2007**

Chairman Rush, Ranking Member Stearns and other distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to appear before you today to discuss hiring equity in college athletics and the NCAA's efforts to assist in increasing the number of minorities in leadership positions within college athletics. Thank you also for holding this hearing on an important issue.

The NCAA is a voluntary association of nearly 1,300 colleges, universities, athletics conferences and related organizations. The NCAA's primary purpose is to regulate and promote intercollegiate athletics in a manner that fully integrates athletics programs with the academic mission of higher education and student-athletes with the student body. As a membership organization, the NCAA serves as the governance and administrative infrastructure through which representatives of colleges and universities enact legislation and set policy to establish recruiting standards and competitive equity among members, protect the integrity of intercollegiate athletics, ensure the enforcement of its rules and provide public advocacy of college sports. The authority for all rules, policies and procedures rests with the member institutions and not the national office. The NCAA also conducts 89 championships in 23 sports in which more than 45,000 student-athletes compete for the title of National Collegiate Champion. More than 380,000 student-athletes are competing in sports at NCAA member institutions this academic year.

Although the national office in Indianapolis is often referred to as the NCAA, the staff is merely the implementing infrastructure for the colleges and universities.

There is much within intercollegiate athletics to celebrate. My emphasis over the last four years has been on academic reform, ensuring that student-athletes have the opportunity to acquire a sound education that will serve them throughout a lifetime so they can serve their country as productive citizens. Indeed, as a long-time university professor, administrator and president, educating students has been my life's work.

Among the success stories of intercollegiate athletics has been the academic performance of student-athletes and their progress over the last decade and a half and especially of African-American student-athletes. Some may see the numbers about to be discussed as damning praise; and indeed, American secondary and post-secondary education must do a better job of elevating the academic preparation of Black children and young adults. But I can say with some pride that the standards intercollegiate athletics has put in place over the past 20 years are making a difference.

When the Department of Education began collecting graduation data for the first time from the class that entered higher education in 1984, African-American male students in the general student body graduated at a rate of 28 percent. [See chart below] African-American female students graduated at a rate of 34 percent. Black student-athletes were doing only marginally better. Black male athletes' rate was 33 percent. Black female athletes' rate was 45 percent. Black football student-athletes graduated at a rate of 35

percent, and worst of all, Black male basketball student-athletes graduated at a rate of 29 percent – just one point better than their counterpart in the general student population.

Sixteen years later, after nearly two decades of NCAA academic reform, graduation rates of African-American male student-athletes is 20 points better than the rate of African-American males in the general student body in the 1984 cohort. Today, Black male student-athletes graduate at a rate of 48 percent, Black female student-athletes at 66 percent. African-American males in the student body today graduate at 37 percent and females at 50 percent. Today, African-American male basketball student-athletes graduate 13 percentage points better (42 percent) than the 1984 class, and football student-athletes are 14 points better (49 percent). These are conservative numbers because the Department of Education methodology fails to take transfer students into account, even though their own estimates are that as many as 50 percent of all college students today transfer at least once.

The NCAA does calculate the success and failure of transfer student-athletes, and the rates there are much better. When you take transfers into account, the graduation success rate (GSR) of African-American male student-athletes is 55 percent and for females it is 74 percent. African-American football student-athletes graduate at 55 percent by this calculation and male basketball student-athletes graduate at a rate of 51 percent. This is a great success story.

Academic Success of  
African-American Student-Athletes

	1984 Cohort Dept. of Ed. Rate	2000 Cohort Dept. of Ed. Rate	2000 Cohort GSR Rate
African-American male students	28	37	N/A
African-American male student-athletes	33	48	55
African-American female students	34	50	N/A
African-American female student-athletes	45	66	74
African-American football student-athletes	35	49	55
African-American male basketball student-athletes	29	42	51

Note the 2000 cohort is the most recent information available; the period measured for graduation is 2000-2006.

But not all challenges within intercollegiate athletics have been as successful, and some are personally frustrating. Chief among those, in my view, is the dismal record of hiring people of color into head coaching positions, especially in the sport of football. We have made significant progress in college basketball. Over the last two decades, the number of African-American head coaches has significantly increased. Today, there are more than 80 in Division I, better than 25 percent of all the head coaching positions in the sport. That is not good enough in a sport where 63 percent of the participants are African-American, but it is significant progress. There has been some progress among athletics directors of color with 11 African-Americans and three Latinos in Division I.

College football, however, is far and away the worst of the areas. In my first public speech as NCAA president to the Association's membership more than four years ago and less than two weeks after taking office, I said that one of the most egregious

instances of lack of access was the low number of African-American head football coaches in Division I-A (or the Bowl Championship Subdivision as it is now called). The number of Black head football coaches in January of 2003 was four when you exclude the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Today, there are six. There are five more in Division I-AA (now called the Football Championship Subdivision); two in Division II; and one in Division III.

The grand total is 14 among all football-playing member institutions when the HBCUs are excluded from the calculation. That represents 2.4 percent in a sport where 55 percent of the student-athletes are African-American. And in the last four years, we have only increased the number in Division I-A by two. At that rate, it will take more than 80 years before we reach a percentage that even approximates the number of African-Americans in the general population. As I have said on as many occasions as possible over the last four years, that is not only unacceptable, it is unconscionably wrong. If we can make significant progress with the hiring of African-American head basketball coaches, why has the progress been so slow in football?

Part of my personal frustration with this issue is the lack of direct control the NCAA has over the matter. The Association cannot make the hires, and it cannot mandate who is interviewed. Just as no central authority dictates to American higher education who among all educators and administrators they ought to interview or hire, the colleges and universities will not cede to the NCAA the authority to dictate who to interview or hire in athletics. This is not a challenge that can be managed through Association action in the

same way we have done with academic reform. The universities and colleges retain their autonomy and authority in the case of hiring and in the case of expenditures, and they will not cede it to the NCAA or any other national organization.

Some observers of intercollegiate athletics have promoted a collegiate version of the Rooney Rule that has diversified the interview pool for the National Football League (NFL). Such a rule will not work for higher education as a whole, nor can a specific sport be singled out to operate apart from the institution. More importantly, such a rule is not necessary. I began working with the Black Coaches Association (BCA) four years ago to address the under-representation of African-Americans among head football coaches and helped that organization design the Minority Hiring Report Card that grades and publicizes the results of interview and hiring efforts in Division I. The idea was that a more open and inclusive search would allow talent, regardless of race to rise to the top and be hired.

For the past three years, the BCA has unflinchingly graded athletics departments and publicly released its report card. This past year, there were more A's than ever, but there were also more F's. Two overwhelming facts emerge that suggest the report card is doing its job through public disclosure. First, more than 30 percent of all candidates interviewed for head coaching positions over the last three years have been minorities. Even more striking is that 76 percent of all the openings have had at least one minority candidate interviewed. In more than three of every four vacancies, a person of color was interviewed. The results for last fall are being collected and we won't know the

percentages until late summer, but the BCA Minority Hiring Report Card has proven to be the operational equivalent of the NFL's Rooney Rule. Indeed, it is a more powerful and comprehensive tool because it evaluates not only whether a minority was interviewed, but the diversity of the search committee, communication with the BCA and others who can make minority recommendations, the duration of the process to avoid 48-hour searches and hires, and adherence to institutional affirmative action policies. The problem lies now not in the search process, which has changed to accommodate the BCA Hiring Report Card, but in the final result – the actual hires.

Focusing media attention on the Rooney Rule and expending energy on blaming the NCAA national office for not having it is aiming at the wrong target and diverts attention from the real issue – the paucity of diversity hiring.

In the last four years, we have only improved the net number of African-American head football coaches in Division I-A by two and in all of Division I by eight. Even in these dismal numbers, there is some good news. Three of the most recent hires – Kansas State University's Ron Prince, Columbia University's Norries Wilson, and Chris Taylor of St. Peters College – are graduates of the NCAA Men's and Expert Coaching Academies. The academies go beyond the Xs and Os of coaching. The focus is on other skills required to run a multi-million dollar operation. In scale of operation and expectations, college football differs from all other sports. A head football coach – even more so than a head basketball coach – must not only understand the complexities of the game, but they must hire and manage a staff of two dozen or more, organize the development of more than a

hundred student-athletes into various skill units, recruit in competition with dozens of other top teams for the best available talent, appeal to alumni and donors for both athletics and campus-wide development, and often be a spokesperson for the university. And, they must win!

The NCAA coaching academies – developed in conjunction with the Black Coaches Association, the American Football Coaches Association and the National Football League – has now helped develop more than three dozen assistant or coordinator coaches in the skills and characteristics required to undertake a head leadership position on a Division I campus. Over time, these academies will elevate the qualifications of all those minority coaches who aspire to be head coaches.

A year-and-a-half ago, I created the office of diversity and inclusion and hired Charlotte Westerhaus as vice president to develop a program that will assist member institutions and the national office to increase their diverse makeup and, more importantly, to put diversity to work in an inclusive environment. Vice President Westerhaus has recently completed and is now implementing a year-long strategic planning initiative that will serve intercollegiate athletics well over the next three to five years. Within the national office, we have worked to set an example for both diversity and inclusion. Over the last five years, the number of African-Americans on the administrative staff in the national office has increased from 46 to 64 and the percentage has increased from 22 percent to 24 percent.

The coaching academies have made a difference. The BCA Hiring Report Card has made a difference. The office of diversity and inclusion will provide both resources and impetus to new initiatives. And yet, not enough hires are being made. What must we do next?

In my view, we must overcome two additional obstacles. First, we have to mitigate the risk-adverse nature of those who make football coaching hires. Like it or not, the pressure to be successful in college football – given the contribution it makes financially to a successful experience for other sports and other student athletes, given the visibility it brings to a campus from multi-million-viewer television audiences, given the complexity of football operations – raises the stakes for those who make hiring decisions or recommendations in the sport. It is viewed as “safer” to hire a proven coach even though such practice closes the door on talented assistants and coordinators, including those who are minorities.

Second, we have to improve the informal networks so that minority coaches are front-of-mind options for hiring decisions. Their names must be advanced along with others when influential consultants are asked the question: “Who can do this job?” We must get top candidates in front of athletics directors and others before the stress of hiring begins. Those who make recommendations must become as comfortable with African-American football coaching candidates as they are with African-American basketball coaches. The Rooney Rule, by the way, had nothing to do with developing the current level of diversity in basketball. Developing a better informal network for minority assistants and

coordinators is the next major push we must undertake, and I will be working with the Division I-A Athletics Directors organization to promote that effort. The Division I-A conferences have begun to host informal events that include African-Americans who are potential head football coaches and athletics directors. This too is a step in the right direction.

History was made February 4 when two African-American coaches in the NFL took their teams to the Super Bowl. Lovie Smith and Tony Dungy quietly and with great dignity made a statement that will change the way coaches of color in the sport of football will be viewed in the future. Any college or university focused on obtaining the values and success that these men represent would be proud to hire them. And both were coaches in college football, but we let them get away.

The next Lovie Smith or Tony Dungy is in the pipeline. Talented coaches are on our campuses in Division I all across America, including coaches of color. We must open the doors to them, and we simply have to hire them for the top jobs.