



A project of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation  
[www.knightcommission.org](http://www.knightcommission.org)

October 26, 2020

Dr. Mark Emmert  
President, NCAA  
700 W. Washington St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Mark:

First, thank you for you and your staff's diligent work during these challenging times for college sports and higher education.

As you are aware, the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics recently recommended a change to the NCAA revenue distribution formula as a result of a deep analysis of the NCAA bylaws, formula and related issues. This analysis is one component of [our year-long examination](#) of how the structure of Division I sports can better serve college athletes, their institutions, and the mission of intercollegiate athletics.

We previously shared with you and your staff the [press release](#) that explains our recommendation in detail. We also shared the related [study](#) that CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA), a national professional services firm, conducted for our group.

We are writing to formally request that the Knight Commission's recommendation to change the Division I revenue distribution formula be considered by the NCAA Board of Governors and the Division I Board of Directors.

Specifically, the Commission recommends that the NCAA eliminate the exception allowing FBS football to count in the NCAA Division I distribution, since the sport does not meet the NCAA's qualifying criterion—namely, that the NCAA operate a sport's postseason championship. As you know, FBS football operates its own national championship independently of the NCAA through the CFP Administration, LLC, and distributes more than \$460 million annually to FBS athletics programs through that separate entity. The unique exception provided to FBS football predated the significant evolution of that sport's national championship outside of the NCAA structure.

The release explaining the recommendation and the results of CLA's study is attached for your reference.

Also attached is the Knight Commission's roster so that you are aware of the leaders who approved advancing this recommendation. We are glad to participate in any additional conversations or meetings to explain our recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carol".

Carol Cartwright  
Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Arne".

Arne Duncan  
Co-Chair

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Attachments: Knight Commission roster  
September 30 Press Release

Cc: Grace Calhoun, chair, NCAA Division I Council  
Kevin Lennon, vice president of Division I, NCAA  
Tori Murden McClure, interim chair, NCAA Board of Governors  
Donald Remy, chief operating officer, NCAA  
Denise Trauth, interim chair, NCAA Division I Board of Directors  
Division I Conference Commissioners  
Members of the NCAA Division I Board of Directors  
Members of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics



# Knight Commission On Intercollegiate Athletics

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## MEMBERS

**Dr. Eric Barron**  
President, Penn State University

**Pamela Bernard**  
Vice President & General  
Counsel Duke University

**Dr. Carol A. Cartwright (Co-Chair)**  
President Emeritus, Kent State University  
and Bowling Green State University

**Dr. Christine Copper**  
Faculty Athletics Representative and  
Professor, United States Naval Academy

**Dr. Scott Cowen**  
Interim President, Case Western Reserve  
University; President Emeritus, Tulane  
University

**Dr. Michael Crow**  
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**Len Elmore**  
Attorney, Television Commentator

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University (Pittsburgh, PA)

**Derek Kerr**  
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Chief Financial Officer,  
American Airlines

**Shanteona Keys**  
Manager of Education, WBCA

**Penelope Ward Kyle**  
President Emeritus, Radford University

**Jonathan Mariner**  
Former Executive Vice President and  
Chief Financial Officer of  
Major League Baseball

**Jacques McClendon**  
Director of Player Engagement, Los Angeles Rams

**Dr. G.P. "Bud" Peterson**  
President Emeritus and Regents Professor,  
Georgia Institute of Technology

**Jill Pilgrim**  
Attorney, Pilgrim & Associates; Founder  
and President of The Center for the  
Protection of Athletes' Rights, Inc.

**David Robinson**  
Co-founder and Principal, Admiral Capital Group

**Peter Roby**  
Former Director of Athletics and  
Recreation, Northeastern University

**Kendall Spencer**  
USA Track & Field Board of Directors member;  
Former NCAA Board member

**Paul Tagliabue**  
Former NFL Commissioner; Georgetown  
University Board of Directors member

**Dr. Nancy L. Zimpher**  
Chancellor Emeritus, State University of New York

Member, Ex-Officio  
**Alberto Ibargüen**  
President and CEO, John S. and James L.  
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