

Honor Brand with an open, inclusive search for successor

Published October 26, 2009 : Page 25



**RICHARD
LAPCHICK**

It is still hard to believe that Myles Brand is no longer with us. We all lost a warrior for student athletes, Title IX and civil rights in sports. On Wednesday, thousands will gather in Indianapolis to pay tribute to his life and achievements. I am sure that many will speak of the difference he made in having

college sport live up to its ideals.

There has been much speculation in the media about the process to choose his successor. Many, including myself, wonder how we can fill the shoes of such a giant. It would be a tribute to Myles if the process were as open and inclusive as possible. He would want the interviewing committee as well as the individuals under consideration to be inclusive. I state this with certainty because he was responsible for the creation of the Office for Diversity and Inclusion and for many initiatives that led to more opportunities for women and people of color.

I write this on the same day I received the news that our first African-American president was chosen as the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize winner. Our first Hispanic Supreme Court justice was recently sworn in. I hope that it will become clear that such opportunities also exist for the next NCAA president. This is not to say that I hope that the NCAA will choose an African-American, Hispanic, Asian or American Indian president, or a female one, but I hope it will include the best pool of candidates, including people of color and women. This would be a tribute to Myles Brand and an important statement to our student athletes on campus, and especially to the student athletes of color in revenue-producing

sports. Just as African-American children across America now believe there is a possibility of becoming president of the United States, it would be a great signal to student athletes to see people who look like them being considered for the NCAA presidency and perhaps even being chosen.

The racial composition of conference and athletic department leaders does not reflect the diversity of our student athletes. In addition to having this process be inclusive from start to finish, we also encourage those on college campuses to hold open hiring practices for coaches, athletic directors and other important positions in college sport. The current racial makeup of those positions of leadership tells a one-sided story (see chart). Thus, a diverse pool of candidates for the new NCAA president would be extremely important.

I would take this a step further and highlight a single individual as somebody who I think would be a spectacular and principled leader of the NCAA.

Bernard Franklin, executive vice president at the NCAA, established himself as Brand's trusted ally. Before that he served as president of Virginia Union University in Richmond, Va., and also served as president of Saint Augustine's College in Raleigh. Franklin has the respect of people in academia as well as those in athletics.

Bernard Franklin was a person who Myles told me "always got the job done" at the NCAA. He oversees the largest administrative area at the NCAA, which includes membership and academic affairs, governance, educational affairs, research, and



SHANA WITTENWYLER

Myles Brand was responsible for NCAA initiatives that helped women and people of color.

diversity and inclusion. He has had his hand in almost all major aspects of the NCAA. He also was the liaison between Myles Brand and the Executive Committee.

Myles told me that he appreciated Bernard even more because Bernard never needed the limelight and was someone who would never seek public credit for his work. I invited Bernard to speak at a function soon after he joined the NCAA. I was moved by his eloquence and passion. I have heard him speak several times since then, and he is a captivating speaker.

Several years ago I was meeting with Bernard in Myles' office before the NCAA announced its

decision to get involved with the Native American mascot issue. They told me their plan and asked my opinion, and Myles said he was having Bernard take the lead on this, contrary to his more common behind-the-scenes profile. He became the public face of the issue, which proved to be one of the most controversial policies that the NCAA implemented during the Brand tenure. Bernard handled it with great skill and was often able to bring what appeared to be polar opposite sides together to successfully resolve most of the cases that involved such passion and history on the different university campuses.

So as we continue to reflect on the life and accomplishments of Myles Brand, particularly during his time as NCAA president, let us pay further tribute to him and honor the processes that he treasured by holding an inclusive search process. I also have my hopes high that his friend and trusted colleague, Bernard Franklin, will become the next NCAA president.

Richard E. Lapchick (rlapchick@bus.ucf.edu) is the chairman of the DeVos Sport Business Management Graduate Program and the director of the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport at the University of Central Florida.

BY THE NUMBERS			
24.8			
Percentage of African-American Division I male student athletes			
15.4			
Percentage of African-American Division I female student athletes			
100			
Percentage of BCS conference commissioners who are white men			
100			
Percentage of Division I conference commissioners who are white (excluding conferences representing historically black colleges and universities)			
▶ Percentage of selected athletic department positions held by whites			
	Division		
Positions	I	II	III
Men's coaches	91%	90%	93%
Women's coaches	90	90	93
Athletic directors	93	92	96
Faculty athletic reps	92	92	96
Sr. women admin.	84	91	96
Associate ADs	90	94	95
▶ Percentage of selected athletic department positions held by African-Americans			
	Division		
Positions	I	II	III
Men's coaches	7%	4%	4%
Women's coaches	6	4	4
Athletic directors	5.5	4	2
Associate ADs	8	4	4
▶ Percentage of selected athletic department positions held by women			
	Division		
Positions	I	II	III
Athletic directors	8%	13%	27%
Associate ADs	28	49	50
Source: Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport at the University of Central Florida			