



FARA VOICE

Issue No. 3

July.

I hope each of you is enjoying a pleasant and productive summer. Mine has been busy. I spent several days at the meeting of the Division I Degree Completion Consultants, which provides close to \$1 million each year to assist student-athletes complete their degree work. These are student-athletes whose eligibility for athletically related financial aid has expired. I also attended the Division I AEC Cabinet meeting, at which a number of significant issues were discussed, including possible governance restructuring, and the upcoming report of the President's Task Force on Athletics. These and other issues will be discussed in detail in future issues of FARA Voice, including changes in the award structure for the Degree Completion Program.

By now, I hope everyone is receiving a copy of FARA Voice by e-mail, but if you know of someone who is not, please have them contact Karen Cooper at the NCAA office and give her their e-mail address so they can also begin receiving each month's copy of FARA Voice. Previous copies are, of course, available on FARA's Web page. FARA members are invited to respond to items that appear in the monthly issues of FARA Voice, or to submit new essays discussing particular issues or raising specific matters of concern to FARs. Items that are specific to one division are certainly welcome. Please contact me at: hauseraj@appstate.edu. Many thanks to Karen Cooper for her assistance in preparing the issues of FARA Voice.

I would like to briefly address one item that has come up at the regional seminars. Some FARs have asked how much it costs to join FARA. Let me assure you that there is no fee involved with being a member of FARA. Anyone who is a Faculty Athletics Representative in any division is automatically a member of FARA, and is heartily invited to take part in the various programs and opportunities provided by FARA, including the upcoming program being planned in November for our meeting in New Orleans, whose theme will be "Empowering the FAR." The program will be described in more detail in the October issue of FARA Voice, and in a distribution that will be sent out by Karen Cooper. All the work that each of you does for intercollegiate athletics in your role as Faculty Athletics Representative is ample payment for your membership in FARA. We ask nothing more.

In this third issue of FARA Voice, Robert Ziegenfus, FARA Division II Vice President, presents a piece describing the Communication Initiative that FARA President Lorrie Clemeo undertook as a primary theme of her presidency. Lorrie has previously discussed some of this in Issue 1 of FARA Voice, and Robert, who has taken a lead role in this initiative, discusses in detail the initiatives that are being undertaken.

FARA continues to accept donations to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina. The FARA Executive Committee has raised over \$400 from within its own ranks, and the membership of FARA is beginning to make contributions. The details of the FARA initiative are described in the article by President Elect Dennis Leighton in Issue 2 of FARA Voice. Our goal is for FARA to raise a sizeable donation for those who are still in need as a result of this natural disaster, and we encourage you to participate, since we have the potential to raise a substantial sum if each of you contributes. You may send a check for this cause to Karen Cooper at the NCAA Office (P.O. Box 6222, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206), made payable to the NCAA with "FARA Katrina Relief" written in the memo on the check, or you may designate an amount on the registration form for the November FARA meeting in New Orleans. Your donation is tax deductible. Let's give these folks our support!!

Our August issue of FARA Voice will contain comments by Thurston Banks, outgoing chair of the Division I Initial Eligibility Subcommittee of the AEC Cabinet, discussing important initial eligibility issues that are currently being studied.

Enjoy the summer, and let me hear from you.

Alan J. Hauser, Editor
Division I FARA Vice President

The Communication Initiative

May of 2006 represented the dawning of a new relationship between FARs and the Faculty Athletics Representative Association (FARA). All FARs received the inaugural issue of the FARA Voice. In that document, FARA President Lorrie Clemo indicated that she had established improved communications as her personal mission. As the point person for the Communication Initiative, I would like to share with you what the Executive Board (Board) has done since the Indianapolis convention in January of 2006 and hopes to do by the Orlando convention in January of 2007.

First and foremost, there was an intensive effort to complete a SWOT analysis. Many of you probably know of this technique whereby an organization critically evaluates itself in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The Board devoted hours to a discussion of this analysis at its annual spring meeting. A plan was adopted. The structure of the plan focuses on the need for revision of both our internal and external communication.

By internal communication, we mean how the Board interacts with the membership. It was clear from a review of the comments on the evaluation forms from the past few Fall Forums (yes, we really do read them!) that the vast majority of you are quite happy with that meeting, especially the networking opportunities it presents. But when do we interact other than at the Fall Forum except to conduct a business meeting and hold an election at the Convention? Aren't there matters we should be discussing at other times of the year? Shouldn't we have the opportunity to share our best practices with one another throughout the year, and not be limited by what we can squeeze into the always busy Fall Forum?

By external communication, we mean the interaction we have with other entities such as the NCAA leadership, NCAA committees, conference commissioners, and even our own faculty senates. A new frontier we will explore is the use of print and digital media (e.g., NCAA News, USA Today, Chronicle of Higher Education). The Board believes it is time for FARA to have an even greater "voice" than the one we nurture in the fledgling document you are now reading. Such a task must be undertaken with great care. Many of the organizations we may interact with have much larger budgets and more powerful media connections. We will have to choose wisely, and be certain we focus on those concerns that are most central to our collective mission.

FARA will become active on many fronts over the next several months. The Board has moved into a more active and responsive mode. We ask that you do the same. We need your feedback. One critical document now in preparation is a set of guiding principles; the basic tenets that will focus our energies on your behalf and with your input. We will be distributing a draft of these principles at or before the Fall Forum and ask for your response. We will then revise them based on your comments and present a document for your approval at the 2007 Convention. How will we do all this interacting? The answer is: via a newly designed Web site to be unveiled at the Fall Forum.

A communications overhaul, the development of guiding principles, and a re-design of the Web site are the current focal points of the Board's efforts to serve your needs at a time when our "voice" needs to be heard above the din of competing voices. We urge you to be part of this communication initiative. To use the summer theme park analogy, get on board this ride – it will be bumpy at times but always exciting!

Robert C. Ziegenfus, FARA DII Vice President



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

FARA Fall Forum

November 16-18, 2006
Sheraton New Orleans

(Registration forms will be mailed on June 30)
Deadline for registration: October 11

NCAA Convention

January 5-9, 2007
Orlando, Florida