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Sister Campus in Belleville Approved for NAIA Membership

April 16, 2012

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Council of Presidents is pleased to announce the approval of four institutions for full membership in the NAIA.

The institutions are: Georgia Gwinnett College; Indiana University Kokomo; Lindenwood University-Belleville (Ill.); and St. Andrews University (N.C.). These institutions will compete as full NAIA members effective Aug. 1, 2012. All but St. Andrews will be eligible for NAIA championships beginning with the 2013-14 season. Because St. Andrews is a returning NAIA member, its athletics teams will be eligible for championships beginning with the 2012-13 season.

“We are pleased to accept these quality institutions as NAIA members,” said Ted Brown, chair of the NAIA Council of Presidents and President of Martin Methodist College (Tenn.). “This was the first year of a new process put in place to strengthen the review of membership applications, and it has worked well. We are taking a hard look at schools to make sure they are a good fit with the NAIA, so it’s more about a good fit than pure numbers.”

These four institutions were among the first set of institutions subjected to the NAIA’s new, more rigorous, annual membership process. The NAIA Membership Committee reviewed each institution’s application and determined which institutions would move to the next stage of the process. Those institutions then participated in a campus visit by a Membership Evaluation Team. The results of those campus visits were reported to the Membership Committee, which then decided whether to recommend institutions to the Council of Presidents for final approval.

Jim Carr, NAIA President and CEO, noted that these new members were subjected to a more rigorous analysis than in the past.

“Our process ensures that the NAIA membership is strong and that new members share our values,” Carr said. “We’re pleased that this new process is working and that more institutions than ever are inquiring about membership with the NAIA. We think the NAIA has a lot to offer, and we’re excited about sharing our story with other potential members.”

Under the new process, institutions are only able to apply for NAIA membership on an annual basis. Membership applications must be received in the NAIA office by Oct. 1 each year to receive consideration for the following year. Institutions applying to the NAIA must meet membership criteria that include sports sponsorship, accreditation and a commitment to character-driven athletics. The Membership Committee also reviews enrollment numbers, graduation percentages, retention rates, recruiting budgets, total athletics expenses and total athletics revenue. The NAIA received seven applications in 2011, but only four made it through the entire process and received approval by the Council of Presidents.

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