

NE10

EMBRACING EXCELLENCE

STRATEGIC VISION 2019-2024



WELCOME TO EXCELLENCE!

We at the NE10 are a family of influence, character, and integrity that is committed to offering a path for student-athlete academic achievement, athletics success, and lifelong development.

We are committed to these goals, and we are embracing our future with a bold new strategic plan.

Our plan celebrates who we are and what makes us unique, and it positions us for long-term success. We are a premier NCAA Division II conference whose members commit to the following principles:

- ▼ **We embrace our influence** – NE10 members exhibit leadership in competition, in the classroom, and in the community.
- ▼ **We embrace our student-first focus** – NE10 members emphasize student development in all facets of college life.
- ▼ **We embrace our region** – NE10 members are proud of the tradition of academic excellence and athletics success that comes with being located in a progressive, innovative, diverse, and attractive region.
- ▼ **We embrace Division II** – NE10 members espouse the ideals of the Division II vision that inspire academic achievement, reward athletic ability, champion postseason participation, and encourage a balanced student-athlete experience.

We believe the NE10 is in a position of strength when it comes to college choice. We embrace what makes us stand out among our competitors. We embrace our positive characteristics and attributes that resonate with prospective students and their families.

The following plan demonstrates where we are as a conference and how we will embrace our future.



OUR MISSION

The NE10 is a model NCAA Division II conference diverse in composition and driven by a united commitment to provide its student-athletes with exceptional educational opportunities, high-level athletics competition and personal growth through contributions to the community. We embrace excellence with integrity in all that we do.

OUR VISION FOR EXCELLENCE

The NE10 will embrace a distinctive culture of academic and athletics excellence in which student-athletes, coaches and administrators are prepared to serve as engaged citizens and leaders in a diverse global society. We will achieve this vision through a commitment to:

- ▼ Building leaders dedicated to life-long learning and community engagement.
- ▼ Creating champions through high-level, broad-based competition.
- ▼ Promoting the health, well-being and holistic development of each individual.
- ▼ Supporting diverse and inclusive environments that foster respect and value all persons.
- ▼ Embracing creative ways to convey the distinctiveness of the NE10 experience.





WHAT WE VALUE

DRIVE

We pursue excellence fostered by an inclusive culture that guides the collective advancement of the Conference.

COMPETITION

We promote the spirit of fairness, sportsmanship and mutual best interests in pursuit of a distinct level of excellence that raises the profile of the Conference and our member institutions.

INTEGRITY

We ensure that all actions of our membership are inclusive, morally sound and representative of all constituents.

OPPORTUNITY

We deliver high-level athletics and academic experiences by providing pathways to engage, compete, learn and grow.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

Education and Leadership

- ▼ Academic Achievement
- ▼ Service and Community
- ▼ Growth and Development
- ▼ Ethics and Rules Compliance
- ▼ Collaborative Opportunities

Competitive Excellence

- ▼ Regional and National Athletics Prominence
- ▼ Quality Competitive Experiences
- ▼ Athletics Program Offerings

Total Well-Being

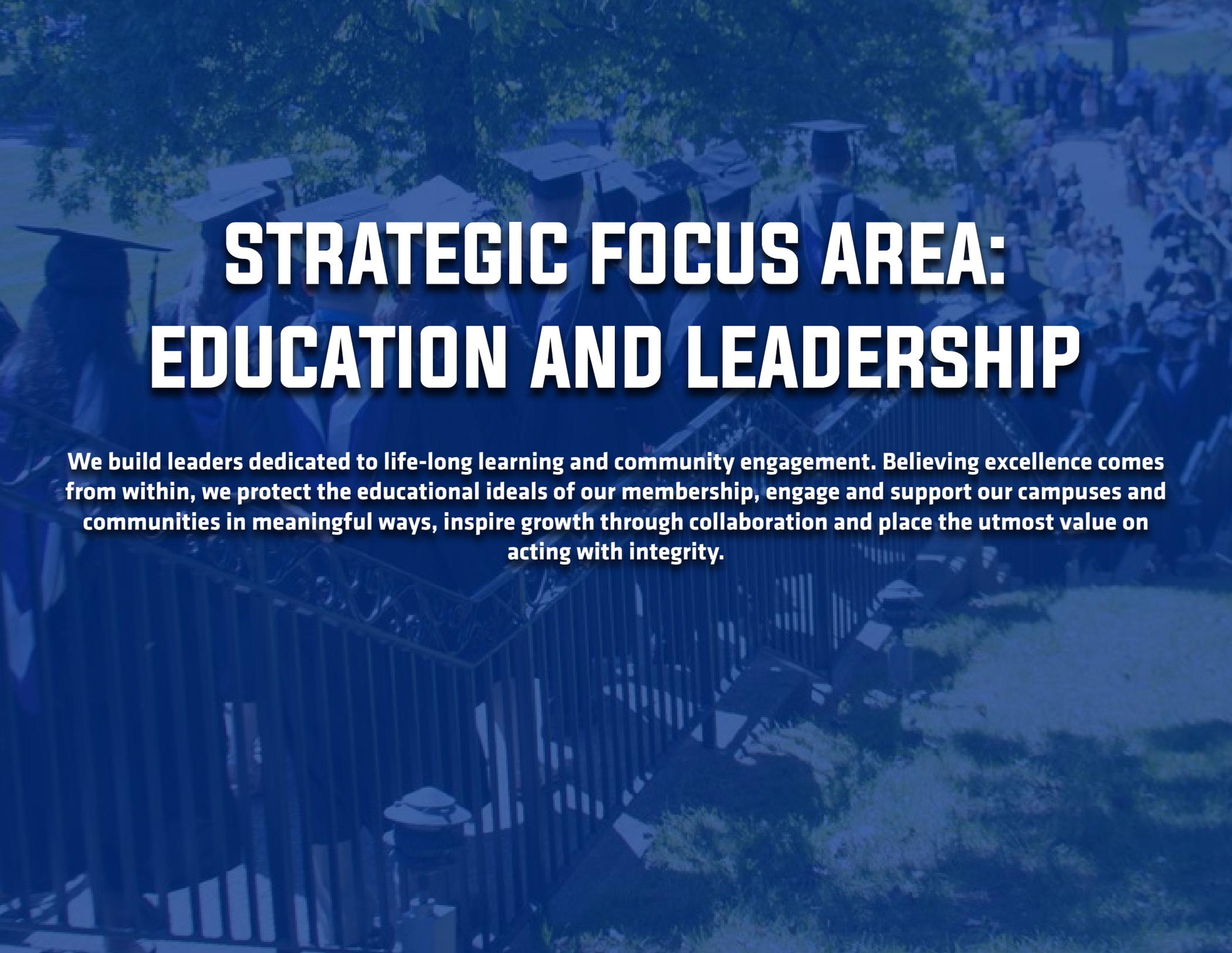
- ▼ Health and Wellness
- ▼ Safe Competitive Environment
- ▼ Skills for Life

Inclusion. Diversity. Equity. Access. (I.D.E.A.)

- ▼ Culture and Environment
- ▼ Education and Programming
- ▼ Staffing and Leadership

Expanding Our Reach

- ▼ Advance the NE10 Brand
- ▼ Membership Destination



STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP

We build leaders dedicated to life-long learning and community engagement. Believing excellence comes from within, we protect the educational ideals of our membership, engage and support our campuses and communities in meaningful ways, inspire growth through collaboration and place the utmost value on acting with integrity.



GOAL NO. 1 ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Protect the educational ideals of NE10 member institutions, celebrate academic achievements and build upon its position as a Division II national leader.

Strategies:

- 1) Members commit to recruit and admit student-athletes who are qualified to meet the institution's academic requirements and are positioned to succeed academically.
- 2) Develop guidelines or policies related to scheduling athletics competition that take into consideration the amount of missed class time for regular-season and NE10 championship contests.
- 3) Earn an overall all-sport Academic Success Rate (ASR) for the Conference of 85 percent, or a Federal Graduation Rate that is at least 10 percentage points higher than the student body at every institution.
- 4) Continually examine the NE10 academic awards program and explore new methods of recognition. Profile academic achievements on the NE10 website and through social media.
- 5) Increase efforts to identify and nominate student-athletes for regional and national academic awards and promote NE10 recipients.
- 6) Develop NE10 academic guidelines or criteria to evaluate potential new members.



GOAL NO. 2

SERVICE AND COMMUNITY

Broaden the level of meaningful student-athlete service and engagement in campus and local communities to prepare them to be socially responsible citizens.

Strategies:

- 1) Identify new or enhanced programs and initiatives for campus engagement.
- 2) Implement a tracking mechanism for NE10 institutions to record and report student-athlete engagement in campus and community service activities.
- 3) Create an awards program to recognize student-athlete engagement and promote their servant leadership.



GOAL NO. 3 GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Provide programs and opportunities for professional growth and leadership development for student-athletes, coaches and administrators.

Strategies:

- 1) Develop an ongoing leadership program for student-athletes and coaches and commit funds to support the initiative.
- 2) Include a leadership development component at the annual NE10 Student-Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) meeting.
- 3) Develop an orientation program to educate new head coaches about the NE10, update them on NCAA issues and highlight leadership development opportunities.
- 4) Encourage diligence in nominating institutional and conference office staff for NCAA committee service.
- 5) Encourage active participation by administrators and coaches in respective professional organizations (e.g. NACDA, coach associations, CoSIDA, etc.)
- 6) Identify a database of professional development programs and grants available to coaches and administrators.





GOAL NO. 4

ETHICS AND RULES COMPLIANCE

Foster an expectation of ethical behavior and commitment to the NE10's core value of integrity and full adherence to NCAA rules compliance.

Strategies:

- 1) Establish standards of behavior for NE10 student-athletes, coaches and administrators.
- 2) Conduct an annual compliance review at each NE10 institution with a focus on specific NCAA bylaws.
- 3) Expand educational opportunities for campus personnel with NCAA compliance responsibilities.
- 4) Encourage attendance at the East Regional Compliance Seminar.
- 5) Promote self-reporting of secondary violations to the NCAA and the NE10 office.





GOAL NO. 5 COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Sponsor and promote collaborative programs and activities involving NE10 campus administrators, faculty and students.

Strategies:

- 1) Convene provosts/chief academic officers to discuss relevant and timely topics, share best practices and explore potential areas for academic collaboration.
- 2) Pursue opportunities for institutional collaboration and sharing of best practices related to administering athletics aid and enrollment strategies impacting student-athletes.
- 3) Include an academic component as part of the annual Presidents' meeting to discuss current topics of interest on campus and in higher education.
- 4) Annually or bi-annually report NE10 benchmarking data related to academics or athletics (e.g., admitted student academic data, graduation rates, compensation data, academic awards/recognition, etc.).
- 5) Consider developing a formal NE10 Academic Consortium with funding for staffing and programming.





STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: COMPETITIVE EXCELLENCE

We create champions in life through the high-level competition found in the NE10. Our student-athletes embrace the commitment that is required to excel in competition where accomplishments are never given; they are earned day in and day out through hard work. It is a hallmark of the NE10 to offer broad-based programs where we create opportunities for thousands of students to follow their passion in 24 Conference sports, alongside numerous others offered by individual institutions.

NE10
CHAMPIONS
SWIMMING & DIVING

GOAL NO. 1 REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ATHLETICS PROMINENCE

Maintain the NE10's high level of broad-based success in NCAA championships.

Strategies:

- 1) Strive to be the leading DII conference in NCAA championships participation by developing ambitious scheduling parameters that position teams for postseason selection.
- 2) Provide quality competitive opportunities for student-athletes in individual sports that position them to qualify for NCAA championships.
- 3) Compile and share comparative financial data related to operating budgets, compensation and capital projects.
- 4) Explore opportunities for members and the Conference to host NCAA postseason events.





GOAL NO. 2 QUALITY COMPETITIVE EXPERIENCE

Ensure that all NE10 competitions are conducted in a manner that provides a positive and memorable student-athlete experience, promotes fairness and competitive equity, and fosters respect and good sporting behavior by student-athletes, coaches, administrators and fans.

Strategies:

- 1) Develop minimum standards and best practices for institutions to follow when they host athletics contests.
- 2) Review and affirm scheduling policies and game times that promote competitive equity and enhance the student-athlete experience.
- 3) Pursue or enhance the use of technology and video replay during NE10 regular-season and championship competition.
- 4) Continue to pursue officiating alliances and avenues to increase the pool of qualified officials for NE10 sports.
- 5) Develop a Code of Conduct and expectations for good sporting behavior and respect for opponents by student-athletes, coaches, administrators and fans at NE10 institutions and empower event management and officials to address situations as they arise.
- 6) Provide opportunities for NE10 members to collaborate on best practices for game day promotions and event marketing to build campus spirit and pride.

GOAL NO. 3

ATHLETICS PROGRAMS OFFERINGS

The NE10 and its member institutions will sponsor comprehensive athletics programs that support and advance institutional goals for student-life and enrollment-driven strategies.

Strategies:

- 1) Monitor high school participation rates and trends by sport to identify new sport sponsorship opportunities for NE10 institutions.
- 2) Evaluate opportunities to increase institutional sponsorship of intercollegiate sports and the addition of varsity sport programs to the conference portfolio.
- 3) Explore the NE10's role in managing and supporting club sport programs at member institutions and developing best practices.





STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: TOTAL WELL-BEING

We value the health, well-being and holistic development of each individual. We pursue competitive success in unison with the physical, mental and social well-being of student-athletes, coaches and administrators.



GOAL NO. 1 HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Provide Conference-wide programs and policies that promote and protect the physical, mental and social well-being of student-athletes, coaches and administrators.

Strategies:

- 1) Create an advisory group of athletic trainers, team physicians, campus health professionals and other institutional representatives to monitor the national landscape of student-athlete physical and mental health issues and recommend Conference-wide best practices.
- 2) Endorse best practices and guidelines the NCAA Sport Science Institute has developed in the key areas of mental health and wellness, sport-related concussions, sexual assault and interpersonal violence prevention, drug and alcohol education, cardiac health, and athletics health care administration.
- 3) Collaborate with organizations and programs that support and bring awareness to student-athlete health and well-being (e.g. Apple Conference, MyPlaybook, Hope Happens Here).
- 4) Deliver regular educational opportunities for our membership (e.g., Mental Health Summit, Student-Athlete Well-Being Forum).
- 5) Develop policies and best practices that promote a balance between student-athletes' academic and athletics pursuits such as Countable Athletically Related Activities (CARA), conflict avoidance policies, game times and scheduling of contests.
- 6) Require NE10 athletics administrators and coaches to complete educational modules offered through the Division II University online platform related to student-athlete health and well-being.

GOAL NO. 2 SAFE COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT

Protect NE10 student-athlete well-being by adopting policies and best practices that enhance health and safety in all athletics competitions.

Strategies:

- 1) Emphasize the development and review of protocols and policies designed to create a safe competitive environment.
- 2) Establish standard protocols and procedures related to sports medicine coverage at NE10 institutions to ensure universal care and reciprocal coverage at all Conference events.
- 3) Engage a NE10 Risk-Management and Insurance Working Group to identify areas of risk and submit recommendations.
- 4) Develop Conference policies related to competition in extreme weather conditions.
- 5) Designate Conference funds to supplement institutional initiatives designed to improve the safety of student-athletes, coaches, officials and fans at NE10 competitive venues.
- 6) Participate in national data-collection efforts that support data-driven decisions related to student-athlete health and well-being.





GOAL NO. 3 SKILLS FOR LIFE

Promote the holistic growth and development of all NE10 student-athletes through opportunities and experiences beyond the competitive environment.

Strategies:

- 1) Establish opportunities to increase student-athlete voice and involvement in NE10 governance structure.
- 2) Launch Conference-wide SAAC initiatives in support of all NE10 student-athletes.
- 3) Increase awareness of grant and scholarship opportunities available through the NCAA and other national organizations.
- 4) Engage SAAC representatives in the development of public service announcements that focus on student-athlete success and engagement.
- 5) Establish networking and career development opportunities involving current and former student-athletes and alumni from NE10 institutions.



**STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA:
INCLUSION. DIVERSITY. EQUITY.
ACCESS. (I.D.E.A.)**

We value all persons and believe that diverse and inclusive communities enrich our institutions and our shared experiences.

**GOAL NO. 1 CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Foster a commitment to a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment for student-athletes, coaches and administrators.

Strategies:

- 1) Create a statement framing the NE10's commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity and access. Include the statement in Conference governance materials and use as a criterion for future Conference membership.
- 2) Create a NE10 I.D.E.A. Council designed to monitor the campus and national landscape and serve as a resource for education and best practices.
- 3) Submit institutional gender equity and diversity issues plans from the Institutional Self Study Guide (ISSG) to the Conference office and report on progress toward goals.
- 4) Maintain demographic data on student-athletes and athletics department staff to annually assess diversity and equity at NE10 institutions.
- 5) Ensure equitable competitive opportunities and experiences for student-athletes in sports the NE10 sponsors.
- 6) Support new participation opportunities for women's sports within the Conference, including NCAA emerging and National Collegiate sports.
- 7) Build alliances and collaborate with outside organizations that support and enhance inclusive campus cultures.
- 8) Promote the Conference's commitment to a climate of inclusion, diversity, equity and access through initiatives that increase visibility on campus and in the community.
- 9) Create awards that recognize and celebrate institutional and Conference initiatives, policies and practices that embrace inclusion, diversity, equity and access.



GOAL NO. 2 EDUCATION AND PROGRAMMING

Establish meaningful policies and participation in educational programming that promote a culture of safety, fairness and respect at the campus and Conference levels.

Strategies:

- 1) Partner with other entities to host I.D.E.A. Forums
- 2) Ensure regular attendance by campus leadership at annual NCAA Inclusion Forums and commit financial resources to support attendance.
- 3) Provide regular I.D.E.A. programming and presentations for Conference governance groups.
- 4) Provide educational resources and programming for institutional SAACs and at Conference SAAC meetings on topics of inclusion, diversity, equity and access.
- 5) Offer opportunities for institutions to share best practices that enhance the experiences of a culturally diverse student-athlete and coach population (e.g., international, LGBTQ, and ethnic minorities).
- 6) Regularly share information and materials from the NCAA Office of Inclusion with NE10 member institutions to increase awareness of and access to available resources.
- 7) Charge the NE10 SAAC to establish Conference-wide community service outreach initiatives that support cultures of safety, fairness and respect.



GOAL NO. 3 STAFFING AND LEADERSHIP

Establish initiatives to increase the diversity of administrators, coaching staff and other personnel across the NE10 membership, and enhance efforts to support their retention and professional growth.

Strategies:

- 1) Nominate and support participation in professional growth and development opportunities for coaches and administrators from diverse experiences and backgrounds.
- 2) Maintain funding support for the NE10 Diversity Enhancement fellowship program and provide annual updates on past recipients' job status.
- 3) Increase awareness of and encourage NE10 institutions to apply for NCAA diversity grants (e.g., Ethnic Minorities and Women's Internship Grant, Strategic Alliance Matching Grant, Coaching Enhancement Grant)
- 4) Develop and promote NE10 best practice resources for recruiting, hiring and retention with support from campus Human Resource and Inclusion offices.
- 5) Optimize the Senior Woman Administrator role within the NE10 through an ongoing commitment to enhanced engagement at the campus level and participation in decision-making processes at the Conference level.
- 6) Review current data and develop an implementation plan to increase the pool of and opportunities for qualified under-represented officials in NE10-supported officiating programs.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA: EXPANDING OUR REACH

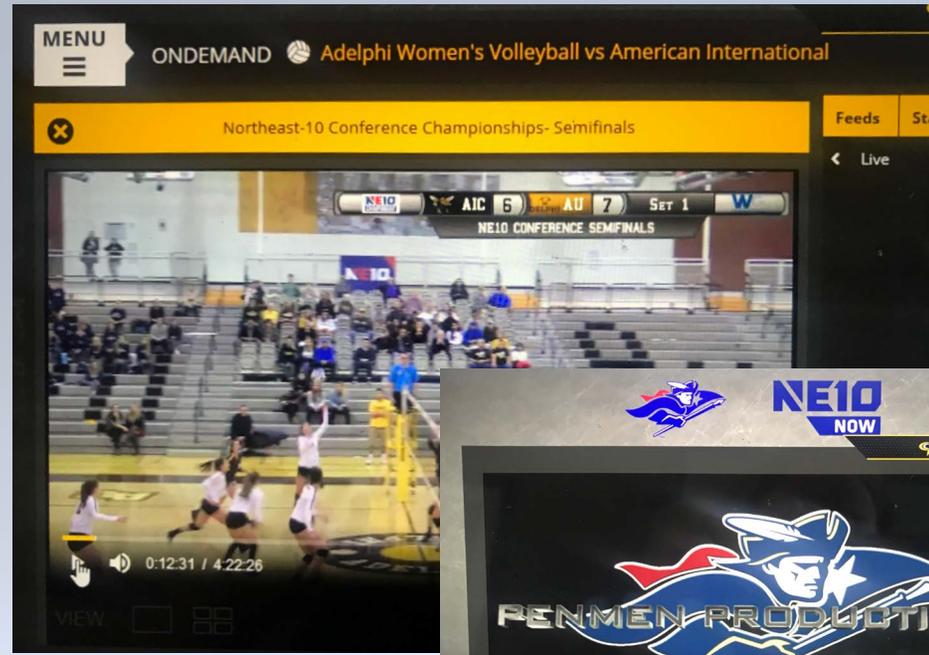
We embrace the distinctiveness of the NE10 experience. Our success resides in the collective impact we make through competition, in the classroom and in the community. Making a difference matters to us and we proudly celebrate our accomplishments. We are all in to stand out.

GOAL NO. 1 ADVANCE THE NE10 BRAND

Broaden the public's knowledge of the NE10 as home to uniquely rewarding and enriching experiences for student-athletes where they can balance being an elite athlete with pursuing ambitious academic and career goals.

Strategies:

- 1) Launch the NE10 Now Digital Network and ensure ongoing adherence to network standards and goals.
- 2) Use NE10 Now and other media platforms to create greater awareness of the Conference with campus constituents and target audiences.
- 3) Adopt policies, implementation timelines and methods for accountability to reinforce the NE10 brand presence on campuses including in venues, on uniforms and in printed and online assets.
- 4) Develop a social media strategy to increase views and engagement across all platforms.
- 5) Evaluate the NE10 EMBRACE campaign within five years of launch (December 2016) and determine whether a "refresh" is needed.
- 6) Establish materials that generate awareness for prospective student-athletes of the benefits of participating in athletics at an NE10 institution.
- 7) Make current and potential corporate partners aware of the NE10's broad impact and leverage the NE10 brand to create new sponsorship opportunities.
- 8) Celebrate and promote exceptional achievement in academics and athletics by student-athletes, coaches and administrators and highlight the unique strengths of each member institution.
- 9) Identify collaborative opportunities for athletics communications and campus communications offices to increase awareness of the NE10 on campus and with alumni and parents.





GOAL NO. 2 MEMBERSHIP DESTINATION

Monitor the membership landscape and potential changes across all NCAA divisions to position the NE10 to make strategic membership decisions.

Strategies:

- 1) Maintain services and programs that provide added value to current members and ensure Conference stability.
- 2) Develop metrics and benchmarks in key areas to evaluate potential new member institutions.
- 3) Identify and maintain a shortlist of potential members that would enhance the NE10.
- 4) Develop criteria for associate membership.
- 5) Maintain open lines of communication between NE10 presidents and athletics directors, as well as with other conference commissioners regarding membership.
- 6) Annually review membership entrance and exit policies.

EMBRACING EXCELLENCE

NE10