



Dear Congressional Leaders,

On behalf of the NCAA Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), we urge you to pass legislation that protects opportunities for student-athletes like us now and into the future. The state of college athletics is an ever-changing one, and we urge you to provide stability to this landscape to further protect our experiences and the experiences of those to come after us. Our goal is to leave Division III better than when we arrived, and we need federal legislation to do so. **By passing legislation that ensures student-athletes remain student-athletes and not employees, establishes uniform commonsense rules for schools, conferences, and associations, and stabilizes the NIL landscape, you will not only strengthen our athletic experience but also preserve it for future generations.**

As members of Division III SAAC, we are charged with representing and strengthening the voices of our peers on issues that impact student-athletes across our institution. We recognize the current college sports environment is ever-changing and we believe it is important our voices are heard. With the rising threats against our programs and institutions, we respectfully ask that you support national legislation that protects our uniquely American system of college sports, and **we urge you to pass legislation that would declare a special status for student-athletes so we do not become employees of our institution.**

Below are individual statements from several of our student-athlete leaders on SAAC, highlighting what it has meant to us to be Division III student-athletes and why federal legislation is needed to protect us and future Division III attendees.

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**Morgan Shaw**

**Cross Country, Willamette University (Oregon)**

“I chose Division III for the opportunities it provided me, for the focus on academics that it has allowed, while simultaneously pushing me to athletic achievement. Division III has given me the space to learn and grow, to be a person first and foremost, a student, and an athlete, all while driving me to grow in all aspects of who I am. I came out of high school running hoping that any team would take me, as I was not yet ready to give up on my love of competition. However, I also knew I wasn't statistically good enough for a lot of places to want me. Willamette offered me a place where I could thrive through individual competition and create the academic future that I so desired. Yet this would never have been a possibility had the NCAA followed an employment model regarding collegiate athletics. I would have become another number, another statistic, and a drain for a university looking to maximize capital through the employment of athletes.”

**Tanner Rowland**

**Tennis, University of California, Santa Cruz**

“As a former Division III student-athlete, I highly encourage you to oppose any legislation or policy proposals recognizing student-athletes as employees. Enforcing a mandated employment system on student-athletes fundamentally undermines the academic and student-focused components of the student-athlete experience, while threatening the financial viability of smaller university athletic departments. This change would jeopardize the existence of NCAA Division III athletics and its core philosophy of prioritizing the student-athlete academic experience.”

**Zack Durr**

**Track & Field, Vermont State University Castleton**

“I've had the opportunity to thrive as a student leader on my campus largely due to the structure of being a Division III student-athlete. I serve as the Senior Class of 2025 President, the Student Government Association Vice President, and the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee President, along with multiple other roles at VTSU Castleton. I've been able to effectively serve the students on my campus within these roles because of the flexibility and amateur status that being a collegiate student-athlete provides. The NCAA's amateurism model allows for flexibility in the student-athlete experience and is ultimately responsible for my ability to thrive in each domain I've served in on my campus. Simultaneously continuing to compete in my sport while serving the VTSU Castleton community for hundreds of hours each academic year has been unforgettable, and this wouldn't be possible if I was considered an employee of my institution as a student-athlete. I couldn't imagine my experience as a Division III student-athlete any differently, and I believe our elected officials must continue to allow student-athletes to prosper because of our current amateur status. I urge Congress to pass legislation to maintain the amateurism model that exists across intercollegiate athletics, which will allow student-athletes to continue to make an impact on their campuses all across our nation.”

**John Langan**

**Baseball, Cornell College (Iowa)**

“By providing protections on the sanctity of the “student-athlete” role, you not only save student-athletes the troubles that potential employment brings such as taxes, loss of financial aid, or cutting of programs due to the reality of budgets, you also keep our institutions running and allow them to provide world-class experiences to not only play our sport but grow as people. College athletics have been such an impactful part of my life, from the lifelong relationships to the overall professional and personal development I have undergone as a student-athlete that sets my experience leagues above my peers. College sports is truly one of the most transformative experiences that is nothing shy of world-class. The ability to step onto a campus in Mount Vernon, Iowa from Tucson, Arizona and knowing that I have 60 teammates that will help push me to succeed - working closely with our athletic department to reach my academic and athletic goals, as well as being able to immerse myself in the culture of my college - I wouldn't trade that for anything. I urge you to pass legislation to further the experiences I've had for generations to come.”

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Student-athletes are the biggest stakeholders in collegiate athletics, and Congress is the only body that can stabilize its' legal environment to provide student-athletes with a fair, inclusive, and consistent experience. Division III SAAC represents student-athletes from across the nation, and our members would welcome any conversation with elected representatives to provide additional information. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact our chair, Lillian Case, directly at [lilliancase2025@gmail.com](mailto:lilliancase2025@gmail.com).

Kind regards,



Lillian Case  
Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee Chair  
Juniata College



John "Jack" Langan  
Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee Past Chair  
Cornell College

#### **2024-25 Division III Student-Athlete Advisory Committee**

Jack Bell, Luther College; Jacqueline Brandon, California Lutheran University; Alberto Bustamante, Vermont State University; Arturo Casas, Manchester University; Jamie Carfagna, Muhlenberg College; Elizabeth Carleton, University of Rochester; Amanda Cohen, Plattsburgh State University of New York; Zack Durr, Castleton University; Imani Gonzalez, Baruch College; Grace Hadlich, The College of St. Scholastica; Holly Hall, Alma College; Hasan Hammad, Christopher Newport University; Julia Hathaway, Virginia Wesleyan University; Kayshaun Higgs, Medgar Evers; Gavin Jones, Westminster College; Josey Johnson, Otterbein University; Jacob Keller, University of Wisconsin-Platteville; Sebastian Knowles, Hartwick College; Paige Kluba, Piedmont University; Theodore Lockhart III, William Paterson University of New Jersey; Sarah Lodge, College of Wooster; Molly Malachow, Pennsylvania State Univ. Erie, the Behrend College; Camy McKenzie, Hendrix College; Muthu Meenakshisundaram, University of Minnesota, Morris; Ella Miller, Wisconsin Lutheran University; Grace Moothart, Austin College; Adaobi Nebuwa, Colby College; Grace Norman, Carthage College; Hayley Peck, Purchase College; Dominic Petruzzelli, Neumann University; Tanner Rowland, University of California, Santa Cruz; Morgan Shaw, Willamette University; Jenna Schuda, Misericordia University; Abby Sweeney, Smith College; Nadia Simmons, North Carolina Wesleyan University; Zoey Wexler, Western New England University; Nathaniel Whisman, University of Valley Forge; Oliver Williams, Westfield State University; Edward Zazzali, Worcester Polytechnic Institute.