



Division II Associations Team Up to Address Officiating Crisis

CLEVELAND – The **Division 2 Conference Commissioners Association (D2 CCA)** and **Division 2 Athletics Directors Association (D2 ADA)** have teamed up to create the “Collegiate P2R” program to address the officiating crisis facing amateur athletics in the United States of America. The two associations are affiliates of the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) and represent 310 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division II member institutions.

Collegiate P2R, or “Player-to-Ref” program, will target student-athletes who have concluded their college playing careers to educate them on the benefits and advantages of becoming an official. Implementation of the program will begin in the fall of 2019. Division II conference offices, in conjunction with their member institutions, will work with local officials to visit campuses and speak with student-athletes and other interested students on the pathway to become an official along with the rewards and challenges.

“D2 CCA is taking an active approach to the officiating crisis,” noted current D2 CCA President Erin Lind, commissioner of the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference. “We are providing a strategic approach to grow the pool of qualified persons interested in getting involved with officiating. This is a fantastic way for Division II student-athletes to stay in the game and give back to the game when their competing days are over.”

In 2017, the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) conducted a ground-breaking industry survey that revealed the average age of officials has risen over 25 years in the past four decades and fewer younger individuals are considering the avocation. Within the NASO survey it was revealed that over half of all officials got into the industry because somebody spoke with and encouraged them to consider officiating. The Collegiate P2R program will initiate that outreach and communication. The program will also attempt to track student-athletes as they enter into officiating for support, as retention has also been an area of concern according to NASO.

“The D2 ADA Board of Directors understands that there is an officiating crisis and something must be done for the future of intercollegiate athletics,” said current D2 ADA President Chris Ratcliff, director of athletics at Rogers State University. “The D2 ADA and D2 CCA leadership is committed to finding a solution before it is too late. Collegiate P2R is the first step in this process. D2 ADA is excited to see this program start and we look forward to assisting in the process of identifying and supporting young officials.”

The mission of the D2 CCA is to encourage and promote Division II athletics and high standards of sportsmanship as important elements of higher education. The CCA is a key communications link among the conferences as they discuss views, policies and regulations that impact Division II intercollegiate athletics. The CCA works closely with the NCAA as a communications channel to NCAA Division II member colleges and universities and serves as a voice to the NCAA representing those schools.

The purpose of the D2 ADA is to empower its membership in their roles as directors of athletics. It provides a collective voice for Division II athletics directors, a forum to discuss issues that impact their role, a recognized relationship with other athletics director associations and NCAA leadership groups and helpful information to the Division II athletics directors including surveys, newsletters and meetings.