

6-25-2007 Aid for Student Athletes

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2 JOSH CENTOR: Good morning. And welcome to "Mondays  
3 With Myles".

4 Dr. Brand, how are you this morning?

5 DR. MYLES BRAND: I'm fine. How are you?

6 JOSH CENTOR: I'm doing great. Why doesn't the NCAA  
7 allow members of the public to provide help for disadvantaged  
8 student athletes?

9 DR. MYLES BRAND: They can, but it has to go through  
10 the normal channels. They can contribute, for example, to the  
11 athletic fund and that can be distributed through the athletic  
12 department. We don't want individual boosters or booster  
13 clubs taking on the support of student athletes directly.  
14 That is just a real opportunity for abuse.

15 JOSH CENTOR: So if you have a football or a baseball  
16 student athlete, any student athlete who struggles  
17 financially, maybe on scholarship, maybe not on scholarship,  
18 why can't that student receive help from, you know, members of  
19 its community just like an economics major who might not play  
20 sports?

21 DR. MYLES BRAND: Unfortunately in the case of sports  
22 where a potential for a lot of money is involved, particularly  
23 with the elite athletes, we see a real chance to manipulate  
24 student athletes for people to take advantage of the  
25 situation. I think we have to bring some regulation into this

1 case.

2 Now, of course, student athletes, disadvantaged  
3 student athletes need resources in order to attend the  
4 university. The fact of the matter is that the resources  
5 available to them now are for the full course of attendance  
6 for those in need through the NCAA opportunity funds, and  
7 close to \$40 million a year we're putting into these funds.  
8 If they really are in need, there's also Pell grants  
9 available, for example.

10 In fact, in the case of Pell grants, which is an  
11 entire federal entitlement, student athletes can get more than  
12 the full course of attendance because they may be able to get  
13 the full-need base from the university through its various  
14 funds, not just the athletic scholarship, but the other funds  
15 based upon need, the opportunity fund, and special assistance  
16 fund, and so on.

17 But on top of that, those student athletes are also  
18 entitled to Pell grants, which can be \$4,000 a year. So there  
19 is a need-based opportunity for all these students.

20 Students, like everyone else, would always like more  
21 money. And even though the needs are being met, they may want  
22 additional funds. And that unfortunately runs the risk of  
23 some people, whether they believe there's a need or not, to  
24 take advantage of the situation.

25 JOSH CENTOR: If you have two students, one who is not

1 competing multiple hours a week in an NCAA sponsored sport,  
2 that student might have an opportunity to go work a number of  
3 hours and make some money to help put him or herself through  
4 school. Those opportunities, are they there for student  
5 athletes?

6 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, students who work are trying  
7 to make as much money as students who get scholarships have.  
8 I mean, students who work 20 hours a week or more, in order to  
9 bring in the kind of revenue that an athletic scholarship  
10 brings in, so that they're starting even. Now, what about a  
11 student athlete who, in addition to the financial aid that  
12 comes from a student athlete's scholarship, plus any  
13 opportunities for need-based aid through the opportunity fund  
14 and so on wants to work. No too many years ago, the NCAA  
15 didn't permit that. We do permit that now, and everyone needs  
16 to know that the rules have changed. We do permit that now.

17 Is there an opportunity for students to do that?  
18 Well, not necessarily during the season, although some do, but  
19 it's a real strain during the season. But it's not  
20 necessarily a strain, for example, during the summer. And we  
21 allow a student athlete to work even in the sport of which  
22 they're an expert. So for example, suppose you're a sport  
23 with tennis, you can give tennis instruction during the summer  
24 as a part-time job and be a student athlete on a grant-in-aid,  
25 as long as you're not being paid more than the other tennis

1 instructors, as long as you're not being paid. Because you're  
2 a student athlete, so that you're not being influenced in some  
3 way or another, but you can work for the same rate.

4 JOSH CENTOR: But if you're a walk-on student athlete,  
5 you also can't accept money from boosters, and then you're at  
6 a different place than those student athletes who also might  
7 struggle and are on scholarship, those ones that you  
8 referenced?

9 DR. MYLES BRAND: Some student athletes become  
10 walk-ons, because they're hopeful that they will get a  
11 scholarship. Not all of them do, of course. But they're  
12 making a calculated risk in the use of their time. They have  
13 an opportunity to participate and that becomes very valuable  
14 to them, and they're willing to take certain risks as a  
15 result.

16 Now, during their off season, of course, they can  
17 work even in their own sport, as long as they're not being  
18 paid an abnormally high rate of return, and they really are  
19 doing the work.

20 JOSH CENTOR: Right.

21 DR. MYLES BRAND: But that's what they're paying, so  
22 to speak, to be a walk-on student athlete. For those who have  
23 grants-in-aid, and they are truly disadvantaged, coming from  
24 very low incomes, they have entitlement programs such as Pell  
25 grants. In some states they have additional federal --

1 additional state funds available as well. And in fact, those  
2 students have available to them, at least the full cost of  
3 attendance.

4 JOSH CENTOR: To just get back quickly to The Student  
5 Athlete Opportunity Fund, that was \$27 million to our  
6 conferences that go to the schools this year, and it increases  
7 at 13 percent a year. Why has the NCAA made such a commitment  
8 to this particular fund?

9 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, out of the CBS contract, the  
10 NCAA is putting aside, three-quarters of a billion dollars for  
11 student use because we want to make sure that students,  
12 especially those from disadvantaged or low income groups, have  
13 the opportunity to participate in their studies, as well as on  
14 the field, and not be so worried about the funding they need.

15 The myth that they can't afford a winter coat is  
16 just -- are not there. If they really are coming from  
17 low-income situations, they merely need to ask for that money.  
18 And if they are coming from low-income situations, they are  
19 entitled to the Pell grant and otherwise.

20 Now, students -- and I remember when I was a student,  
21 there were always things that I wanted to buy that I didn't  
22 really have the money for -- you know, a new stereo and so on,  
23 and so I had a part-time job. And so most students, you know,  
24 want to be able to live a little better than the full cost of  
25 attendance for what they need. And in that case, I think

1     there's an opportunity to earn extra dollars, but it's not  
2     simple.

3                 JOSH CENTOR: All right. Well, thank you for filling  
4     us in on the topic.

5                 DR. MYLES BRAND: My pleasure.

6                 JOSH CENTOR: Thanks for listening to "Mondays With  
7     Myles". We will see you next week.

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