

7-2-2007 Charles Bloom (SEC) & CoSIDA

1 (File: 20070702mwm)

2 JOSH CENTOR: Welcome to "Mondays With Myles", a very
3 special conversation today.

4 From San Diego, we join you. I'm here with Dr. Myles
5 brand, president of the NCAA, and Charles Bloom, associate
6 commissioner of the SEC, and we're going to talk about CoSIDA.

7 Dr. Brand, why are SIDs so integral to college sports?

8 DR. MYLES BRAND: We have to tell our story better.
9 The fact of the matter is that sports is of great interest to
10 alumnae, the fans, certainly the campus, and those who
11 participate. But there are a lot of misperceptions about
12 athletics, a lot of misperceptions about how well our student
13 athletes do academically, for example; a lot of misperceptions
14 about the role of athletics on campus. And there's no one
15 better placed or more important to tell that story than the
16 sports information directors on all our campuses -- not just
17 in Division I, but across all our campuses in all three
18 divisions.

19 JOSH CENTOR: Now, Charles (indiscernible) College
20 Sports Information Director's Association is celebrating
21 50 years. That's a big deal; isn't it?

22 MR. CHARLES BLOOM: It is. The industry has grown
23 from its birth 50 years ago. And we're seeing the popularity
24 of the profession. More people are getting into it. The
25 importance that Dr. Brand has mentioned about getting the

1 message out in intercollegiate athletics, I think, has
2 resonated from when you're an undergrad to working in the
3 athletic department and in media relations and getting a
4 career in sports information. So I think it's really -- the
5 profession has grown. It's a popular destination amongst
6 college graduates, and a seed profession, as well as the
7 organization growing in years to come.

8 JOSH CENTOR: Dr. Brand, we talk about this sometimes.
9 We're not a college sports organization, but a higher
10 education organization. What is the sports information
11 director's role in getting out some of the messages about
12 higher education?

13 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, that's exactly right, Josh.
14 The NCAA is an association of higher education leadership. Of
15 course, we focus on sports, but it's all about higher
16 education in that context. And so the messages we're
17 expecting to come out of our athletic departments, often
18 through the means of the SID, is to make sure people
19 understand what role athletics play on our campuses, how they
20 add educational value to those who participate, how they help
21 shape the images of our campuses for not just the local
22 community, but in many cases, nationally; what role they play
23 in illuminating the values of higher education.

24 You know, if you look at college sports, compared with
25 professional sports, in professional sports, the stars are the

1 players; in college, the stars are the universities. It's
2 those whose students participate in athletics. And so SIDs
3 have to understand a lot about what's happening at the
4 university. They have to have open lines of communication.
5 And they have to work with the rest of the campus, in order to
6 get out those campus messages, of course, in the context of
7 intercollegiate athletics.

8 JOSH CENTOR: Now, perhaps I'm wrong, but there seems
9 to have been some sort of a paradigm shift here. CoSIDA,
10 College Sports Information Director's Association, that's
11 50 years ago. But now we're seeing more of media relations,
12 associate director of communications. This has, you know,
13 gotten to a broader scope; hasn't it?

14 MR. CHARLES BLOOM: Yeah. The business has changed.
15 It used to be media guides, releases, statistical information.
16 And it has really grown to where you want to manage the
17 message, you want to promote the message of the institution
18 and of your athletics department. It gets relationships with
19 all types of media. It's managing the content that you have
20 available. It's the web site, the teleconferences, the
21 satellite fees, your television shows. It's all about what
22 you have to offer as a university from the athletic side, that
23 the SID media relations person manages.

24 JOSH CENTOR: Now, Dr. Brand, "Mondays With Myles", of
25 course, is a feature of our blog the DoubleAZone. This was a

1 shift for the association about a year and a half ago.

2 Do you see more communications initiatives going the
3 way of new media?

4 DR. MYLES BRAND: Well, the media world is changing
5 dramatically. Of course, network TV continues to dominate and
6 will dominate for the foreseeable future, but not to the same
7 degree that it has in the past. There are new opportunities
8 to communicate, new ways to present the content that's already
9 taken place, our games -- not just our championship games, but
10 the regular season games.

11 But also there are different ways to communicate with
12 our various audiences, particularly those who are much more
13 adept at using the new communication techniques and the
14 computer technology.

15 The blog that we run here is just one example of the
16 NCAA may not necessarily be the leader, the ground breaker in
17 all of this, but we'll try to keep up front as much as we can.

18 JOSH CENTOR: Absolutely. Now, Charles, you know, I
19 know you, so I know you're excited about new media and other
20 initiatives of that sort. But are all sports information
21 directors excited about the new opportunities that are being
22 presented to them?

23 MR. CHARLES BLOOM: I think it's a double-edged sword.
24 I think that on the positive side it's something that gives
25 the university an opportunity to promote itself. On the

1 negative side, you've got to really watch it and patrol it.
2 You don't know who is blogging; you don't know what's being
3 written. You have no control over that.

4 You know, there's tons of fans out there who are
5 passionate about their universities and their sports, and they
6 have the ability, sometimes, to sway the message by what is
7 posted on their blogs. We're finding more mainstream media,
8 reads, blogs, and so a lot of what's -- some of what is
9 written in the mainstream media has its generation from the
10 blog, so it's a lot more work for the SID in terms of looking
11 at that information and trying to create and craft the message
12 to fight sometimes those negative messages. But it comes with
13 a positive aspect in that you do have that opportunity to mold
14 and craft a message that will benefit the university in turn.

15 JOSH CENTOR: CoSIDA has always recognized academic
16 excellence in student athletes. We have our academic
17 all-district teams, our academic all-American teams.
18 Dr. Brand, that's one of the most special parts of the
19 organization, if you ask me.

20 DR. MYLES BRAND: Oh, I agree. I think CoSIDA has
21 done an excellent job of emphasizing the success of the
22 student athletes, both on the field of play, as well as in the
23 classroom. They deserve a lot of credit for it.

24 You know, sometimes the SIDs are hidden. They're
25 behind the scenes. They're undervalued for the important work

1 that they do. Let's keep in mind that they are the main
2 people delivering the messages. They are helping shape the
3 public opinion that brings people into the stadiums. It's
4 hard work, very skilled work. Sometimes we ought to take a
5 few minutes and bring them forward a little bit and celebrate
6 and reward them for the good work that they've done over the
7 years.

8 JOSH CENTOR: And I know we're doing some of that here
9 at our 50th celebration. Charles, we have Divisions I, II,
10 and III represented here. We have a burgeoning CoSIDA
11 membership.

12 How do you go about programming at a conference like
13 this to make sure that folks really get what they came for?

14 MR. CHARLES BLOOM: I think you do the best you can,
15 first, because it is such a wide range of issues, as we talk
16 about the different divisions. I think you have to have a
17 pulse of the membership, but also I do think that they are
18 issues that pertain to every division.

19 While, you know, Division I may get on television
20 more, I think there's issues, promotional issues. There's
21 issues where, you know, trying to get on television. Every
22 sport, every school is trying to get on more television. I
23 think that's a demand of the day. So there are issues that
24 are germane to all the groups, and you have to look at it.

25 A member of CoSIDA who is here this week has to look

1 at the workshop in a global view and say, Hey, I can make this
2 apply to me, go to the panels and listen with an open mind,
3 and come back to their universities and apply it to what they
4 do.

5 JOSH CENTOR: You're the incoming president of the
6 organization. And I know that there's going to be a vote for
7 whether or not there should be an Executive Director of the
8 group.

9 Can you explain what are the benefits of having folks
10 who are on campus or in conference offices against having
11 somebody who is an Executive Director? What's that debate
12 about?

13 MR. CHARLES BLOOM: Well, the Executive Director
14 position is put on the agenda to have someone who has a
15 24/7 -- is able to work 24/7 on behalf of the profession and
16 the organization. I think the organization and the profession
17 are intertwined real closely. There's no other professional
18 development organization that deals with college sports
19 information director's like CoSIDA, so there is a need for
20 someone who can take the organization and move it forward.
21 Right now, it's such that the organization has grown so much.

22 We're the -- it's an all-volunteer army. You know, we
23 have a group of officers that work every year to work -- do
24 the workshop, do the panels, do the social program, do the
25 special awards. And for someone to come in and set a path for

1 us, both fiscally, as well as in the workshop, I think that
2 would help us as -- in terms of the board and the officers
3 spend more time to talk about the leadership of the
4 organization. It's all about leadership.

5 JOSH CENTOR: All right. Well, Dr. Brand, we're going
6 to give you the last word here. The NCAA relationship with
7 CoSIDA, a good one?

8 DR. MYLES BRAND: It's a good one. As I mentioned,
9 and believe strongly, the SIDs across all our campuses and all
10 our divisions are extraordinarily important to the ability for
11 us to not just get out our messages, but in order to provide
12 information necessary for our fan base and for our decision
13 makers in the university.

14 Importantly, CoSIDA, I think has matured over the
15 years. Their job has gotten harder, in part because of the
16 new media about which we spoke, but also because we're
17 expecting more of them. Many of our professional associations
18 do have Executive Directors, but some don't. They both work
19 well. But I think the key to COSIDA's future is the ability
20 to integrate with and work closely with the campuses, the
21 conferences, and most especially from my perspective, the
22 NCAA.

23 JOSH CENTOR: All right. Dr. Brand, and Charles,
24 thank you for joining me today on this special conversation
25 celebrating 50 years with CoSIDA. We will see you next week.