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NATIONAL WRESTLING COACHES ASSOCIATION

Call to Action: Save Duquesne Wrestling

From: Mike Moyer, Executive Director – National Wrestling Coaches Association
Re: “Call to Action” – Save Duquesne Wrestling
Date: January 27, 2010

As many of you have probably already heard, the Duquesne University administration announced that it plans to discontinue Duquesne’s intercollegiate wrestling program immediately following the 2010 NCAA Championships.

It is very important that the local, regional, and national wrestling community express support for wrestling to the Duquesne administration via emails, phone calls, or faxes. As important as it is to express support, we must be polite and respectful in any communications with Duquesne. Although this whole situation is unfair, our side will be penalized for unsportsmanlike behavior: we cannot afford to be rude or disrespectful.

Here is the contact information for the people to contact:

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Please be sure to convey the following speaking points in a very respectful way and in your own words. We really want to hold them accountable for explaining why they would make such a decision to eliminate wrestling without first reaching out to the wrestling community and alumni for financial support:

- **The “Quick Facts” section of the Duquesne University Website states:**

“In a survey of colleges and universities covering 42 states, DUQUESNE was among 135 selected for the 1997-98 Honor Roll of Character-Building Colleges that emphasizes moral and spiritual development.”

Speaking Point: Few, if any, activities build and/or reveal character better than intercollegiate athletics, and wrestling is arguably one of the top character-building and character-revealing intercollegiate sports.

- **One of Duquesne’s clearly stated objectives in its mission statement is “service to the community.”**

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Speaking Point: Historically, the Duquesne University wrestling program has played a major role in replenishing the depleted pool of high school and middle school teachers/wrestling coaches in western Pennsylvania. In fact, there are currently 19 active teachers and/or wrestling coaches at the youth and/or scholastic levels who are alums of Duquesne University. The WPIAL is arguably one of the strongest high school wrestling areas in America.

- **One of the stated reasons the administration used to justify the elimination of wrestling was its inability to be competitive as a partially funded program.**

Speaking Point: On average, approximately 80-85% of all D-I schools with a wrestling program will advance at least one wrestler to the NCAA's each year. This is primarily because we have approximately 260,000 high school wrestlers and only 220 NCAA member institutions (83 NCAA D-I colleges) with wrestling teams.

Speaking Point: Duquesne University has a rich wrestling tradition under Coach Hartupee as evidenced by the fact that he has advanced 37 wrestlers to the NCAA Division I championships over the past 16 years.

- **One of the stated reasons the administration used to justify the decision to eliminate wrestling was Title IX compliance.**

Speaking Point: The Office of Civil Rights has clearly stated that it is a disfavored practice to eliminate men's sports to comply with Title IX. The spirit and intent of Title IX is to increase opportunities for women, not eliminate opportunities for men. Indeed, eliminating men's teams does not help Title IX compliance *at all*, unless the school reaches participation proportionality. Even with these cuts, Duquesne does not reach participation proportionality.

Speaking Point: In addition to participation proportionality, the Office of Civil Rights also requires scholarship proportionality, and the wholesale elimination of male athletes threatens Duquesne's compliance with scholarship proportionality.

- **One of the stated reasons the administration used to justify the elimination of wrestling (and three other sports) is "financial savings."**

Speaking Point: By NCAA standards, wrestling has one of the lowest "costs per student-athletes" of any male sport. If the administration provided some time, a substantial portion of the wrestling budget could be raised through private donations.

- **Speaking Point:** Even without scholarships, several Ivy League wrestling programs (i.e. Cornell, Harvard, Penn, etc) are among our most nationally competitive wrestling programs. This also shows that strong students can excel in wrestling.

- **One of the stated reasons the administration used to justify the elimination of wrestling (and three other sports) is Duquesne's inability to provide all current student-athletes with an overall quality experience.**

Speaking Point: Some of our nation's top political, military, corporate, and community leaders were athletes in traditional Olympic sports. These sports more closely support the educational mission of schools like Duquesne, and the athletes persevere and flourish *in spite of* lacking a fully equitable "overall quality experience." Duquesne should not use its own underfunding as a reason to de-fund these teams entirely.

Moreover, Duquesne should take great pride in knowing that its wrestling team placed in the "Top 10" eight of the past eleven years in the NWCA Team Academic Rankings.

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