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*The PICTOR Group (TPG) was engaged by the University of Southern Indiana (USI) to assist with an Analysis and Assessment of NCAA Divisional Classification of the athletics program. This included an objective evaluation of the feasibility of USI reclassifying from membership in NCAA Division II to Division I*

based on membership feedback. A proposed constitution was voted upon and ratified by the membership at the 2022 NCAA Convention in January 2022. The new constitution deregulates the governance of college sports through the delegation of authorities and responsibilities to the divisions, conferences and member institutions. Each of the three NCAA divisions have begun their work to address critical issues for their membership to include defining membership standards, distribution of allocated



the Division I level. Affiliate memberships will need to be explored for USI sports that the new conference does not sponsor.

USI's athletic facilities are very impressive and position the athletics program well to recruit and meet the training and competitive needs of the student-athletes. The Screaming Eagles Arena and the new Aquatic Center are state-of-the-art facilities. The facilities for the track and field, tennis and soccer programs need improvements to provide the necessary training and competitive needs for those programs.

There is a programmatic and cultural difference between Division II and Division I. The athletics administration and coaching staff will need to be prepared to meet the NCAA philosophy and expectations of a successful Division I program. Student-athletes will also need to adjust to the competitive challenges and expectations of Division I.

Dr. Ronald Rochon provides strong and inclusive executive leadership for the University. The senior leadership team is well-positioned and committed to the advancement of the U

Once the University's decision and announcement has been made, it will be essential that a strategic planning process get underway immediately to guide the athletics department's reclassification and to meet the NCAA application deadline of June 1. As previously noted, USI's application must include an initial strategic plan addressing the Division I philosophy statement and the requirements set forth by the NCAA. The strategic plan must be approved by the Division I conference, and the NCAA application fee must accompany the application. The reclassification from Division II to Division I is a four-year process and involves submission of detailed annual reports to the NCAA Strategic Vision and Planning Committee.

