



DSU ATHLETICS PARTNERS WITH WILLIAMS COMMUNICATIONS

Courtesy: DSU Athletic Media Relations
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DOVER, Del. - Delaware State University has teamed up with **Marc Williams**, CEO and founder of Williams Communications, LLC to create a unique partnership which will expose Hornet student-athletes to unique opportunities in both the sports and entertainment industries.

Williams, a former senior-level sports executive, will offer a total of six enrichment seminars to the 300+ students in the school's athletic program during the 2012-2013 academic school year. Williams served as the keynote speaker during DSU's athletic department staff meeting in early August. The sports marketing pioneer unveiled his "plan of attack" to the athletic department, coaches and staff at DSU explaining that his signature Striving for Excellence program is designed to empower students to be even better.

Williams will address the student-athletes at DSU Sept. 17 and share his expectations and intended outcomes for the year ahead. The first seminar session with the Hornets' athletes is scheduled for September 24 and will feature a workshop conducted by sports and entertainment PR, crisis communications and social media expert, Wesley Mallette (former Vice President of Communications for MTV Networks and former Senior Director of PR for BET). Mallette is currently a Managing Partner with Reputation Strategy Partners and works with a client roster that includes the United Healthcare Pro Cycling Team, AccessAthletes.com, sports journalism TV personalities, Olympic athletes (swimming, cycling, track and field), as well as athletes in baseball, football and basketball, among others. Mallette will team up with Williams to give DSU student-athletes a blueprint for using social media in a positive, responsible way.

"I've known Wes for over 20 years and he is a man of great character and integrity," Williams said. "Wes is one of the most knowledgeable people in the world as it relates to media, sports and crisis management. DSU student-athletes will greatly benefit from his knowledge and expertise."

Williams Communications, LLC, created in 2007, is a full-service marketing firm specializing in event marketing and brand development. As the former Global Brand Director for Champs Sports, Williams has spent more than a decade as a sports marketing executive working with three of the largest sports brands in the world: Champs Sports, Footaction and Reebok. Williams is credited with positioning Champs Sports to become a billion-dollar footwear and apparel company with 600 retail stores in the U.S. and Canada.

While working in the corporate world, Williams is credited with spearheading efforts to create one of college's top football bowl games, the Champs Sports Bowl. Additionally, he cultivated a sponsorship with NBC Sports to be the official retail sponsor for the Arena Football League and was instrumental in helping to start one of the most successful grassroots basketball tours of all times, the And 1 Mix Tape tour.

During his extensive career in both the sports and entertainment industries, Williams has worked with some of the best in the business including basketball great Michael Jordan and NBA star Dwyane Wade.

He has also teamed up with music moguls Beyoncé and Jay Z as well as other entertainment powerhouses such as Will Farrell, Nelly, Chris Rock and actor Pooch Hall who plays Derwin Davis on the popular BET sitcom, The Game.

Collaborating with tennis great Venus Williams and entertainers such as Gwen Stefani, Chris Brown, Outkast, Jermaine Dupri and Bon Jovi, Williams is responsible for negotiating the first sports retail global campaign with the hip hop industry by signing a lucrative deal with Ruff Ryder Records and Grammy-Award winning recording artist Eve.

Traveling all around the country speaking at colleges and universities, Williams will now share his keen sense of business savvy with Delaware State students. Williams is also currently pursuing a doctoral degree from the College of Human Resources and Education at West Virginia University after receiving a full fellowship to attend. Williams, who is preparing to become a college president after graduation, holds a master's degree in Sports Management from the prestigious Isenberg School of Management at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

"I truly feel that there's a unique opportunity to capitalize on the resources of our young people," Williams explained. "They are an amazing resource. We, as educators, must help mold our young people. With modern technology and social media, there's a tremendous opportunity for us to learn creative ways to tap into the God-given gifts and talents these young people have."

Williams Communications, LLC recently received a NCAA grant to help encourage scholarship, career goals and personal development among college students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other institutions of higher education across the country. In addition to the new partnership with Delaware State University, Williams recently completed a successful program called Bears Striving for Excellence at Morgan State University and has now joined the staff at Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa as a visiting lecturer during the Fall 2012 semester. He has created a partnership with Loras that also features Boston Celtics legend JoJo White as a key contributor to a project involving students in the sports management program at the private institution. Williams was recently chosen by CNN as one of the "Top 10 College Motivational Speakers" in the United States.

"We are very pleased by the positive results and the remarkable impact on the student-athletes at Morgan State," explained Robert Vowels, NCAA Vice President of Education. "This pilot empowerment program could possibly be a model for many schools across the United States."

Other Striving for Excellence seminars planned throughout the school year at DSU include a sports symposium and the hugely-popular career symposium entitled Advice from the Pros. This speaker series event assembles some of the world's top industry executives who will share their expertise and business acumen with students interested in pursuing careers in the music, sports and entertainment industries. Past speakers have included Jay Harris, sports anchor of ESPN's SportsCenter, Wendy Lewis, senior vice president for Major League Baseball and Ava Hall, vice president of BET International.

In November, a graduate symposium will also be presented by top administrators from West Virginia University who will provide information on how to successfully prepare for the graduate school experience. This particular seminar is an opportunity for WVU staff to educate and encourage students-athletes at DSU to pursue a graduate-level degree.

"We are so excited and honored to be working with Marc Williams and his company," explained **Eric Hart**, associate athletics director for academic services at DSU. "We know that our students will be blessed by the level of networking Marc Williams will bring to Delaware State. Because of him, our student athletes will be exposed to the top leaders in the industry. One major byproduct of this experience is that we want our students to be able to clearly articulate their goals beyond their athletic experience here at DSU. Marc Williams will empower them to do just that."

Newly-appointed DSU athletics director **Candy Young** is also anticipating positive outcomes from the partnership over the course of the school year.

"I really believe our student athletes will now have more access to more empowerment opportunities because of Marc Williams and the school's partnership with him," said Young, who is now in her seventh year at DSU. "I think this experience will really open their eyes to life and give them true life skills or tools to be successful once they are beyond the classroom and the field. I think the platform that Marc Williams and his team will bring will raise the bar for our students. His workshops will demand that each student becomes a better, more balanced person once they leave this institution. I also think the partnership will give our staff a different perspective. Everyone will grow from this program. It's really a wonderful opportunity for Delaware State."

---DSU ATHLETICS---