



Endorses 'The University Network'

After more than two years of exploration and negotiation, NIRSA has formally endorsed The University Network's web-based program that is bringing large format electronic displays to campus recreation centers. A NIRSA Associate Member, The University Network worked with nine NIRSA Member Institutions as a pilot beginning in 2002 to test the viability of the program and proprietary technology. The schools included the University of Alabama, University of California (Los Angeles), University of Illinois (Champaign/Urbana), University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), Michigan State University, Northeastern University, Oregon State University, The Ohio State University, and University of Texas at Austin.

Having completed the successful pilot program, this new member benefit initiative is expected to expand from nine to 50 schools by the end of the 2003. Candidates for participation in the expansion were suggested by directors of the nine pilot schools and The University Network officials; all of the expansion schools were initially contacted within the past three months. It is expected that this NIRSA endorsed program will expand to as many as 400 NIRSA Member Institutions of all enrollment sizes over the next few years.

Participating NIRSA Member Institutions receive a flat screen electronic display, at no charge, to be installed in their recreation center near the controlled entry area. A web-based feed provides national corporate advertising, yet schools have full editorial control over what appears on their screen. Member Institutions are able to use the screen for communicating recreational sports and events programs with sight, sound, and motion messages. The schools' messages are supplemented with paid advertisements. There is significant revenue sharing between participating NIRSA Member Institutions and The University Network from net advertising sales, and schools will receive a finder's fee if they introduce The University Network to new advertisers who purchase paid ads. There is a separate revenue sharing agreement between the Association and The University Network based on overall net advertising sales.

Several new companies have recently entered the campus communications market, and offer products using large screen electronic displays. Of these companies, only The University Network is NIRSA endorsed, maintains membership in NIRSA, and has a formal license agreement with the Association.

For more information this NIRSA endorsed program, contact NIRSA Assistant Director for Marketing Barry Brown (barry@nirsa.org); for more information about The University Network, go to www.theuniversitynetwork.net