

### Overview

In the summer of 2020, in response to the social movement to systematically dismantle structural racism within our communities and across the globe, the National Collegiate Association for Athletics (NCAA) and many of its conferences and member institutions placed a microscope on issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion in college athletics. The Southeastern Conference (SEC) and the University of Tennessee moved swiftly to answer the call. The University of Tennessee Athletic Department is committed to the development and execution of an actionable plan to eliminate barriers and create opportunities for individual and team success.

At the conference level, the SEC Council on Racial Equity and Social Justice was established to provide ongoing guidance to the Conference office and its member institutions as it relates to identifying resources, outlining strategies and assisting with implementation of efforts that promote racial equity and social justice. As a University, the Division of Diversity and Engagement launched a campus-wide initiative to charge each college and vice chancellor unit with the responsibility of submitting a three-year diversity action plan to address goals and priorities in the areas of culture and climate, recruitment and retention, engagement and outreach, and curriculum. Tennessee Athletics formed the Inclusion, Diversity & Equity in Athletics (IDEA) Council to aid in creating and implementing an action-based roadmap to inclusive excellence by fostering a culture of ownership, accountability, and evaluation.

To operationalize strategies to identify and address barriers and challenges to inclusive excellence and create and maintain a culture of evaluation and accountability, the Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Action Plan and related strategic initiatives are anchored to the following goals:

**Goal 1:** Create and sustain a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive campus **climate**.

#### Objectives:

- Engage all University of Tennessee Athletics Department (UTAD) staff and student-athletes in creating and maintaining an environment of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).
- Identify and eliminate barriers to staff development and student success.
- Develop a comprehensive and responsive system of communication to engage all key stakeholders and external constituents as it relates to DEI issues.

**Goal 2:** Attract and retain greater numbers of individuals from historically underrepresented populations into **faculty, staff, and administrative positions** (particularly department heads, directors, deans, and vice chancellors).

#### Objectives:

- Increase the number of staff from underrepresented populations in regular, full-time positions.
- Retain greater numbers of staff from underrepresented populations annually.

**Goal 3:** Attract, retain, and graduate increasing numbers of **undergraduate and graduate students** from historically underrepresented populations and international students.

#### Objectives:

- Increase number of student-athletes from underrepresented populations across and within all sports.
- Retain greater numbers of student-athletes from underrepresented populations annually.
- Formalize a Young Professional Program to on-board, develop, and place all graduate students in full-time Athletics positions.

**Goal 4:** Develop and strengthen **partnerships with diverse communities** in Tennessee and globally.

Objectives:

- Enhance voter education and registration efforts for student-athletes and staff.
- Continue to be national frontrunners in student-athlete leadership development and service and sport for social change.

**Goal 5:** Ensure that **curricular requirements** include significant intercultural perspectives.

Objectives:

- Embed DEI topics into the curriculum of the student-athlete transition courses (COUN 212 & COUN 404) and leadership development courses (ELPS 310 & ELPS 495).
- Continue to be engaged partners in the development of the University's revised General Education curriculum (Vol Core).