



News Release

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Contact: Denice Menard dmenard@tjssl.edu
(619) 961-4312

Women's Intercollegiate Football, Sports-related Injuries: Focus of Conference at Thomas Jefferson School of Law On September 20, 2013

San Diego -- Is women's football a viable intercollegiate sport? The Center for Sports Law & Policy at Thomas Jefferson School of Law will present its first white paper specifically addressing this issue at the 2013 Sports Law Conference on Friday, September 20.

The conference, led by TJS� Professor and Center Director Rodney Smith, also will feature a session on the continuing problem of head and related injuries in sports at all levels, a topic that has new significance now that the NFL agreed in late August to pay \$765 million to settle thousands of lawsuits brought by former injured players and their families.

Women's football is gaining momentum, especially in Florida where it's the fastest growing high school sport. As universities struggle to comply with Title IX and provide women with opportunities to participate in intercollegiate athletics, the NCAA has suggested adding rowing, bowling and equestrian opportunities. The panelists, who researched and authored the white paper titled "Solving the Title IX Conundrum in an Equitable Manner: Starting Women's Intercollegiate Football," will discuss why they reached this conclusion and how women's football can become a recognized sport.

The second session of the conference will concentrate on recent sports law developments, particularly as related to head and other sports-related injuries. The impressive group of panelists, who are experienced in sports injury representation and/or have sports law practices, include attorney and Pro Football Hall of Famer Ron Mix, attorney and former La Jolla High School Football Coach Rey Hernandez, "San Diego Top 10 Personal Injury Attorney" Ben Coughlan and Australian attorney James Paterson, who practices in the area of corporate governance and corporate sponsorship and also is Co-Chair of the Law Institute of Victoria's Sports Law Committee.

Another highlight of the conference will be the presentation of the Rudolph C. Hasl Leader in Sports Award to David Williams II, the Vice Chancellor for University Affairs & Athletics at Vanderbilt University, for his exemplary service in college sports. A strong advocate for the student athlete and Director of Athletics at Vanderbilt, Williams also serves on the NCAA's Committee on Infractions and has worked with the SEC in negotiating its latest media agreement with ESPN. He will deliver a keynote address during the first hour of the conference.

The conference will kick off the third annual National Sports Law Negotiation Competition that will bring 36 teams from law schools across the nation to the TJS� campus for a weekend of stimulating negotiation rounds.

Admission to the conference is free, but attendees must register as seating is limited to the first 150 registrants. For more information and to register, visit www.tjssl.edu/conferences/womens-football-conference-2013. Attendees may bring their own lunch or a boxed lunch can be ordered in advance for \$10 when registering. The public is invited.

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