

'He's moved us forward'

Molloy's Bogner concludes extended DII leadership role

By David Pickle

At the 2005 Division II Presidents and Chancellors Summit, a young president from an East Coast school crystallized a complex Division II membership discussion with a simple question.

"If you're going to invest in athletics, what's the return?" asked Drew Bogner, president of Molloy.

Division II's real issue, Bogner said, was bigger than whether members were migrating to Division I, which was the concern of the moment. The actual question, he asserted, had to do with whether Division II could make a compelling case to justify its niche in the NCAA continuum.



PROFILE:
DREW
BOGNER

What followed for Division II was a comprehensive values study, which demonstrated that Division II institutions could realize net tuition gains with a properly managed athletics program, in addition to other benefits. As for Bogner, what followed was five years on the Division II Presidents Council, the last two as chair, and a ringside seat to some of the biggest developments in recent NCAA history.

How big?

Since 2009, Bogner has served on the search committee that identified Mark Emmert as Myles Brand's successor, taken part on the team that developed the NCAA's new media contract with Turner and CBS, and participated in last summer's historic Division I presidential retreat as a representative of Division II.

Combine that with myriad achievements in higher education, and it's been a great decade for Bogner.

"Drew has done a fantastic job," said West Texas A&M President Pat O'Brien, who will replace Bogner as Council chair in January.

Bogner is so skilled and comfortable in the field of education that it's surprising to learn that he first pursued an M.D. rather than a Ph.D. After his undergraduate years at Newman in his hometown of Wichita, Kan., he spent 18 months at the University of Kansas Medical School.

"When I got in (to medical school), I realized that mainly getting in was my goal," he said. "So then I started thinking about what I really wanted to do, and I decided that education was where I wanted to be."

That proved to be the right choice. After earning his Ph.D. from Kansas, Bogner returned to Newman, originally teaching biology. He shifted to the department of education, where he was given the opportunity to start an evening program. From there, he became dean of alternate education and then chief academic officer. In 2000, he was recruited as Molloy's president.

Under Bogner's leadership, Molloy's reputation for quality has continued to grow, with favorable rankings from the Princeton Review and U.S. News & World Report. Bogner has built a list of presidential successes, such as building projects and capital campaigns (the endowment has grown from \$2.3 million to \$27 million during his administration). He also has strengthened the school's foundation programs of education, communications, nursing, criminal justice, social work and business.

That seems like plenty for most mortals, but Bogner also carved out time for one of the most impressive leadership stints in Division II history. As he looks back on his time, he takes particular pride in the way his question

from the 2005 presidential summit – the one about Division II value – has been addressed.

"We have clearly articulated the sum and substance of Division II," Bogner said.

And one word, "balance," has carried most of the load. "If you went to any of our Division II colleges and you asked the presidents or ADs or probably the coaches, 'Tell me about Division II,' they probably will say something like, 'It's about Life in the Balance.' We have been able to distill down the essence of what we expect for the Division II athlete."

The most obvious symbol was the 2010 Life in the Balance legislative package, which reduced playing and practice seasons in most Division II sports. Bogner was a member of the Presidents Council when the legislation was developed and approved. As chair, he worked hard to maintain the gains and shepherded through a second phase at the 2011 Convention. Most recently, he has overseen development of the Ease of Burden 2012 legislative package, which aligns comfortably with the balance premise.

Though Bogner is proud of the accomplishments, he doesn't position Division II as being somehow more high-minded than Division I. Despite the ugly headlines of the past year, Bogner sees favorable shifts in Division I that may not be apparent to others.

"I was thinking how often in the last three or four months I have seen an article where the lead spokesperson for change is one of the Division I presidents," Bogner said. "That's not lost on me. That is a fundamentally different place than even two years ago when the chief spokesperson for change was the president of the NCAA."

Such insight has been much appreciated throughout the NCAA, and especially in Division II circles, where Bogner became known as a strong student-athlete advocate. He attended both Division II National Championships Festivals conducted under his watch and was a regular at the annual Student-Athlete Advisory Committee-Management Council Summits.

The student-athletes at the summits left him especially impressed.

"They are prepared and they have great insight," he said. "They have thought about the legislation before they come in. Their comments are good, and their questions are probably even better as they push us to think it through on another level."

That next level, of course, is where Bogner is most at home.

"He's kept us focused," said West Texas A&M's O'Brien in summarizing Bogner's leadership. "He's been innovative in bringing new thoughts and new ideas to the Council, and he's moved us forward."

Drew Bogner bio

POSITION: President of Molloy since 2000; chair of the Division II Presidents Council.

PREVIOUS POSITIONS: Executive vice president for academic affairs, dean of community education, chair of the Institute for Teacher Education, professor of education and professor of biology at Newman.

EDUCATION: Graduated from Newman with a degree in biology, M.S. Ed. and Ph.D. in philosophy and history of education from Kansas.

FAMILY: Married to Karen; two children, Ryan and Lindsay.

WHAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW: Bogner teaches about every third semester. Recent courses have been on Japanese history. This semester: The Modern Presidency.