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Sailing Program

Bill Kelly <president@cnu.edu>

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To: faculty@cnu.edu, students@cnu.edu, employees@cnu.edu



Dear Captains,

Over the past couple of weeks, we have had real conversations on our campus about the challenges and opportunities we are facing. We are in a solid position and our Strategic Compass is informing our efforts to align assets and be the very best steward of the resources we receive from the state, the funds we receive through tuition and fees, and the gifts from our philanthropic support. With that in mind, I have made the difficult decision to make this the final season of competition for the Captains Sailing Team. This action is being taken after great deliberation, a full consideration of alternatives, and a sober analysis of what is best for the future of the University, as outlined in our Strategic Compass and our priority to Build a Foundation to Thrive.

I know many people are affected, including student-athletes, their families, coaches, alumni, and supporters of the program. I want to acknowledge our Captains for Life who did so much to build the team and establish its record of success. Our hearts go out to them and I am grateful for all they have given through their passion for the sport and their pride in representing CNU. We are especially grateful to the program's supporters who have given so generously of their resources over the years.

Over its more than 50-year history, the Sailing Team has contributed to the remarkable record of success of CNU Athletics. Its student-athletes and coaches have upheld our values on the water and in the classroom and that is true once again this season under the strong leadership of Coach Dreugh Phillips. I am grateful for all that our current and past sailors have given to Christopher Newport University.

Nevertheless, we are confronting difficult decisions, participation in the sport has been declining, and we can no longer delay costly improvements to the fleet. Our Captains sail courageously against much larger and better-funded teams and they have certainly held their own and continue to do so this season. I met with the team this morning to share my decision. There is no good time to announce news of this nature, but I wanted the team to know now rather than wait till season's end. We are a student-first university, sharing this news with them was my responsibility as your President and it is my responsibility to share this information with all of you.

Throughout the upcoming transition, we are fully committed to supporting our student-athletes. They are Captains now and Captains always.

With great respect,
President Bill Kelly

Bill Kelly
President
Christopher Newport University

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