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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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NAIA COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS APPROVE FOUR NEW MEMBERS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Members of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Council of Presidents (COP) met in Kansas City earlier this week and approved membership applications from Benedictine University at Springfield (Ill.), Central Baptist (Ark.) College, Warren Wilson (N.C.) College and the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry. These institutions bring total NAIA membership to 290.

"The NAIA welcomes these four institutions and looks forward to working with campus leaders to advance character-driven intercollegiate athletics," said John Leavens, NAIA Senior Vice President for Membership Services. "I am confident these new members share in the long-held mission of the NAIA to promote the education and development of well-rounded students and productive citizens through intercollegiate athletics."

NAIA national office staff works closely with member conferences to identify prospective members. NAIA conferences are highly involved throughout the evaluation process to ensure a good fit for prospective institutions at both the conference and national levels. The NAIA will continue to work with each conference to identify prospective schools for NAIA membership.

These institutions join an Association that was founded in 1937, and is a leader in the development of student-athletes. The NAIA continues to be a pioneer in implementing exceptional standards for academics, diversity and character. Those standards are evident not only on the campuses of member institutions, but also in the competitive arena.

The Association provides exclusive opportunities for more than 45,000 young men and women to achieve academically while competing for the love of the game. NAIA member institutions award millions of dollars through athletic aid to eligible student-athletes and create an environment where competitive athletics, academic excellence and character walk hand-in-hand.

To learn more about the NAIA visit www.NAIA.org.

About Benedictine University at Springfield

Benedictine University at Springfield is a progressive liberal arts university offering master-, bachelor- and associate-degree programs as well as a Ph.D. in Organization Development. Founded in 1929 by the Ursuline Sisters, Springfield's oldest institution of higher learning possesses an enduring legacy of leadership and excellence amid an exquisite campus setting with a vibrant student body. Degree programs include a variety of graduate and undergraduate courses in business; fine arts; the natural, life, and computational sciences; as well as humanities.

Benedictine University offers opportunities to excel both in the classroom and on the playing field. The Bulldogs athletic motto is simple: you are considered a student first and an athlete second. The program's philosophy is straightforward: encouraging student-athletes to reach their highest potential in their education as well as in competition. Benedictine feels that the unique opportunity to be an intercollegiate athlete provides students with valuable lifelong learning experiences that will help them in their future careers.

Benedictine currently sponsors baseball, men's golf, men's and women's soccer, softball and volleyball with plans to add women's golf, men's and women's cross country and men's and women's basketball. The university has applied for membership in the American Midwest Conference and will begin competing with varsity student-athletes certified eligible for NAIA competition beginning in 2010-11. NAIA postseason eligibility will first be available in 2011-12.

"Acceptance into the NAIA will offer new and exciting experiences for all our athletes as well as adding juniors and seniors to our rosters," said Steve Torricelli, Athletics Directors, Benedictine University at Springfield. "Athletes will now be able to participate all four years while earning their degree at Benedictine University at Springfield."

To learn more about Benedictine University at Springfield visit www.sci.edu

About Central Baptist College

Since its inception in 1952, Central Baptist's mission has focused on educating the student as a whole – intellectually, physically, and spiritually. While many other colleges and universities subscribe to the notion of holistic education, it is



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the spiritual dimension of higher education that makes Central Baptist College unique. Central Baptist, a community of learners dedicated to the integration of Christian faith and academic excellence, exists to instill in its students a commitment to lifelong learning, spiritual development and service to God. These ideals are combined through a program characterized by academic rigor, practical experience and spiritual direction in a Christ-focused environment.

Under the NAIA umbrella Central Baptist will sponsor men's and women's basketball, baseball, softball, volleyball, men's golf, men's and women's soccer and men's and women's cross country.

To learn more about Central Baptist College visit www.cbc.edu.

About Warren Wilson College

Warren Wilson College is an independent, accredited, four-year liberal arts college, which awards the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in a variety of disciplines and the Master of Fine Arts in creative writing. Warren Wilson was founded by the Presbyterians in 1894 and maintains a relationship with the Presbyterian Church. The roots of this historic relationship continue to nurture the college's commitment to community, social responsibility, the value of work, and openness in the pursuit of truth. The college provides a strong sense of purpose, place, and participation, and supports diversity, community and personal development.

The mission of Warren Wilson College athletic program is to integrate physical activity and wellness as a vital component of every student's experience. Athletic administration offers the college community an opportunity to participate in a wide variety of programs at the individual, intramural, club and varsity level. Through such variety, Warren Wilson is uniquely positioned to attract and support a diverse student body, faculty and staff. As an integral part of the educational process, the College develops contributing members of society through its commitment to excellence in academics, service and work. Warren Wilson provides students with the foundation for a lifetime of health, wellness, leadership and personal achievement.

Warren Wilson will compete in men's and women's cross country and men's and women's swimming and diving.

To learn more about Warren Wilson College visit www.warren-wilson.edu

About the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Founded in 1911 to "help in the solution of forestry problems" the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry was founded in partnership with Syracuse University. From the early years of its existence, college leaders saw the need to respond to the broader, rather than more specific, needs of environmental professionalism. Over the years, programs were added in design, engineering and life sciences, as well as natural resources management. As SUNY-ESF heads towards its 100th anniversary, the College is at the forefront of developing the technologies to create a sustainable future.

The mission of SUNY-ESF is to advance knowledge and skills and to promote the leadership necessary for the stewardship of both the natural and designed environments. SUNY-ESF today offers 22 undergraduate and 30 graduate degree programs, including eight doctoral programs, and is ranked among the nation's finest universities.

The intercollegiate athletics program at SUNY-ESF traces its roots back to 1912, when students organized a Forestry Club on campus that has sponsored an intercollegiate timber sports competition every year since. SUNY-ESF has since added to its sports offerings and will move its men's golf, men's and women's soccer teams and men's and women's cross country teams to full intercollegiate varsity status for 2010 competition.

To learn more about SUNY-ESF visit www.esf.edu.

About the NAIA

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, is the governing body for athletics programs at its nearly 300 colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada. The long-held mission of the NAIA is to promote the education and development of well-rounded students and productive citizens through intercollegiate athletics. The Association offers equitable access and opportunities for participation in its 23 national championship events held annually throughout the country.

Today, the NAIA strengthens its commitment to student-athletes and strives to enrich their college experience by supporting academic achievement and character development. NAIA *Champions of Character* is the Association's innovative flagship program designed to instill character values in student-athletes, coaches and youth in the communities it serves. To learn more visit www.NAIA.org.