**Grand Valley State University Additional Responses to Questions
RFP #224-39 Athletics Fundraising Study, April 3, 2024**

1. **For context, can you share a few high-level priorities within GVSU Athletics, whether fundraising, performance, wellness, infrastructure, compliance and/or the student-athlete experience related?**

Grand Valley State University Athletics’ is committed to our students having an exceptional student-athlete experience where they are winning in their sport, in their studies, and then in life after Grand Valley. It is about preparing the whole student for what life may have in store for them.

Athletics is also interested in growing and increasing fundraising support for athletics. The priority is to increase annual fundraising to support all aspects of athletic department operations such as food for our Fuel Hub, small projects like locker room renovations, equipment purchases, to supplement basic operating costs, special international trips, and other opportunities.

1. **Does a working affiliation exist between the GVSU Athletics Fund and AHEAD initiative (pending its “Donor Collective” status)?**

The AHEAD initiative is not connected to the GV Athletic Fund. The AHEAD Initiative was connected to N.I.L., but this has evolved and changed. Athletics is helping student-athletes navigate the N.I.L. world.

1. **Is there significant external development experience among the GVSU Athletics Administration & Support Staff?**

Grand Valley State University’s Athletics administration and support staff connects potential donors through relationship building and events (i.e. golf outings) to raise money. Athletics builds relationships, cultivates those relationships, makes asks, and thanks individuals for their support.

1. **Are peer institutions for this assessment limited to the Division II landscape, or is there a desire to survey relevant FBS and/or FCS institutions (i.e., those generating significant revenue from and/or funds directed towards Football & Men’s Basketball)?**

Grand Valley State University’s Athletic Division is uniquely positioned in that we lead Division II. We would expect the consultant to determine which universities are exceeding in athletic fundraising regardless of division. We would prefer not to focus on anyone above FCS, but certainly could be another Division II institution who has a great working relationship with their development office and/or has athletic dedicated fundraiser within the department and/or operates a high raising annual fundraising program. Please note that Grand Valley would need to approve these peer institutions before an assessment would be conducted.

1. **What, if any, challenges did the 2023 athletics fund rebrand aim to combat (i.e., disproportionate funding of GVSU athletic programs, N.I.L. considerations, operating costs, etc.)?**

Grand Valley rebranded the athletics fund because no one knew what the Irwin Fund was and there was confusion because over time people called it the Irwin Club. Donors asked what they “got” for being part of the Irwin Club. While we have benefits because of gifts, it was still confusing to our donors.

Additionally, we have a Charles and Florence Irwin Fund that is a scholarship for students in Physical Education and the Movement Science Program. This was confusing to people, and we believe individuals gave to this scholarship thinking it was going to athletic department operations.

Lastly, N.I.L. was not a part of the rebranding conversation. The focus is to increase giving directly to the athletic department for all team operations. Operating costs have skyrocketed so we use these funds to supplement basic operating needs as well as special projects or trip as stated above.