



**West Virginia University**  
**The Student Assembly - Student Government Association**  
**Assembly Proclamation: AP-2020-06**

**AN ASSEMBLY PROCLAMATION SUPPORTING WVU ATHLETICS AND STUDENT-ATHLETES IN  
THEIR ADVOCACY EFFORTS FOR BLACK LIVES MATTER**

**Short Title:** Supporting WVU Athletics & Student-Athletes

**Author:** Tucker Nadeau, Senator  
Amaya Jernigan, Senator  
Sohan Daniel, Senator

**Sponsors:** Zac Backus, College Senator (Education)  
Sarah Ihlenfeld, Senator  
Amelia Jones, President Pro Tempore  
Hunter Moore, College Senator (Engineering)  
Alexis Rossello, College Senator (Business)  
Tyler Seidel, College Senator (Engineering)

**First Reading Date:** 09-16-2020

**Whereas**, The West Virginia University Mission Statement states that “faculty, staff and students at West Virginia University commit to creating a diverse and inclusive culture...in West Virginia”; and,

**Whereas**, The WVU Student Government Association Mission Statement declares its goal is “to ensure the personal freedoms and general welfare of the students within our University, to promote principles of diversity, and to continue in our tradition of self- governance”; and,

**Whereas**, Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement “began as a call to action in response to state-sanctioned violence and anti-Black racism...with intentions to connect Black people who want justice in their community<sup>1</sup>”; and,

**Whereas**, There has been countless occasions in Morgantown, West Virginia where the police have unnecessarily used force and violence on Black community members without consequences<sup>2</sup>; and,

**Whereas**, Black students, faculty, and staff of WVU deserve to be vocal about the many cases of police brutality, inequality, and injustice happening around the world and in their communities; and,

<sup>1</sup> <https://blacklivesmatter.com/what-we-believe/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.newsbreak.com/west-virginia/morgantown/news/1576438658014/video-surfaces-of-police-brutality-in-morgantown>

**Whereas**, From May 26th to August 22nd, there have been “more than 7,750 Black Lives Matter Demonstrations in all 50 States<sup>3</sup>”; and,

**Whereas**, There have been over a dozen BLM demonstrations in the Morgantown area hosted by students and community members of Morgantown that served as a way to bring justice and attention to the importance of BLM<sup>4</sup>; and,

**Whereas**, On August 30th, the WVU Student Athlete Advisory Committee sponsored a Unity Walk in support of inclusion, equality, and change that had several hundred participants from every sport<sup>5</sup>; and,

**Whereas**, The WVU Football program announced on September 1st that all players would have the option of placing a #BLM sticker on their helmets; and,

**Whereas**, Both the Unity Walk and the football program’s stickers were met with criticism and comments ranging from telling the players to not “worry about politics and just play football” and calling BLM a “domestic terror group”<sup>6</sup>and threatening to stop supporting the team due to its support of BLM; and,

**Whereas**, The BLM movement is important to our student athletes who face the reality of racism and discrimination on a daily basis; and,

**Whereas**, The recent community walks and placement of stickers on helmets is a step towards change in the treatment of Black athletes, students, faculty, and staff; and,

**Whereas**, The WVU Student Government Association is in agreeance with the words of sportswriter Michael Miller, namely that “The truth of the matter is that basic human rights are not politics and all lives cannot matter until Black lives matter”<sup>7</sup>.

***Therefore, be it proclaimed by the Student Assembly of West Virginia University:***

Section 1: The West Virginia Student Government Association supports WVU Athletics in their advocacy efforts for both the Black student athlete experience and the Black Lives Matter Movement,

Section 2: The West Virginia Student Government Association stands in solidarity with student-athletes in their fight for social justice on and off the field;

Section 3: Upon passage and approval, this legislation shall be forwarded to:

**Mandates:**

G. Corey Farris, Dean of Students

Sabrina Cave, Executive Director, Student Enrichment

Dr. Thanh Le, Director, Student Engagement and Leadership (Advisor)

Shane Lyons, Director of Athletics, Associate Vice President

Keli Zinn, Deputy Athletics Director

Matt Wells, Senior Associate Athletics Director/External Affairs

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<sup>3</sup> <https://time.com/5886348/report-peaceful-protests/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.thedaonline.com/news/morgantown/hundreds-gather-in-morgantown-to-protest-police-brutality-racial-injustice/article\\_d446fe52-a516-11ea-b1bd-67f7dcf3be6e.html](https://www.thedaonline.com/news/morgantown/hundreds-gather-in-morgantown-to-protest-police-brutality-racial-injustice/article_d446fe52-a516-11ea-b1bd-67f7dcf3be6e.html)

<sup>5</sup> <https://wvusports.com/news/2020/8/30/blog-wvu-saac-sponsors-sunday-evening-unity-walk.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.instagram.com/p/CEiJnPFnMG4/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/CEiJnPFnMG4/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.smokingmusket.com/2020/9/3/21419908/west-virginia-wvu-mountaineers-black-lives-matter-blm-helmet-sticker-fan-boycott>

Neal Brown, Head Coach WVU Football  
Coleman Barnes, Associate Athletics Director for External Affairs  
Tangela Cheatham, Director Student-Athlete Enhancement  
Daily Athenaeum  
The Dominion Post  
Chase Riggs, Student Body President  
Tracey Picou, SGA Secretary