

Why Names, Images and Likenesses Are Not Enough

Project NILO is an innovative program to help students profit from their own businesses as well as their own Names, Images and Likenesses (NIL).

PHOENIX, ARIZONA, USA, June 5, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On June 30, 2021, the Division 1 Board of Directors of the National Collegiate Athletic Association ([NCAA](#)) [approved an interim name, image, and likeness \(NIL\) policy](#). This new policy allowed all NCAA D1, D2 and D3 student-athletes to be compensated for their NIL. Since the rule went into effect, Americans have been bombarded with stories, rumors, and speculation about everything from new uniforms and state laws to million dollar offers to a flurry of top talent transfers to the end of competitive collegiate football. It is too soon to predict all the long-term impacts on the quality of NCAA football and basketball, or the viability of lower-funded universities' sports programs. There is an organization which is focusing on an issue that is not making many headlines, i.e., what are the real long-term implications for students, especially diverse and/or economically-disadvantaged students? The World's Best Connectors LLC, a community of C-Suite executives, has created [Project NILO](#). This program will help athletes and their parents navigate the current NIL chaos, and acquire the training and mentorship needed to successfully create and manage their own businesses with NIL proceeds.



Project NILO is a new initiative by The World's Best Connectors LLC, which will provide entrepreneurship education courses, a private equity intensive, and an apprenticeship that leads to business ownership for student athletes with NIL opportunities.

For many years, controversies have plagued college athletics. Often colleges, administrators and coaches make millions, while some students graduate without professional contracts or even adequate academic knowledge or credentials to pursue a successful, non-athletic career. Denise

Meridith, CEO of WBC, has been involved in educating and mentoring student athletes for many years. She managed a youth sports non-profit for 14 years in Arizona called Linking Sports & Communities, which encouraged student athletes to stay in school, lead healthy lifestyles and be financially responsible. She has always supported compensating student athletes, but is worried about how NIL will be implemented and benefit students in the long run.

"I am concerned that, even with NIL, the majority of student athletes still risk leaving college with no professional sports career, no marketable skill or experience, and no long-term source of income," says Meridith. "WBC is creating Project NILO to make "OWNERSHIP" a key component of students' NIL activities."



Jonathan Mason is the Director of Project NILO. He is a Harvard graduate, an outstanding young executive with business management experience on both Wall Street and Main Street. He is currently CEO of a company providing business consulting services to professional athletes called Jentry Search Academy, which will have the lead for administration of Project NILO.

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"WBC will partner with local small businesses to provide job opportunities for college athletes that fit their rigorous on-field and off-field schedules," says Mason. "The multi-year program includes entrepreneurship education courses, a private equity intensive, and an apprenticeship that leads to business ownership".

Project NILO is unique from the plethora of companies that have sprung up to pursue the top ballplayers or manage the large NIL contracts from corporations that people hear about in the news in several ways.

Project NILO will be designed for all kinds of athletes—e.g., men, women, people with disabilities,

LBGTQ+ members, etc. It is also not just for football and basketball; for example, other Olympic and Paralympic sports also provide opportunities for NIL sponsorship. Students would apply to get into this competitive program; Project NILO will only be accepting dedicated, ambitious students who have an interest in, capacity for, and desire to succeed in business. Success in academics and sports requires the support of the whole family. So, Project NILO wants to provide some counseling to parents during the process.

Project NILO will not duplicate any existing university programs. The applicants will be receiving specific training in business management, regardless of their university majors, and opportunities in relevant internship/volunteer opportunities during a structured two-year curriculum.

They will interact with successful business and sports leading role models and mentors.

WBC specializes in creating new partnerships. Project NILO will be working with several universities, such as Arizona State University, to pilot use of the program, as some variations will accompany different sizes, types and needs of schools, starting with the Fall 2022 semester. National organizations, such as BlackOwned.com, C-Suite Network, Denise Meridith Consultants Inc, Connect To Your City LLC, and sports organizations will assist with sponsorship, mentors, training classes and webinars, business internships and opportunities, promotion, and marketing.

Universities, corporations, current and retired professional athletes, sports organizations, and supportive individuals who want to support the development and implementation of Project NILO should contact WBC at worldsbestconnectors@gmail.com.

WBC wants to provide reputable, objective advice to student athletes and their parents about how to seek, negotiate, evaluate and accept compensation offers, and, more importantly, to give them the skills, knowledge, and abilities to create viable businesses they can OWN during and after college. Project NILO wants to add "Ownership" to Names, Images, and Likenesses.

Denise Meridith



Jonathan Mason, from Jentry Search Academy, will be directing the activities of Project NILO for The World's Best Connectors.

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