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**CoSIDA Continuing Education Membership
Call/Webcast: Division I Communications
Issues & Topics Roundtable**

**With D1A Athletic Directors Association
(D1 ADA) leaders & CoSIDA Division I leaders**

An interview with:

BOB BOWLSBY (Stanford AD)
JEFF HATHAWAY (Connecticut AD)
DAVE HART (Alabama AD)

SHELLY POE (CoSIDA 3rd VP, Ohio State)
CHARLES BLOOM (SEC, CoSIDA Past
President)
MAX CORBET (Boise State, CoSIDA Past
President)
DeWAYNE PEEVY (University of Kentucky,
CoSIDA member)
LARRY DOUGHERTY (Temple University,
CoSIDA President)

LARRY DOUGHERTY: My name is Larry Dougherty, and I will serve as the moderator for this teleconference.

From the Division I Athletic Directors Association, we have **Bob Bowlsby, Jeff Hathaway, Dave Hart**. From CoSIDA we have **Charles Bloom, Max Corbet, DeWayne Peevy and Shelly Poe**. Dr. Chris Hill, Utah Athletics Director who was scheduled to be on the call is unable to join us today.

Let us start off the teleconference with the first issue. What are some of the major communication-based issues facing collegiate athletics today? If Bob Bowlsby can start out the discussion.

BOB BOWLSBY: Thank you, Larry. Thank you for the opportunity to participate.

I think we are seeing some rapid change in how we communicate with our various constituencies in intercollegiate athletics. It makes it incumbent upon us to change with the times and do the things that are necessary to reflect what's going on around us.

I think there's a great deal more direct contact and interface. I think our consumers out there expect two-way communications and messaging versus one-way delivery as it's been in the past. I think we're seeing an unprecedented decay in our nation's newspapers. Circulation and readership is down in virtually every marketplace. There's a significant migration to online consumption. This is particularly true when trying to connect with young fans. It's very different than connecting with older fans who have been our traditional supporters through the years.

I think you look at some of our nation's major newspapers, they are having layoffs and downsizing in their sports departments. There is difficulty in finding other places that will thoroughly develop stories that we would like to see covered. The newspaper has always been the place that you could count on for a thorough and balanced presentation of any particular story. I think that's more and more difficult.

We live in an era of radio sound bytes and video clips and blog posts. I just think the manner in which we're communicating with our constituencies and the manner in which the professional media follows our programs has changed dramatically in the last 10 years. My estimation is that it will continue to change.

As a result of that, it makes it incumbent upon us and indeed creates an imperative to change and evolve skill sets for communications and media relations professionals. I think as these trends continue, the face of CoSIDA, the face of



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intercollegiate athletics communications is going to continue to evolve. The more quickly organizations and individuals can evolve and the more responsive we can be to not only demanding from our consumers but things that may be a result of the various delivery systems we have on our campuses, the more we can respond to that quickly, the better off we're going to be.

I don't see any shortage of challenges today. I think those challenges will continue into the future.

SHELLY POE: I would like to chime in maybe from a communications perspective.

I think the one thing that we have to keep in mind as technology changes, as delivery systems change, what is our message and what is our audience, what are the best connections we can make in combining those two together, getting the message to the audience.

Right now most of those changes come in the form of technology in terms of new forms of media, in terms of new news cycles, more 24-hour availability of breaking news, and as Bob said a lot of the old checks and balances of the old system of professional journalism has gone by the wayside because everybody is in a hurry to get it first. They don't do as much fact checking. We need to adjust to that.

It's more critical than ever that the message we are putting out originally is a spot-on target of what we want it to be and what we want our audience to hear.

I think social media has given us a lot of really great opportunities to go straight to our audience, give them messages and some insights that we're not using the traditional media to filter out. I think also we have a great challenge in any type of technology in knowing that the technology today is not the same as it was five years ago and of course it will be much different five years from now. But also technology doesn't just change the communications office, it's a communication vehicle, but it makes impact on recruiting. Can coaches Skype, or can they tweet with marketing in ways to target and pinpoint some of your best audiences and some audiences you maybe wouldn't reach through traditional media. Video clips on YouTube, do they affect your rights fees. The list goes on and on. We need to learn from athletics and from other industries where technology can help us bring those together.

CHARLES BLOOM: I would tell you, I'd like to probably separate any possible solutions that we discuss between the internal and the

external, starting with the external. Bob mentioned this before. The numbers of traditional media, the newspapers, the radios, televisions are cutting staff and are not as prominent as they've been in the past.

However, the huge sums of new media that have come onboard with the websites and the blogs have muddied the water, so to speak. I would tell you that any media outlet that as an editorial control, a publisher or editor, we need to continue to build those relationships. Also, if possible, we need to try to form a relationship with media in the blogs knowing that the press boxes are only so big, but try to develop a relationship whereas you can use those independent blogs in the future. There's a ton of them out there. I think you know who they are.

Internally, a couple of things to discuss is that each of our institutions in the conferences have an untold number of media that is available to them. I talk about their conference, television packages, institutional television packages that deals with coaches shows, that deals with replays, any pay-per-views, point-to-point broadcasts, in-stadium signage and videos through the PA's websites. Each institution has at least one website, as well as the academic site, the campus website, as well.

Social media, seems like every school and conference is utilizing the social media tools, Twitter and Facebook are the most popular, you have YouTube out there, as well, very popular. Each of our institution's radio networks, lots of content, PSAs [public service announcements] during the game itself, you have radio call-in shows. A lot of that is available to you.

As important as those tools are, I would say as well that what is important is the coordination of the message, to make sure that everyone on the athletic staff that needs to be brought in on the messaging, whether that is developed from the president through the athletic director on down, that your coaches, everyone is onboard with the same message. It's okay sometimes to have multiple messengers, but you need a singular message.

This is easier said than done. What we need is cooperation from all of our coaches groups. I think that is vital looking forward. From my conference chair, one of the things that I hear from the media is there's an angry media contingent out there, that they are looking at

everything. One of the reasons is because they don't get anything from no access or covering our schools and our coaches.

So hopefully in the future, if it's possible to get our coaches groups onboard with some sort of access that is good for the student-athlete, good for the program.

Then just everybody that's involved on your external team on campuses should be involved with the strategy on the development of your messaging and what's all at stake in your messaging plans.

DAVE HART: I think Charles' comments provide an excellent segue to add another element to this.

I think in a day and age of accelerated technological advancements, I don't think we can succumb to absolutely avoiding face-to-face communication. Having just gone through 11 days of the aftermath of what is honestly, when you see it with your own eyes, just an absolutely horrific natural disaster with the tornadoes.

The ability to interface with campus leaders has been invaluable in this instance. I think a big part of that is the utilization of social media obviously available to us in order to reach all the stakeholders, university constituencies, et cetera.

I think without question, the leadership that was provided by Deborah Lane, who serves as assist to the president, university relations, and Doug Walker, who is our media relations director, the ability to get those two face-to-face to follow - and we're blessed to have an exceptional president - to follow his lead really and truly it was an experience to be a part of university leadership that responded immediately.

Having said that, you might imagine with all the technological advances we're speaking of, the day after the tornado, as I and many other staff members came to the athletics facilities, there was no communication. Couldn't use your cell phone, didn't have power. So to pull people together, coaches, administrators, university officials, and to begin to make certain, as Charles Bloom said, that we did have a common direction and we would have a unified message, has certainly made it easier on everyone who is affected by that disaster.

We are in constant communication with city officials, university officials, state officials, governor's office. The component to me that was the most valuable to me in all of that was not what Doug or Milton, a senior associate for technology

advancement, they did a wonderful job, but the most valuable element of all of that was sitting in the room with the leaders.

Sometimes I become concerned in this day and age that if you need me, email me. If you need me, text me. That simply is not the answer.

JEFF HATHAWAY: Appreciate all the comments. Essentially a lot of challenges were listed that we're facing right now.

I, too, would say from a first standpoint that having this conversation is a great beginning to try to find some solutions, to interact with a variety of communication experts and to have them hear from an AD's perspective what our concerns are is certainly the start of a good conversation.

I think, as David said, and you have all of our thoughts and prayers from what you have all gone through, and we've all gone through challenging situations, here at UConn we had a murder of a football player two years ago, for all those that have gone through a NCAA hearing situation, we all know how the media feeds off that.

When I think about this, first and foremost we need to depend on ourselves and to do everything we can do to set the message, to set the message, to stay on message, to provide a takeaway that we want our constituents to hear, to listen to, to grab onto.

As we depend on ourselves, I think it begins with what Dave said, and that is getting people together, talking it through so at least in your leadership group, at least in the people that are dealing with this problem straight on, that it's been vetted and it's been discussed, not only in athletics but across campus with the appropriate people on campus, and then putting into play what that message is, how do we get it out to a multitude of constituents.

As we know, many of our younger constituents are on Twitter, Facebook. I just find when we need to communicate with our students. We use the mass emails and stuff like that. The fact of the matter is we put something out on Facebook, we get more responses quicker. We need people to fill in on a newscast we were doing the other day from our basketball arena after the championship. We put something out on Facebook. Five hours later, there was 1500 students there to provide a backdrop for this newscast.

I think we've got to be the distributors of the information. We can't depend on the pipelines

anymore. The papers are evaporating, as Bob said. Less and less reporters. It's been interesting to me to watch our newspaper people come to our events now. They're coming with a still camera, the beat writer is coming with a still camera, with a video camera, so they're shooting photos, they're shooting video for their respective websites, they're writing the story, then they're writing the blog.

I don't know what you all feel, but I get a sense that when our writers write the blogs, we lose the sense of accountability. It almost becomes an opinion piece, which takes me back to the beginning, and that is we've got to get together, develop the message, stay on message, and make sure we provide a takeaway for the people we want to get this information.

LARRY DOUGHERTY (moderator): I heard you talk about Twitter. As Charles said, staying on message. How do you handle your schools and organizations Twitter in terms of your athletic staff and student-athletes right now? Generally if anyone wants to chime in on the Twitter situations from your organizations or schools.

SHELLY POE: I think the best-case scenario is education of your staff and your athletes in terms what positive things it can do, but what the pitfalls are, and hammer over and over that this is public information, as public as you can possibly imagine.

We had a coach here do something that I thought was very effective. He got up in front of a team and said, We're having Parents Night tomorrow night. I'm going to pick out six or eight of your Twitter accounts and read from them verbatim. That got some people sitting up straight in their seats. They didn't necessarily want their parents to know what they were writing.

Just to hammer over and over and over this is very public, this represents you like nothing else. I don't think we can prevent them from doing it. You can say that, but it's so intertwined in the culture, especially of college-age people now, instant, social communication. I think we have to find positive ways to use it rather than just ignore it altogether.

MAX CORBET: Our football coach is one of the coaches that bans our student-athletes from Twittering during the season. Constantly reminds them before and during the off-season when they can, just follow the simple rule of, you know, when you put something out there, think what your mother would think about it. Would she find that acceptable, what you're saying, whether you're

talking about friends or whoever it is. Just kind of a rule of thumb as we try to educate the student-athletes as much as anything on what that message is coming out there, just think about it as would your mother be good with it.

It's amazing how the kids sit up, just like Shelly said, pretty fast, Oh, I better think about that before I say something like that.

JEFF HATHAWAY: We run into the same thing with Facebook. We'll monitor Facebook, take some things off of Facebook, bring the students in and say, You're a senior, two months away from graduation, prospective employers are going to your website and here you are doing A, B, C and D. Like we know all kids are, they don't look at stuff that way. They think there's invincible in so many ways.

I think Max is right. Once you put it in front of them and give them a little bit of perspective, I do think it helps.

CHARLES BLOOM: In our office we use our social media really in two main platforms. One is the branding of the conference sending out tweets, positive tweets, on their schools. If we're working on a media guide, we find a nugget that we find worthwhile, we stick it in a tweet. We also use it to send people back to our website. We'll link some stories back to our website. We use it for that, as well.

But I would say, too, I know we have some former NCAA [men's Division I] basketball committee folks on the call, the buzzword today is 'transparency'. I think that the basketball committee might have been the first to really open up the process to the media, to let them in on the selection process. That's gained a lot of value through the years. I know just this year the NCAA is opening up a compliance seminar, compliance workshop for media, as well. We in the Southeastern Conference put media on the field during a football scrimmage at Alabama to get them a bird's eye view of how tough it is to officiate games.

I really think in terms of principle, transparency is really a way to garner some positive relationships.

JEFF HATHAWAY: I think that's correct. I use the example of the mock selection with the media. Again, our audiences are different depending on the situations. We've also used the mock selections with the NABC and brought in the NABC board, the basketball coaches association

board, which are significant coaches, Tom Izzo, Phil Martelli, Jim Boeheim, we brought them in for a mock.

You're right, when you open it up and you share it and you run that person through that scenario and have them make the decisions that you're facing, it does bring a different light to it. I hadn't heard about the compliance one yet, but that's one, quite frankly, the media could use a lot of assistance with only because it's so difficult. When you're dealing with so many rules and interpretations, when you try to explain that to the media, it's one thing. I think if they can sit down, feel it, work with it, I think it gives you a different perspective.

LARRY DOUGHERTY (moderator): Our third topic for discussion today. What are the expectations of today's communications directors and athletic directors in terms of developing specific strategies and tactics for dealing with communications-based issues, challenges and opportunities?

I'll ask Dave Hart to start us off.

DAVE HART: You know, there's an adage I've always been able to apply. I just heard it in different words. It's very simplistic: Tell me, I forget. Show me, I remember. Involve me, I understand.

I really think that's what we're talking about. I think the expectation today is that that involvement be paramount. I still talk to peers who do not have their media relations director as a part of their leadership team. To me, that's unthinkable because that person plays such a key role now in trying to anticipate issues before they become issues.

I think that goes back to the whole line of communication that Charles and others have referenced here. Whether that's a direct line first and foremost to the appropriate people on campus or the appropriate people, in this instance, it would be Charles in the conference office. I think transparency is important, but I think consistency is just as important.

I know there are exceptions to everything. But I think people will respect - people in the media - a level of consistency. When they don't get that, that's when the problems escalate.

So, again, it's not brain surgery. A lot of it is common sense. A lot of it is communication. But that goes back to what I said earlier.

Yes, we have an amazing amount of paths we can go down today to communicate. But I think at some point it always goes back to people, it

always goes back to their willingness to communicate face-to-face as well as utilizing a multitude of social media opportunities that exist out there today.

But I really think the ability to anticipate is the most critical factor when you're developing strategies and tactics.

JEFF HATHAWAY: I don't have much to add to that. I think Dave covered it pretty well.

BOB BOWLSBY: I think he did, too. I think the inclusion aspects are spot on. It's remarkable what good outcomes we can get if there's appropriate collaboration and nobody cares who gets the credit for it, or the blame in some cases.

I think Dave's synopsis is right on target.

JEFF HATHAWAY: I would add to that, I think we all have got to know that our sports information communication staffs, it's not all the statistics and the game-related information.

In the world which all of us as athletic directors live, where we live on our campus, all the different things that can come up, whether it's an arrest, a catastrophe like Dave has just been through, other situations, we got to know, and our SIDs, our communications people have to know that's when the rubber hits the road. You have to have talked how to deal with those situations in advance and have some type of a plan, not that it can be specific, but make sure there's an expectation that that communications director is going to be right in the thick of things and is controlling an awful lot of the message that's going out.

DeWAYNE PEEVY: The interesting thing in this is that being the so-called social media experts on our campuses has changed the way people think of our communication offices. I think that kind of helped our industry gain a seat at the table because a lot of the people in our departments, we were the first ones to know anything about these other means of communication.

I think it's our job to make that seat permanent and show our worth. At Kentucky, it's kind of interesting, because my office is actually located between the senior associate AD for compliance and the associate AD for marketing. That's where my department is settled as well. I work more closely with those groups and departments than anyone now.

I think our role is still to make sure that our

athletic directors are well-informed on all the issues involved first and foremost. That way, when things do happen, you're the first people that they run to, to know we're trying to keep up with what's going on, be a step ahead of everything.

I think if possible, I try to provide Mitch with talking points, pros and cons, my personal take on the immediate response from fans and the media, along with a plan to deal with those responses. That way we try to utilize all of our assets, including our blog, Twitter, Facebook, et cetera, and media outlets.

I think our biggest thing is making sure that not only do we have a seat at the table, but we have a worth to own that seat.

SHELLY POE: I think DeWayne is spot on there. I would say our role has evolved more into one of a sort of traffic cop, for a better way of saying it. You know, we have the best grasp and the best knowledge of the strategies that go with traditional media, social media, utilizing your own website, et cetera, et cetera. So when problems come to us, come to the department, I think the communications people can quickly kind of give a thumbnail sketch of, Here are strategies to do this, this and this, picking which vehicles you want to use.

I think with so many communication vehicles out there right now, it's good to know which ones will get you the best mileage for what you want.

CHARLES BLOOM: Again, this may be a synopsis of what everyone is saying. To get a seat at the table, to get the ear of the boss, I think the old adage: Just don't bring me problems, bring me solutions, is a key proverb, so to speak.

We all, as communication directors, we have our Twitter feeds up on our computer. Twitter does allow you to get an advance on what people are thinking, what the media are thinking. You can use that to your advantage to get a heads up on what the issues are presented to your athletic director, and with possible solutions.

I think the Twitter, it does negatively impact us in terms of trying to chase rumors and all the innuendo out there, but on the positive side it does give you a heads up much quicker than it would be in the pre-Internet days when you had the defined news cycles.

LARRY DOUGHERTY: Our fourth topic for discussion today is, How can today's communication staffs help educate athletic directors and their senior staff about communication-related issues?



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MAX CORBET: I think one of the biggest things that we can do as communication directors, individuals, head coaches also, what we try to do here, keep them informed of what is being said and being talked about out there. We've talked about the blogs, Twitter, fans, different media, what they're talking about.

The athletic directors and coaches today are so busy with so many different tasks. I know mine are. I'm sure everyone on the call, the CoSIDA panelists, their people are the same way. They just can't keep up with that information.

One thing I strive to do with our AD and staff is try to keep them informed as best I can of what's being said, what's being talked about out there. It may just be in passing, sometimes an informal situation also. But just kind of be their eyes and ears as to what's going on out there. Part of that is weeding out the good and the bad blogs, for me at least is one of the toughest things to try to do out there, what is good, what is rumor, what may be more of a factual thing being talked about, something we really need to take notice of. We need to educate ourselves. That's where you need to find out who in your community, in your fan base are the bloggers and tweeters that are putting things out there. Getting that knowledge, keeping it in front of you, I jog down notes in my office from time to time of something I may see or hear, then raise it when it's appropriate. But it's kind of a daunting task.

Another thing as communication people, I think sometimes we are afraid to do this, but I think you have to do it, is you've got to be able to ask the AD and the coaches the tough questions. What is being talked about, what they could be asked in an interview situation coming up. They may say they're going to talk about a couple different items, but you know there's another problem or another issue out there brewing. It's just preparing the coach, the athletic director: Here are the kind of questions you're probably going to get asked.

I know with our people here, several times we've been able to bring stuff in front of them, I never thought about that, wasn't thinking about that. It's just because they're so busy, their minds are going so many different directions. That's a way that I think as communication people we can really help out, is, Here is the pulse, here is what they're something, what you can possibly be asked.

You can't get enough education to them on what the problems are, what the questions are going to be. Sometimes they may not like the questions being asked of them as an SID or media relations person, but you have to do that. You've got to be able to do that. Hopefully you have a good enough relationship with your leaders that you can do that.

The last thing I'll throw in here is just from helping I think our ADs, just building relationships with the media. One of the things we've tried to do here, and I think it's worked out to our benefit here as of late, is when there's national writers or broadcasters on our campus, or even if we're on the road, whenever the opportunity exists, that I get my athletic director some face time with them. Sometimes it may not work out and they may be busy. I found for the most part that the media people are thankful of that opportunity, to meet the athletic director. They can talk to the AD, kind of get an idea of what your program is about, how it ticks, what you're thinking of issues, whether it be the BCS, compliance, championships, whatever it might be. I think in the long run it can really help.

I think it's helped us over the years by now they have more of a face-to-face with that AD. I think he's appreciative. He gives them an opportunity to give his spiel a little bit, give them his take. It's just building that relationship. I think a lot of us do that. It's been very beneficial for us because there's always going to be some hard times coming down the road. Unfortunately we are there right now a little bit. But by building up the relationships over the years, helping the AD, having him take some time out of his schedule, visit five minutes with a national writer from Sports Illustrated or whatever, can pay off with benefits down the road.

JEFF HATHAWAY: I would underscore what Max said. I think the best advice we can get sometimes is, What are the difficult questions going to be? As the group was assembling for the press conference or the interview session, what is that communications person hearing as they walk around and about with the media people.

I want to hear the tough questions. Those are the ones that we're going to have to focus on. I would hope all the athletic directors, I hear what you say, Max, you want to make sure your boss will share in the information, but that's the information we need to hear and prepare for.

DAVE HART: That goes back to the fundamental concept that we talked about before in the ability to anticipate. I think that's what the

athletics director, the head coach, appreciates from a very strong - and we have one here - media relations director is, Hey, help me anticipate some of the hard questions.

LARRY DOUGHERTY: We have a question for the group. I think fans still look at school websites as not objective sources of information. How do we confront this?

SHELLY POE: We do put a lot of time into our website. We find, especially with 36 sports that we have at Ohio State, it's a great way to give lots of information to lots of different constituent groups that really want to get it.

But I think, as so many schools have done it, done a good job, whether they hired former professional journalists to be their columnists, don't be afraid to not make everything a puff piece, don't be afraid to address some things that the fans are thinking in concrete ways, whether it's a video from our coach or your AD saying in their own words what a situation is about or whether it's some columns or some inside pieces from people that are going to give a different portrayal.

Again, there's so many opportunities for people to gain information, accurate and not, out there that you really want to drive an audience base to your website. You want to do that by not just providing lots of information, but some good thinking information, too. There's no reason you can't do that.

DeWAYNE PEEVY: I agree totally with Shelly, too. One of the reasons we created a blog on our own school website is to give us a chance to be in I guess the blog role of places that our fans go to when they want to know what's going on.

The hardest part for a school is, when you want to know something, you really want to know what's going on, people don't assume that the school website is the place where I can find the real truth, or the dirt, so to speak. It's going to be kind of a slanted view.

I think one of the things we tried to do is get to a point where we're one of the view places you check on a daily basis just to see what's going on, what's out there. We have now more comments on what's going on in the sports world. That way, when something does happen, your more apt to include us for our viewpoint.

It's a tough sell, but I think it's helped. I agree with her, saying you got to keep plugging along, can't give up the fight. The alternative is not



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being included at all.

MAX CORBET: I think it's a good question. I think I've asked myself that of some websites, trying to find out more information and all I see is the good.

It's an opportunity to put some nice feature stories out there, a lot of good things that your student-athletes or your department is doing on a website. But it can also be a way to take a negative situation with your website and be proactive with it and try to maybe get in front of the issues.

We had several issues this last week that we're in the middle of. We took an approach a little bit of putting that information out for our fans on our website, trying to be detailed about some current NCAA situations, but be more proactive at it. I don't think we really were sugarcoating it any. But it was some stuff we would prefer, yes, really not to talk about, but we also wanted to get it out there and be able to get that in front of people first and then let them form their opinions about it.

I don't think we were trying to push totally one side or the other. But it was definitely a hot topic here and we wanted to take the opportunity with the website a couple different times of issuing some statements and releases, getting some things posted, getting it out there.

So it's a tool that can help you in a negative situation, things you may not want to talk about. You don't want to hide from those things either. You don't want to stay behind the curtain. You want to get out in front, and the website definitely can do that.

CHARLES BLOOM: I would say you have to create a messaging strategy based on the results of your sporting event or the issues that are in your department.

But know this, the mainstream media websites are not going away. In fact, the websites are multiplying, as well as your fan sites, the rivals and the scout, all that. They're out there, as well. Your fans are going to those, as well.

Making your website as truthful and getting the information out, messaging points that you want to get out is important, but know that that competition isn't going away so you need to think about that when you're messaging for your department.

LARRY DOUGHERTY: We have another question here. How do you deal with the reality of essentially always being on the record? How do we keep our student-athletes from becoming totally gun shy? If anyone has any thoughts on that topic.



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BOB BOWLSBY: I think one of the things where our communications staff and media relations folks can be of assistance, it was mentioned earlier, serving a role as a filter for some of these kinds of things. Chances are pretty good that the communications staff is going to be a fair amount more conversant on which sites are legitimate, which user names are attached to people that are crackpots versus legitimate journalists. That filtering process is becoming ever more important.

It's a role, speaking for myself, but I think most of my director colleagues, they don't have the time or the ability to do that filtering themselves. I think it's an important role and one that's likely to be even more important going forward.

SHELLY POE: As kind of a parallel note to that, I think it's really important that we emphasize, as we said before, with some of the social media. Everything is on the record. Everything is for public consumption in this day and age. I just think we need to get our young people, our coaches, et cetera, in that mindset, that really anytime you're speaking or anytime you're interacting with any sort of fans, public, whatever, it's quite possible that will be spread to a larger audience. Just to get them more comfortable and trained with being a little bit guarded with what they do, how they present themselves and how they present the message of your school.

JEFF HATHAWAY: I think just the sheer fact that virtually everybody that has a cell phone now has a camera on that cell phone underscores what we share with our coaches and our student-athletes. Even when you don't think there's a reason to say, Are we on the record or off the record, somebody 25 feet from you might be taking a picture of what you're doing, who you're sitting with, whatever the case may be. Unfortunately we're in a world where you're always on. We need to get our student-athletes, particularly highly visible student-athletes, to understand that, and the same with our coaches.

LARRY DOUGHERTY: Discuss the importance of communications directors attending continuing education conventions.

JEFF HATHAWAY: I think we've heard a number of people talk about how important it is for the communications director to have a seat at the table. Probably more and more communication directors would like to do that.

I think one of the obligations of having a seat at the table is being cutting edge and having your staff being cutting edge. To me, continuing education is imperative in all of our positions. We certainly wouldn't have our athletic trainers or our strength and conditioning coaches not be going to continuing education opportunities, for obvious reasons. It's the same with every other position.

So I think we've got to underscore the professionalism of this profession, of the communications profession. I think we've got to underscore the changing technology which certainly is changing faster, I won't speak for everybody, but faster than I can keep track of it. We have to have people in our organization that are on top of that in a real-time way to make sure we're maximizing the use of it and that we understand how it can be used against us, for example, or used in a negative way.

I would hope that our communication folks would understand that continuing education is a way of life and necessary to best protect the athletic program and the institution, and frankly to preserve or give them a bigger role in the participation among the senior staff or whatever we call our senior administrators at our respective institutions.

SHELLY POE: I think what Jeff said is important. I think, too, it fits very naturally with the group of people we have as communications people. By nature we went into this field because we're curious, we're intrigued by things. We want to know what's next. We want to know how to best deliver a message and spread a word to people.

So, again, I think giving people opportunities to attend workshops, that feeds the natural curiosity that people in our line of work have. It's very welcomed and I think it's great when the administration will encourage that.

DAVE HART: Not to be repetitive, but I think clearly we have an obligation to help people grow in this profession. Professional development opportunities, and they're not all what I would categorize as outstanding, but if you can choose the ones that are meaningful in nature, then I think, again, we're fulfilling our obligation by plugging our people into those opportunities.

Quite honestly, media relations is one of those areas, in my experience throughout my career as an administrator, that people get locked into. I think we also have an obligation to talk to them about, Is this something you want to do forever? If it is, great. If you want to spend 30 years as the media relations director at Institution

X, that's wonderful. But if you want to develop a career plan that may have you transitions to another arena, then I think we're obligated to help in that regard, too.

LARRY DOUGHERTY: I would like to thank our panelists today. Thank you, everybody, for joining us. Everyone have a good day.

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