



April 11, 2012

Dear Save UMD Swimming & Diving Supporters,

As we approach Saturday's Swim & Dive banquet the Board wants to provide you with an update as to where we stand with our collective efforts to save the Men's & Women's teams. We also wanted to share our long-overdue response to Kevin Anderson's press release from February.

UPDATE:

We will be frank with you, the news we have to share is not encouraging but we are not conceding defeat. The April barometer has passed and we are short of the \$1.4mm cash mark due to the fact there is no trust in the Athletic Department among alumni, parents, and other prospective donors. While we have pledges approaching \$800,000 we have only realized about \$100,000 in actual cash. We are working on securing \$250,000 pledged by a Foundation and we are still hopeful to receive \$250,000 from the M Club. With all this said, we remain engaged in our efforts to secure \$2.8mm cash by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Against the best efforts of the Board, we unfortunately continue to feel the school has not been a partner with us in an effort to save the teams. In fact, we have actually observed behavior on their part that has hindered rather than build trust.

ANDERSON RESPONSE:

Back in February, at the conclusion of a meeting between Kevin Anderson and the Board, Anderson released a press release that was drafted without the knowledge, consent, or alignment with the Board – frankly, we felt ambushed.

At the time, given the situation, the Board did not feel it was in the teams' best interests to come out in opposition to Anderson's press release. Now that time has passed and our situation has deteriorated, we wanted to share our response to the unilateral "deal" Anderson published.

At first read, the deal appears to be a compromise: an offer of an "apparently" lower threshold and an increase in time. But the reality is:

- the fundamentals upon which the numbers are based remain flawed and overstated;
- it shifts all risk to the athletes;
- it creates division and dissent among the team where previously there was unity;
- and, above all, the school has violated its own principles of fiscal responsibility, competitiveness and cooperation

**Flawed Fundamentals:** The school continues to maintain that 8 years of funding equals \$11.56M. Beyond the obvious fact that 8 years is unreasonable in any context, the school's number ignores the fact that scholarships (\$1.2M over 3 years) are a committed (i.e. sunk) cost, the pool fee (\$2.6M over 8 years) is an accounting construct\*, and has disallowed our legitimate cost savings of \$100k/year (i.e., \$800k will not be recognized). In summary, the school wants 8 years of overstated funding now. Wouldn't we all like that "deal"?

*\*Note: Campus Recreation has confirmed that the Athletic Department gets to walk away from this fee if the Swim & Dive and Water Polo teams are eliminated, so the number can't be real, and if it is real, where will the money come from? – most likely the entire student body will have increased student fees!*

**Risk:** All fundraising responsibility falls to the athletes and their parents. All business plans, fundraisers and other meritorious ideas were dismissed by the school. Their message – it doesn't matter *how* you get the money, it better be in the bank by the deadline or your program gets it! And given the Athletic Department gets to walk away from pool fee, we don't believe there is an incentive for the Athletic Department to keep the teams.

**Division:** Creating these milestones is actually *more irresponsible and disruptive* as the school has now created division among the swimmers: Juniors are hoping for one more year while Freshman look for certainty that won't come. There is a very real possibility that half the team will graduate or transfer even if \$2.8M is raised by [June 30th](#). Maryland could find itself facing the scenario of having a program but **no team**. A related issue is, even if the team is saved for 1 year, it won't be competitive for some time as no worthwhile recruit will sign-on with the threat of program elimination in a year. Even if \$5.8M is raised by [12/30/12](#), recruiting will still be impacted as it is highly unlikely recruits will want to join a team perpetually faced with elimination when they can join equally or more talented teams with solid funding.

**Principles:** Which leads back to the principle violations – the school wants the public to believe that they will save a dollar figure that is over-

stated. At the same time they continue to spend on football and basketball (e.g., \$1M for artificial turf for a practice field for the football team). Also, their "compromise" actually compromised the competitiveness of the teams – 1 year of recruiting has already been lost and a second recruiting year is at risk. Even if saved, the teams won't be competitive for the next 6-8 years.

In summary, intended or not, the Athletic Department's unilateral decision to publicize this "deal" with out the alignment of the Board created an environment of further distrust and exacerbated the Board's efforts to raise the funds needed to save the teams. Combine this with the fact that we are beginning to hear of swimmers making commitments to other schools (the signing period begins on Wednesday 4/11) and we have a significant hill to climb in the next two-and-a-half months.

Still, we are not giving up. **Save UMD Swim & Dive, Inc. needs your donations now more than ever if we want to keep this Terrapin Legacy alive.** All donations made via our Endowment Pledge Form can be returned to you if we do not make the June 30, 2012 mark. Also, as we are a 501(c)3, a portion of your donation may be tax deductible.

Thank you to everyone who has and continues to support this effort. Regardless of the outcome, you are all amazing people.

Kind Regards,

Save UMD Swim & Dive, Inc.