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Grand Canyon University Adds Football to Sports Roster *Exploratory meetings indicate strong support for Division II team*

PHOENIX (Jan. 29, 2008) – Grand Canyon University (GCU) has decided to move forward with the introduction of a football program beginning in the fall of 2009, due to an overwhelming interest in exploratory discussions held over the past several months.

“Based on the reaction we’ve had from local high schools and the community, we’re confident that there’s support for us to move forward,” said GCU CEO Brent Richardson.

Late last fall Grand Canyon University hosted an exploratory meeting with high school athletic directors and coaches to discuss the potential of introducing a football program – and the response was overwhelmingly positive with nearly 80 in attendance.

“It’s a program that builds community camaraderie and student enthusiasm, and it would really complete our roster of athletic programs on campus,” Richardson said.

A pivotal moment was when a north Scottsdale resident turned up on campus the day after seeing an article in a local newspaper, referencing t-shirts that GCU has boasting “undefeated in football since 1949” – the year the school opened.

“With that kind of community support, I think we can make this program a go,” Richardson said.

GCU has aggressively boosted its athletic programs over the past few years, and has invested in enhancing its campus and athletic facilities to accommodate new sports including lacrosse, soccer, wrestling, swimming and diving. As an NAIA and NCAA Division II school, the University has had championship teams in baseball, basketball, golf, softball and volleyball.

GCU Athletic Director Keith Baker believes the program would attract 80 to 100 new students, and that 24 scholarships would be available. A head football coach is expected to be announced in the next 30 days.

“We’re in the fortunate position of having visionary leadership at this school, and they realize that an investment in programs to enhance the on-ground student experience helps our reputation as a well-rounded educational institution,” Baker said.

Since acquiring the school in 2004, Richardson has lead a transformation of the school, increasing the student population from fewer than 1,500 students to more than 15,000.

More information about GCU’s athletic programs is available at <http://athletics.gcu.edu>.

About Grand Canyon University

Founded in 1949, Grand Canyon University is one of Arizona’s leading higher learning institutions and one of the nation’s fastest-growing. Based in Phoenix, the regionally accredited, private, non-denominational Christian university offers online and campus-based bachelor’s and master’s degree programs through the Ken Blanchard College of Business, College of Education, College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and College of Liberal Arts. The school was recently ranked as having one of the top online education programs in the U.S. by OEDb (Online Education Database) and ranked in the top five online colleges for entrepreneurs by *Fortune*. With a total enrollment of approximately 15,000 students, GCU emphasizes individual attention for both traditional undergraduate students as well as the working professional. For more information visit www.gcu.edu.

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