An Open Letter to the NCAA on Alcohol Ads and College Sports

August 2005

Dear NCAA Executive Committee Member:

We know too well the damage underage and binge drinking can do on college campuses. We all lost children to alcohol-related deaths while they were in college. We are not alone – more than 1,700 college students die each year in alcohol-related incidents.

We strongly urge the NCAA Executive Committee – and the NCAA’s member schools – to end beer ads on college sports broadcasts. By doing so you can take a strong leadership step to curb the culture of alcohol that infects too many of our nation’s campuses and puts too many young people at risk.

We know that ending beer ads on college sports would not have saved the lives of our children. Many internal and external influences lead to a young person’s death by alcohol.

Beer ads on college broadcasts, however, serve to legitimize an out-of-control partying atmosphere for students and undermine the positive steps many colleges take to control underage and binge drinking. We cannot see how colleges and universities – whose fundamental mission is to develop and nurture young people into productive members of society – justify profiting from marketing alcohol to students and other young fans on college sports broadcasts.

We are encouraged that you are reviewing NCAA alcohol advertising policies. We strongly urge you to act on the side of the health and safety of your students and other young fans by ending messages to drink beer on college sports broadcasts.

Sincerely,

Catherine Bath, Mother of Raheem Bath

Michael Lanahan, Stepfather of Gordie Bailey

Edith S. Heideman, Mother of Adrian Heideman

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Raheem Bath died at the age of 20 as a student at Duke University

Gordie Bailey died at the age of 18 as a student at the University of Colorado

Adrian Heideman died at the age of 18 as a student at California State University at Chico