Dear USNA AA Cape Fear Chapter,

Happy New Year to you all! I am a fellow USNA graduate, Class of '96, and chapter member. I hope you are all coping with this very difficult situation of the pandemic that we find ourselves in. The disruptions have been significant to all of us individually, and many sources of revenue to families, businesses and various organizations have been seriously impacted. I wanted to remind you of one of those impacted revenue streams that means a lot to all of us, Navy Sports.  I, along with fellow chapter member Rex Kiteley,  sit on a USNA committee that financially supports Navy Sports. This organization, the Athletic and Scholarship Program (A&SP) is made up of volunteer alumni who help raise funds for Navy Sports teams and also to fund the prep school scholarships and Navy and NAPS coaches.

As a reminder of the situation today, Navy Sports consist of 33 Division 1 men and women's NCAA sports teams, and 16 club sports teams that compete in their respective divisions and conferences. It is often shocking to our alumni to learn that almost none of the funding to support these teams comes from the Federal Government. Over 95 percent of the necessary operating funds for the Navy teams is raised by donations from alumni or from other commercial contracts like television revenue and the licensing of merchandise.

As part of our USNA moral, mental and physical education in preparation for the fleet, our Navy Sports teams play a key part in the Physical Mission of the school. The importance of Navy Sports is different than a normal civilian school. Evidence of this is that Navy has more Division 1 men and women's sports teams than any other university in the country except for Ohio State, despite the much smaller student body size. And you probably read that Navy ranks among the very top schools in the country at graduating student athletes at a rate of over 95 percent, which is higher than the Brigade average.

Unfortunately, much of the revenue needed to support all of our Navy teams to compete and to pay their coach's salaries comes from various revenue sources associated with the football season. Events like pre-season summer sports camps, playing Notre Dame, home game ticket/parking revenue and the financial guarantee from the city of Philadelphia for the Army-Navy game are each multi-million dollar sources of revenue, and they have all been cancelled this year. Overall it is projected that approximately 56 percent of the planned full year Navy Sports revenue that will support all of the Navy teams has been lost. To add to the problem, each of our fall Navy sports teams have had additional expenses associated with Covid testing that is required to be performed 2-3 times per athlete per week and before each game. This additional Covid testing cost is approximately $800,000 for our fall teams. This will continue for the foreseeable future and impact the winter and spring sports.  Luckily the ESPN football television revenue has remained in place despite having no fans in the stadium, and this allowed the fall sports teams to continue. As we go into the spring, the situation is uncertain if the revenue loss is not somewhat replaced.

As you and your family consider your philanthropy and contributions this new year, can we ask you to please consider supporting Navy Sports during this critical time. It is simple to do as you only need go online at USNA.com and give to THE FUND FOR ATHLETIC EXCELLENCE. This fund is used to underpin all of our Navy teams and their needs. Again, this is not a football fund, but financial support for all of the 33 men and women's teams and the club sports. Your help, no matter the amount, will really help at this very difficult time.

I know many of us use Navy Sports as a way for all of us to stay connected with each other and our classmates and to maintain our camaraderie. Year round we talk, email, have meals (nowadays Zooms), read and text with each other about Navy Sports. Without Navy Sports, most of us would not have anything to wear. We all know how important these teams are to the school and its mission. I hope you will take a few minutes to help, as it has never been needed more than it is today. I wish you all good health and happiness this year and thanks to Steve for passing this message on to all of you for me.  Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or comments on this topic!

Thanks in advance and Go Navy!

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