

Pat Whitcomb

Press release Wednesday January 23, 2019

I am writing the following in response to my firing from position as Head Wrestling Coach at North Idaho College after 22 seasons. My intent is to be as transparent as possible to the community that has shown me so much support over the last 30 plus years.

First I want it to be known that this is in no way an attempt to get my position reinstated. My time has come and gone at North Idaho College. I will always be proud and thankful of my time spent at NIC since walking on campus in the fall of 1985.

On January 7, 2019 I was asked to attend a meeting in the Human Resources Office at NIC. I was handed a letter by a Vice President and a Director in H.R.

In a nutshell the letter said ( We believe you knew or should have known about an academic integrity issue within the athletic department. Even If you didn't know, this shows gross neglect of your duties.) I want it to be known that I categorically deny any knowledge of Academic Integrity violations dealing within the Athletic department prior to the investigation in the fall of 2018.

The letter basically gave me two options.

1. Resign my position and I would be paid the rest of my contract through June 30, 2019. In doing so I would have to agree to not say anything negative about what has been taking place at NIC.
2. Refuse to resign and be terminated. If terminated I would receive only two weeks of pay and benefits such as health care for my family.

I refused to resign, as I had done nothing wrong. I will be receiving my last paycheck from NIC on Friday January 25, 2019.

During the independent investigation meeting, my attorney and I were read a statement by the investigating attorney from a Vice President at NIC that directly implicated a head coach from an athletic program other then wrestling dealing with academic integrity violations. This was either not included in the independent report, (I have not been allowed to see the report that my termination was supposed to have been based on.), or President MacLennan is not being transparent with the public about it being only one athletic program being involved in academic integrity violations.

I let it be known to the NIC Board of Trustees I would meet with them in executive session to let them know what is going on with this situation. My offer still stands.

Now to the real reasons for my termination:

1. In the spring of 2016 we signed an amazing young man from Pelham Alabama. He is African American and a double amputee. At the time of his signing with NIC I immediately made a request to the administration requesting better access on his behalf to the wrestling room and campus. Still to this day almost three years later not one accommodation has been made for easier access to the practice room. He has to be carried, or crawl up the stairs. I raised safety and ADA concerns to the administration time and

time again. Some of the feedback I was given from the administration was there was no money for this. Also, threats of having to roll out mats on the gym floor after other practices were finished if I pushed it. There was a main level room on campus that would have solved this problem. Instead it was allocated as an off - season workout facility for other sports. The money spent on this facility would have easily covered some accommodation for the wrestler with special needs. The Athletic Director told me this was his call and that was that. I continued to raise concerns after this. It was only after this that I started to receive poor evaluations and official write-ups in my personal file. I was then told in a meeting this fall with disability services that if I had not pushed so hard in the beginning, accommodations most likely would have been made.

2. An assault took place early this fall on the NIC campus against a female instructor. It was reported to the administration immediately. When I became aware that nothing was being done to protect her safety, I met with a number of administrators and loudly voiced my dismay. As far as I know the campus still has not been made aware of this safety issue. Having a daughter who attends NIC this is of great concern.

My focus has always been plain and simple. Do what is in the best interest of NIC and the wrestling program there.

I have let it be known for the last three seasons of the Athletic Director's intend to drop wrestling and add baseball. Every administrator I approached at NIC assured me that this was not so. Community, just sit back and watch this unfold now. If NIC wants to add baseball a sport I would love to see reinstated then do so and add another female counterpart. If it wants to send a message of retaliation against standing up for what is right. Then drop the most successful wrestling program in the NJCAA.

Brandon Richardson is doing an incredible job under adverse circumstances. But the only reason of not bringing back coach Keri Stanley to help run the program would be the assassination of the program. My estimation is at the conclusion of the season a request to kill the wrestling program and add baseball will be made.

As a community of taxpayers, this is your college. This administration works for you. Don't let them double talk or confuse you with white noise.

Ask two simple questions:

1. Has there been any accommodations made as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) for accessibility to the Wrestling room at NIC?
2. Was there an assault against females on campus in the fall of 2018?

If the administration is not totally transparent with you as a community. I have concrete evidence dealing directly with this that can be brought forward.

As I was told by a spokesperson from NIC "Pat this is not personal. It's just business".

The blatant disregard of the safety for people with disabilities and females at NIC is not just business to me. It's Personal!

North Idaho College will now choose one of two paths moving forward.

The first one, a continued path of intimidation and retaliation towards students with special needs and females on campus.

Or a second one, a path to change the current culture and practices that exists in the administration, thus insuring the safety and fair treatment of all people on the campus at NIC.

Please feel free to contact or comment at [nicwrestling.com](http://nicwrestling.com) where more information will continue to be posted.

Never be afraid to fight for what is right! No matter what the cost.

Thank you

Pat Whitcomb

Former Head Wrestling Coach

North Idaho College