



# TECH 2020 ATHLETICS



*Pressing Forward ▶ Producing Greatness*

# INTRODUCTION

Dear Friends,

It is our goal to elevate the Louisiana Tech Athletics program to a new level. Last year as part of the Tech 2020 Strategic Plan, we made a commitment as a university to strengthen our athletics program.



Louisiana Tech is on track to be a top research university. And every top research university in the United States has a highly competitive athletics program. That's our goal. We're developing a road map for Tech Athletics.

We believe that a competitive athletics program will make our entire University stronger and will continue to help attract exceptional students—young people who excel in both athletic and academic competition.

We have a tradition of greatness at Tech, both on and off the playing fields. The Lady Techsters basketball program has competed in 25 NCAA tournaments and won three national championships. Our football team has won 22 conference titles and two national titles. Our Bulldog basketball team has captured over 20 conference titles. Just in the last three years, our women's track and field team has won five WAC team titles.

Our student-athletes continue to make us proud as they are consistently recognized for both their athletic and academic success. The Bulldogs and Lady Techsters are a special part of the community. We must make sure the tradition of greatness continues.

In the following pages, you will see a glimpse of what we have planned for the Athletics Department over the next five years. We have developed a vision and mission to guide our work along with 10 key goals as our focus. The development of a women's athletic center, improvements to the baseball, softball, and football fields, and many other facility upgrades are enhancements you should expect to see in the coming years. In addition, we have identified numerous staff positions that are critical to bring our program to a level to compete with our peers.

Our work has already begun. This year we have made several quality additions to our coaching staff. This Spring our student body demonstrated their commitment to athletics with an overwhelming vote to help fund improvements to the tennis courts, bowling alley, and track. Next Spring, when the Bulldog baseball team hosts the WAC tournament, we will be proud to showcase improvements to our baseball stadium including new stadium seating, an expanded press box, and a permanent ticket booth.

Our work to improve athletics will be a constant effort over the next five years and will require a commitment from the entire Tech community. We have set a bold goal of increasing the budget by six million dollars to support the vision for Tech Athletics. We need your support.

As you review our vision and goals for the future, please consider being a part of the vision for excellence in athletics. I look forward to seeing you in the stands.

Go Tech!

Dan Reneau  
President

## MISSION

*Louisiana Tech University Athletics' mission is to*

- Embody excellence in everything we do.
- Develop student-athletes to maximize their potential in mind, body, and spirit.
- Bring pride, admiration, and loyalty to the University family, community, and state.
- Win with integrity.

## VISION

*Louisiana Tech University will be a conference leader in performance by investing strategically in student-athletes' development, providing superior facilities, and enhancing program support to achieve a local and national image of success and dominance.*



## BACKGROUND



American Management Strategy Group (AMSG) was hired in December of 2006 to facilitate the development of a five-year strategic plan for the Louisiana Tech University Athletics Department as part of the overarching University vision, Tech 2020. The Tech 2020 vision outlines a roadmap for Louisiana Tech's transition from "a very good institution to a great one." Included in the vision is a goal focused on strengthening the athletics program that aims to "ensure a nationally competitive athletics program that wins with integrity." The Athletics Department Strategic Plan outlines the goals, objectives, and strategies necessary to build a winning program and to create a roadmap for the future of athletics at Louisiana Tech University.

## PROCESS



Over a period of six months, AMSG made five visits to the campus and met with various groups including the Steering Committee, Athletics Department staff and coaches, as well as other internal and external constituents. AMSG gathered data from the NCAA, WAC, C-USA, and various other sources to establish benchmarks for Tech Athletics. Both the Steering Committee and the Athletics Department group took part in various exercises that led to the development of a strategic vision, goals, and objectives for the Department. AMSG also conducted one-on-one interviews and reviewed internal operational documents (i.e., organization charts, job descriptions, NCAA Improvement Plans, budgets) as part of an internal operational assessment. Recommendations from the assessment are integrated into the Strategic Plan.



# CRITICAL ISSUES

## ***Budget***

To remain competitive at the Division I level, Tech must bring its budget closer in line with conference peers. The WAC has set a budget goal for Tech to grow to \$16.5M in the next five years. Increased funding will allow Tech to make the investments in several program areas that are critical to maintaining competitiveness and overall success as an athletics program.

## ***Fundraising (Challenges)***

The State funding formula that caps the amount of operating funds that can be allocated to athletics places Tech in the position of needing to raise more funds outside of the University. Adding to the challenge of securing outside funds is Ruston's small corporate and media market. Tech will have to develop an aggressive strategy to increase the number and amount of individual supporters as well as seek corporate support and increase visibility outside of Ruston.

## ***Fundraising (Opportunities)***

Donations from individuals represent the greatest opportunity for Tech to increase external support for athletics. In 2006, fewer than 800 individuals contributed to the CHAMPS program, the primary vehicle for individuals to support Tech athletics. In the Ruston area, there are more than 6,000 Tech alumni, and in the State of Louisiana there are over 46,000 alumni. The economic outlook for the State of Louisiana is healthy and growing across all industries, resulting in increases in jobs, personal income, and population. This growth represents the potential for support from government and business as well individuals.

## ***Facilities***

The Plan identifies a number of facility improvements that are critical for recruiting and competition and that position Tech to host championship events.

## ***Staffing***

The current administration is operating with less than half of the staff of other peer institutions in the WAC. The lack of human resources affects the ability to fundraise and market the program as well as manage performance and expectations of coaches and staff.

## ***Conference Affiliation***

Membership in the WAC has changed significantly since Tech joined. Schools that were geographically close to Tech (Southern Methodist, Rice, Tulsa) have left to join Conference USA, leaving Tech as the school located farthest east. Although the WAC offers strong competition, the WAC also presents significant challenges for Tech.

## GOAL ONE

Louisiana Tech will be a competitive member of its conference that consistently wins in athletic competition and in the classroom.

By 2012, we will enhance our tradition of winning by consistently finishing in the top three of the conference and advancing to post-season competition. Our student-athletes will be recognized by the Conference and on a national level for our academic and athletic excellence.

### *Objectives & Strategies:*

#### **Recruit talented athletes.**

- Increase recruiting budgets.
- Expand recruiting territory.
- Improve total student-athlete experience to attract talented recruits.
  - Continue facility upgrades.
- Improve housing options.
  - Identify funds to support University Park housing option in scholarships.

#### **Recruit strong students.**

- Ensure that recruits have an academic track record that will translate to success at Tech.

#### **Schedule for success.**

- Decrease the number of money games.
- Increase the number of home games.

#### **Build winning teams.**

- Ensure successful coaching staff.
- Improve strength and conditioning program.



*Since joining the WAC, Tech football has played 75% of non-conference games on the road.  
Over the next few years the Bulldogs will play six home games per year.*

*Louisiana Tech was honored in 2007 by the America Football Coaches Association as one of 32 schools in the nation to graduate 70% of its football student-athletes.*

## GOAL TWO

Louisiana Tech student-athletes will maintain the highest graduation rate among Division I public institutions in Louisiana and exceed all minimum academic standards.

### *Objectives & Strategies:*

**Maintain a graduation rate equal to or greater than the general student population.**

**Maintain a GSR greater than that of all other Division I public institutions in Louisiana.**

- Implement Academic Improvement Plan.

**Ensure that coaches play a proactive role in implementing the Academic Improvement Plan and promoting academic excellence.**

- Create coaches' checklist to support implementation of the Academic Improvement Plan.
- Include academic performance of student-athletes in coaches' annual review.

**Improve APR to meet and exceed NCAA minimum of 925 in all sports.**

- Establish incremental APR goals for each sport to support five-year goal.

**Improve Athletic Academic Center to ensure a supportive learning environment.**

- Hire Academic Support Counselor/ Learning Specialist.
- Create a clean, welcoming environment through minor aesthetic updates.

## GOAL THREE

Louisiana Tech student-athletes will be valued contributors to the Tech community.

### *Objectives & Strategies:*

**Increase volunteer involvement with local campus and community groups.**

- Establish 100% goal for student-athlete participation.

**Increase student-athlete participation in Champs Life Skills program.**

**Create a formal document stating Tech Athletics' expectations of student-athletes on and off the field.**

- Include and highlight expectations in student-athlete handbook.

**Increase number of Tech student-athletes involved in community events (e.g., the Peach Festival, Habitat for Humanity).**

## GOAL FOUR

Louisiana Tech will continue its commitment to equity through support of its intercollegiate athletics teams.

### *Objectives & Strategies:*

Enhance education and training to support the University's commitment to diversity.

- Provide opportunities for diversity training for staff, coaches, and student-athletes.

Increase student-athlete participation in Champs Life Skills program.

Achieve goals of Minority Plan in the approved NCAA Certification Plan.

Achieve goals of Gender Equity Plan in the approved NCAA Certification Plan with reference to Title IX.

Celebrate the diversity of the student-athlete population.



## GOAL FIVE

Louisiana Tech will continue its commitment to honesty and integrity in athletics.

### *Objectives & Strategies:*

Ensure that compliance is integral to the Athletics program management and operations.

- Hire Director of Compliance Services.
- Provide additional compliance information through link on Tech Athletics' website.
- Hire Assistant Business Manager.

Ensure that compliance with NCAA and University policies are a key consideration in all personnel decisions.

Work with student-athletes, coaches, staff, and fans to develop Tech Sportsmanship code.

Ensure that student-athletes, coaches, staff, and fans comply with Tech Sportsmanship code.

- Educate student-athletes, coaches, staff, and fans about Tech Sportsmanship code.



*Louisiana Tech has an excellent track record of managing with integrity; Tech has operated for over 14 years with no major NCAA violations. In 2006, Tech received full recertification from the NCAA.*

## GOAL SIX

Louisiana Tech will achieve its vision through cooperation across campus and in collaboration with the extended Louisiana Tech community.

### *Objectives & Strategies:*

**Engage the broader community in building and strengthening Tech Athletics.**

- Identify specific ways stakeholders can support Tech Athletics; report progress annually.
- Host “meet and greets” for every sport.
- Include the community in beginning and/or end-of-the-year celebrations highlighting upcoming seasons and recapping the year.

**Increase coordination between University Marketing & Public Relations and the Athletics Department through a joint marketing/ branding strategy.**

- Schedule regular meetings between University Marketing and Athletics Department marketing personnel.
- Work with University Marketing on solicitations, publications, and commercials.
- Work with University Marketing and CLC to license Tech’s logo associated with Tech Athletics.

**Identify joint marketing and planning opportunities with the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB).**

- Collaborate on publications and PSAs to promote Ruston’s attractions; include games/dates/times/events in publications and mass emails.
- Coordinate with CVB on tournaments hosted by Tech.

**Increase coordination between Intercollegiate Athletics and Intramural Athletics.**

- Develop a joint calendar of events.
- Establish liaison between Intercollegiate Athletics and Intramural Athletics.
- Establish goal of zero scheduling conflicts between Intercollegiate Athletics events and intramural events.
- Host intramural championships on Intercollegiate Athletics’ facilities.
- Include intramural teams as participants in pre-game or half-time entertainment.

**Create coordinated fundraising goals and strategies between the Athletics Department and the University Foundation.**

**Coordinate with the Department of Health & Exercise Science to support joint appointments.**

**Build a strong partnership with the University Bookstore to increase athletics apparel sales and revenue.**

**Engage local businesses in regular spirit days to wear Tech gear and support Tech Athletics.**

*The Tech student body are among Tech Athletics’ strongest fans and supporters. Tech students recently showed their support by passing a referendum that allowed student fees to help in the construction of new facilities, including a track, tennis courts, bowling alley, and swimming pools.*

## GOAL SEVEN

Louisiana Tech will elevate its image to be recognized nationally as one of the two major competitors in Louisiana.

### *Objectives & Strategies:*

**Ensure that Tech Athletics' growth and accomplishments are recognized in the local and national media.**

- Hire Assistant Media Relations Director.
- Increase affiliations with local and national corporations for increased visibility.
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with media locally and regionally; gateway to national media.
- Identify opportunities to partner with nationally renowned non-profit organizations to increase visibility.
- Increase volume of press releases and stories.
  - Request submissions from all sports on a regular basis.
- Expand Tech Sports Network statewide.
- Update website daily.
  - Contract with CSTV to be official website provider for Tech Athletics.
  - Expand content to include personal interest stories regarding Tech Athletics and student-athletes in addition to regular sports stories.

**Build a strong and consistent brand for Tech Athletics.**

- Establish marketing budget.
- Create a new, trademarked Bulldog logo.
- Increase the number of vendors carrying Tech logo merchandise.
  - Target tourist venues.
- Increase volume of sales of Tech merchandise.
- Create a merchandise plan with the Tech Bookstore and Athletics Department that includes a plan for product development, sales management, and revenue share.
- Increase the number of coaches, student-athletes, Tech staff, students, and fans who wear Tech gear.
  - Establish expectation/policy for all coaches to wear Tech gear on game days and whenever they represent Tech.
  - Establish game days as Tech spirit days (Code Blue), and encourage Tech students, staff, faculty, and local businesses to show their pride and wear Tech gear.

**Maximize communication mechanisms to inform Tech Athletics supporters of the growth and accomplishments of the Athletics Department.**

- Maintain consistent communication with Tech fans, alumni, and media.
  - Work with Alumni Association to send regular email blasts.
- Create online surveys to engage fans with the Athletics Department.
- Consistently update media outlets: email, newspaper, radio, television, direct mail, website, public announcements, and message board announcements at Tech events, coaches' shows, PSAs, campus and community word-of-mouth, print publications.

**Elevate the image of Tech's student-athletes on campus and in the community.**

- Include personal interest stories in The Tech Talk, on the website, and in the local paper about student-athletes.
- Highlight student-athletes in the community section of the paper and on the website.

*Tech's relationship with companies such as NIKE, CSTV, ESPN, and CLC help to bolster Tech's image and strengthen the Bulldog brand. A strong brand will help with recruiting and fundraising efforts.*

## GOAL EIGHT

Louisiana Tech Athletics will raise funds to support an overall budget of \$16.5 million and will meet or exceed the WAC recommended budget increase.

### *Objectives & Strategies:*

**Increase institutional support with an increase in the amount allowable by the State by \$1,500,000 to \$4,600,000.**

**Increase corporate sponsorships by \$750,000 to \$1,000,000.**

- Hire Associate Athletics Director for External Relations.
- Hire Director of Corporate Sales.
- Extend solicitation efforts to national sponsors.
- Leverage coaches' relationships to gain access to national sponsors.
- Build strong presence in Shreveport, Monroe, Alexandria, and El Dorado markets.
- Leverage CHAMPS groups outside region as entree to out-of-area sponsors.

**Increase ticket sales by \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000.**

- Hire Director of Ticket Sales/Customer Relations.
- Evaluate current ticket sale software and system.
- Achieve annual ticket sale goals for each sport.
- Increase group ticket sales.
- Increase incentive packages for purchasing season tickets.
- Develop extensive season ticket campaigns annually for all revenue sports.
- Sponsor and promote additional home marquee games.
- Expand geographic reach of solicitation and marketing efforts.

**Increase individual donations through Foundation to \$2,000,000.**

- Achieve 5% giving goal for all Tech graduates living in Louisiana.
- Increase Champs memberships by 1,300 to 2,000 within two years.
- Increase amount and number of online donations.

*In Louisiana alone there are over 40,000 Tech grads. Tech has set a goal for 2012 for 5% of those grads to be contributors to Tech Athletics.*



## GOAL NINE

Louisiana Tech will have facilities that are equivalent to the top half of the conference and meet the qualifications necessary to host NCAA championship events.

### *Objectives & Strategies:*

**Complete new Track Complex:** new track surface and field event areas, new fan seating sections, restroom facilities, men's & women's track locker rooms, track scoreboard and PA system.

**Complete Lambright Intramural Sports Complex:** tennis courts, restroom facilities, locker rooms, equipment storage, fan seating sections, bowling lanes.

**Complete Softball Complex improvements:** pressbox, home team locker room, outfield fence, PA and sound system, access control fence so that admission can be charged, permanent ticket booth, improved fan seating area.

**Complete Aillet Football Stadium Improvements:** new scoreboard/video board/PA/ sound system, artificial turf, lighting.

**Complete J.C. Love Baseball Stadium improvements:** expanded pressbox, scoreboard with color message center, permanent ticket booths, new stadium seating area, and outside walkway lighting.

**Complete Women's Athletic Center (locker room complex) for soccer, softball, women's tennis, and women's track.**

**Expand and upgrade administrative offices to house new employees/ administrators.**

**Complete Thomas Assembly Center improvements:** new men's basketball offices, new court, new men's basketball locker room, women's volleyball locker room, improve weight room and training room.

**Create a plan to maximize field space for practice and competition:** football practice fields and soccer practice and competition space.

**Continue athletic facility evaluation and improvements as necessary.**

*"Facility enhancements are vital to the recruitment of outstanding student-athletes. There is a direct correlation between facility improvements and successfully recruiting talented student-athletes."*

## GOAL TEN

Louisiana Tech will operate with a team of staff and coaches equipped with the skills, experience, and attitudes reflective of a top athletics program.

### *Objectives & Strategies:*

Louisiana Tech will have a coaching staff positioned to achieve the goals and objectives of the Athletics Department.

- Develop annual plan to increase coaching positions incrementally where needed.

Louisiana Tech will have an administrative staff positioned to achieve the goals and objectives of the Athletics Department.

- Develop annual plan to increase administrative positions incrementally where needed.
- Develop additional student worker positions to support marketing, promotions, corporate sponsorship sales, ticket sales & operations, and event management.

Louisiana Tech will have a coaching staff that are compensated at a level comparable to their peers.

- Identify plan to address compensation in coaching positions.

Louisiana Tech will have an administrative staff that are compensated at a level comparable to their peers.

- Identify plan to address compensation in administrative positions.

Athletics Department staff and coaches have a clear understanding of individual performance expectations and are evaluated on a regular basis.

- Implement performance management system for administrative and coaching staff.
- Evaluate job descriptions on a regular basis to include clear performance expectations.



# BUDGET IMPACT

*The Strategic Plan identifies an annual operating budget of \$16.5M as a five-year goal. The goal represents an increase of \$6M from the 2006/07 budget. Four sources have been identified as primary areas to increase revenue; individual donations, institutional funds, corporate sponsorships, and ticket sales.*

The primary growth in expenses in the plan is attributed to increased staff, both coaching and support/administrative, and increased sports program budgets. The Plan identifies nine support/administrative positions and four coaching positions to add to the Department over the next five years. The program budget increases fall under recruiting, marketing, staff development, and strength and conditioning. The total cost estimate for the additions is just under \$1.5M, which leaves room to identify additional priorities and grow incrementally over the next five years to reach an annual budget of \$16.5M.

The Plan also includes cost estimates for one-time capital outlay projects. The total cost estimate for specific facility improvements identified in the plan is \$5.25M, of which \$2M is allocated to the Lambright Intramural Sports Complex.

