



College Broadcasters, Inc.

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## **CBI and SPLC Decry Prohibitions on Student Media Outlets Covering College Athletics**

College Broadcasters, Inc. (CBI) and the Student Press Law Center (SPLC) stand behind student media outlets that have lost the ability to offer live game coverage of their schools' athletic events due to exclusive agreements signed between athletic departments and commercial broadcasters.

Student-run media outlets are a vital part the experiential education offered on college campuses. Restricting or denying student access to high-profile events is both harmful to student development and antithetical to the value of the free exchange of ideas championed at educational institutions. Many professional sports broadcasters and journalists first developed their skills in student media. Cutting off access to student media outlets not only undermines the academic and co-curricular mission of higher education but also hinders the development of today's students into tomorrow's media professionals.

While we understand the economic imperatives behind these agreements, we believe these can exist co-operatively with student-operated broadcasts, which are generally non-commercial in nature. We cannot support contracts with outside entities that restrict the freedoms of student media, particularly when these agreements are made by college administrators only, without considering student opinions.

CBI and the SPLC would like to urge colleges and universities to consider student media outlets when considering broadcast rights agreements with outside entities, and to preserve the rights of student media outlets to cover their fellow students' athletic events.

College Broadcasters Inc. represents students involved in radio, television, webcasting and other related media ventures; ensures a commitment to education and the student pursuit of excellence through active involvement in electronic media; promotes cooperative efforts between the association and other national, regional, and state media organizations; facilitates the discussion of issues related to student-operated electronic media; and other community oriented programs. CBI currently represents more than 225 active radio and television member stations.

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1152 Mae St. • Hummelstown, Pa. 17036 • [www.askcbi.org](http://www.askcbi.org) • 1-855-ASK-4CBI