

## User Submission: We Still Are. from @map408psu

July 24, 2012

Fellow alumni,

I'm composing this message to you on Monday afternoon, en route home to Northern Virginia after chaperoning a bus trip to University Park as part of Penn State's "Spend a Summer Day" activities, an effort designed to give prospective Penn State students and their families the opportunity to experience our campus first-hand, to interact with students, professors, and alumni, and to get a very real sense of the incredible community that we have at Dear Old State.

Of course, when I agreed to assist with the trip back in the spring, I had no idea the events that would transpire in the intervening months. We've been stunned over and over again by disappointing, upsetting, and at times polarizing news that has left us questioning trust we once placed in others, integrity we once knew as certain, and the very tenets of "Success with Honor" that have formed the bedrock of Penn State intercollegiate athletics and our entire University for decades. And whatever your personal opinions and perspectives, I think it's safe to say that this campus and community will never be quite the same again.

The sanctions and penalties passed down by the National Collegiate Athletic Association on Monday morning are trivial when compared to the horrific events that transpired years ago to bring us to this point, and our thoughts and prayers continue to go out to the victims and their families. Supporting organizations such as RAINN (Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network: [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)) and contributing to the causes of awareness, prevention, and healing is an important step towards reaffirming our compassion for a community deeply damaged and lives forever changed.

However, our compassion for the victims does not have to be mutually exclusive from the shock and sadness we feel towards the continued ripple effects of those heinous acts on our Penn State family. The penalties imposed will, in part, deprive student-athletes of the opportunity to pursue a Penn State education, and will deprive current and future members of the Penn State Blue Band the opportunity to support their team on the road as part of postseason play in years to come. The band will continue, as it always has, to be a stalwart supporter of the University and its students and student-athletes, and while their season may not end in Indianapolis or Pasadena or Miami Gardens, their enthusiasm, hard work, and dedication will be unwavering.

Over the course of the day on Monday, I, along with fellow alumni Carol Nelson, Chase Tralka, and Johanna Steinbacher, offered tours to several prospective families who visited the Blue Band building interested in hearing more about our incredible program and getting a first-hand glimpse of the facility that has, quite literally, transformed the way the band rehearses, prepares, and performs.

We admitted that while bowl games may not be in the band's immediate future, the opportunity to put on the blue and white uniforms, charge through the tunnel at pregame, and be a part of a 113-year tradition of excellence will continue onward unabated.

One parent, after taking in the practice rooms, the uniforms, the newly-refurbished instruments, and the photos and messages that line the walls of the building, simply looked at us and said, "You're still Penn State. This is still the Blue Band." And Penn State needs the Blue Band now, more than ever.

We're down, but not out. We're hurt, but we're healing. We'll endure the excoriations of pundits and the criticism of our loyalty, but Penn State will move forward. We'll be a leader in promoting awareness and advocacy just as we have through the Penn State Dance Marathon, Lift for Life, Student Red Cross, Relay for Life, and countless other acts of charity and benevolence for so many years. We'll consider the reforms, recommendations, and direction outlined in the Freeh report, and we'll emerge as the institution and the community we all know and cherish.

We still are Penn State.

Please feel free to contact me directly ([Mark.Poblete@psualum.com](mailto:Mark.Poblete@psualum.com)) if you have any thoughts or concerns to share. Thanks for all that you do each day to support the Penn State athletic bands program, its students, and the traditions and spirit that make this University one of the greatest in the world. I look forward to seeing all of you during Homecoming weekend.

For the Glory,

Mark Poblete '07

President, Penn State Alumni Blue Band Association Board of Directors

« [Facebook Event: Penn Staters for an Act of CARE — User Submission: America and PSU...We Are](#) »

Tags: alumni, Association, Band, Blue, for, healing, life, lift, Mark, NCAA, Penn, Poblete, Relay, SASD, State, THON, tours