Actively engaging our surrounding communities in campus life is a pillar of the Division II athletics experience.

For Division II, community engagement is about building lasting relationships. Our unique approach flips the paradigm by encouraging Division II athletics programs (and schools in general) to become members of their communities rather than merely asking their communities to support athletics. The DII brand of engagement enhances the community rather than simply benefitting the institution.

The payoff is that communities willingly support colleges and universities where effective outreach has occurred because they feel greater ownership. That translates to a stronger “town/gown” relationship, and greater community attendance at your athletics events!

- Division II conducts community engagement activities at each of its 25 national championships. Area youth and adults who interact with Division II teams during outreach events are then invited to attend the championship events, often through complimentary admission.

- Division II is nationally known for its long-standing commitment to the Make-A-Wish Foundation and Team IMPACT, both of which improve the lives of children with life-threatening illnesses. The Division II Student-Athlete Advisory Committee established the Make-A-Wish partnership in 2003 and has since raised more than $4.1 million to benefit kids.

- A major tenet of the Division II experience is the “game environment” initiative that helps institutions establish an atmosphere at home athletics contests that is both energetic and respectful. The initiative emphasizes family-friendly fun, with fans and participants conducting themselves in an inviting manner for all ages.

Our emphasis on community engagement resonates with our students, our faculty and staff, and our community members. We show that visibly in our community through our athletics events and outreach. Our students expect to engage, and they value the relationships that come from it.

Linda Bleicken, President, Armstrong State University