Official discusses UL partnership with Pelicans and Saints, student benefits

In late December of 2019, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette finalized a partnership with the Pelicans and Saints.

Eric Maron is the senior communications representative for the university. He provided insight into the partnership.

"They started early last year, and it was a process that the university, along with the organization, has been working on to come up with the right elements for their program and for our program and for our students and how best we can involve students in this partnership," Maron said.

Though it has been in discussion for over a year and announced to the public this month, the actual deal was finalized in late 2019.

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"We had gone over it. Signed the papers and sent it on to them, then they signed the papers. So we were prepared for it and able to make the announcement as soon as the new year came out," Maron said.

The partnership means that the Pelicans and Saints named the university as their official higher education partner. No other school in Louisiana can make this accomplishment, at least for the next three years.

"Right now it's a three-year partnership and then we reevaluate in the second or third year and they will see if they want to renew the partnership," Maron said.

This partnership will give students the opportunity to gain real-world experience in a field of their choice.

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Getting an internship with the organization will also help students with their resume.

"So this will allow students through the internship to apply what they've been learning and also to learn how that is being applied with the business leaders that have been there for years," Maron said.

Students will be able to take what they have learned in the classroom and see it being used in the business world.

"So it's a great opportunity for them to bring it all together, the theory, and the practical, put it in one big package. Now, when they go out after they graduate, they've got the whole experience behind them, a little bit of everything," Maron said.

The internship is not just open for students studying or interested in sports. It's open to all students from all majors, as a lot goes behind running a sports franchise.

"That's the beauty in the program, it's not necessarily a sports program internship. It's working with the Saints and Pelicans organization on sales, on event planning on event management, writing their press releases. It's also their web design and working with social media," Maron said.

"These sports organizations have such a wide-ranging footprint as far as the different elements that need to be in it to make their business run," Maron said. "So any student interested has the opportunity to apply," Maron said.

Students can apply through the university's career services website.

"They're still formulating some of those elements right now, but it'll be going through there," Maron said.

The deal was just as right for the University of Louisiana at Lafayette as it was for the Saints and Pelicans, according to Maron.

"I think we're just a good fit for both organizations, Saints and Pelicans are a great brand, and we've got a great brand here with the Ragin' Cajuns, and it just seemed like a natural fit on the sports end of it to have two great sports brands in the partnership," Maron said.

This partnership is heavily student favored and a great opportunity for those interested.

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