AMENDED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - ACTION ITEM

ITEM 1.15: The University of Arizona Requests Approval of its First Amendment to the Multiple-year Employment Agreement for Desireé Reed-Francois as R. Ken Coit Director of Athletics

Requested Action: The University of Arizona ("U of A") requests that the board review and approve the First Amendment to the Multiple-year Employment Agreement for Desireé Reed-Francois as R. Ken Coit Director of Athletics ("AD"), as described in this executive summary.

Background

- U of A seeks review and approval of a First Amendment to the Multiple-year Employment Agreement ("Amended Agreement") for R. Ken Coit Director of Athletics Desireé Reed-Francois ("Reed-Francois") through the period ending March 2, 2032. This Amended Agreement would result in a new five-year contract, while also amending certain other terms agreed to between Reed-Francois and U of A.

- In August 2024, following board approval, U of A entered into the Multiple-Year Employment Agreement ("Original Agreement") with Reed-Francois with a base annual salary of $1,000,000 for the first year, with annual increases through the end of the term on March 2, 2029, along with Additional Duties Compensation of $250,000 per Contract Year.

- Under Reed-Francois' leadership, U of A's Athletic Department has experienced tremendous athletic success, including:

    - A Final Four Appearance for Men's Basketball, a College World Series appearance for baseball, a Holiday Bowl appearance in football, two national championships in triathlon and 11 total conference (regular season and tournament) titles.
    - Additionally, Men's Tennis advanced to the Elite Eight for the first time in program history, Volleyball advanced in the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2018, and Men's Golf made the Final Four at the NCAA Championships for the first time in more than 20 years.
    - In 2025-2026, 18 of 22 programs advanced to postseason competition.

- U of A was awarded the Big 12 Commissioner's Cup for the 2025-2026 academic year, which recognizes the Conference's best athletic department based on various metrics, including Big 12 championship results, regular-season performance, and off-field achievements, including academics, graduation outcomes, career development, and community service.

- The Athletic Department has also achieved record revenue, fundraising, and academic outcomes during Reed-Francois' tenure. This includes securing more than $87 million in venue naming rights and raising a record $46 million in fundraising through the Wildcat Club during the 2025-2026 academic year. This was approximately $5 million above the prior record set in 2022 and exceeded the nine-year annual fundraising average by nearly $16 million.

- Through the Bear Down Blueprint project spearheaded by Reed-Francois, the Athletic Department has increased outreach and strategic investment and expanded revenue generation, in a manner that has significantly strengthened the Department's long-term financial position while adapting to the evolving landscape of college athletics. The Department is now operating with a balanced budget after carrying a deficit of approximately $39 million when Reed-Francois joined U of A.

- Reed-Francois has also successfully prioritized community engagement and fan experience. In the past two years, the Department has launched several new fan engagement initiatives, including the Bear Down Bash and Bear Down Takeover, and made significant improvements to the fan experience by, among other things, upgrading the sound and lighting at Casino Del Sol Stadium and McKale Center at ALKEME Arena, expanding premium seating options, and making constant improvements to the game day atmosphere.

- U of A's student-athletes have continued to excel academically and off the field during Reed-Francois' time as AD. Academic accomplishments and notable metrics include:

    - Achieved the highest semester GPA (3.372) and cumulative GPA (3.368) in Department history in 2024-2025.
    - The following year, student-athletes surpassed the highest semester GPA record set in 2024-2025, by achieving a 3.413 GPA in Spring 2026. This marked the Department's 17th consecutive semester with an overall GPA above 3.0.
    - Achieved a Department record 92% Graduation Success Rate ("GSR"), with seven programs posting a perfect 100% GSR for the 2025-2026 academic year.
    - Twelve Athletics programs earned a perfect single-year Academic Progress Rate ("APR") score of 1,000, the highest total in Department history in 2025-2026.
    - Student-athlete career outcomes continued to improve, with postgraduate employment increasing from 74% in Spring 2023 to 92.5% in Spring 2025.
    - Student-athletes contributed more than 3,300 hours of community service, helping the Department earn recognition as a Top 10 finalist for the 2026 NACDA Community Service Award.
    - Student-athlete satisfaction remained exceptionally strong, with 95.4% indicating they would attend the U of A again, and 91.8% reporting a strong sense of connection to campus and community.

Discussion

- **Duties, Term Length, and Compensation/Salary Adjustments**
  - Term: The proposed Amended Agreement term will be five years, from March 3, 2027 through March 2, 2032 (the "Term"). Each Contract Year will be from March 3 through March 2 of the following calendar year.

  - Program Duties: Reed-Francois' program duties will continue to be the duties customarily associated with the athletic director of a Power 4 athletic department. This includes, among other items, planning, directing, and coordinating a comprehensive program of intercollegiate athletics for U of A, including fundraising for, and financial oversight of, U of A's intercollegiate athletics program, all in accordance with applicable University, ABOR, Big 12, NCAA, and College Sports Commission ("CSC") policies, rules, and regulations.

  - Total Annual Compensation: Reed-Francois' total annual compensation will include Base Salary funded by U of A. Base Salary will start at $1,150,000 in the first Contract Year and will increase incrementally each year. In addition to the base salary funded by U of A, Reed-Francois will also earn $250,000 per year as Additional Duties Compensation funded by the University of Arizona Foundation. Reed-Francois' Total Annual Compensation per Contract Year is as follows:

    - Contract Year 1 (2027-28): $1,400,000 ($1.15M Base Salary + $250K Addl. Duties Comp.)
    - Contract Year 2 (2028-29): $1,450,000 ($1.2M Base Salary + $250K Addl. Duties Comp.)
    - Contract Year 3 (2029-30): $1,500,000($1.25M Base Salary + $250K Addl. Duties Comp.)
    - Contract Year 4 (2030-31): $1,550,000 ($1.3M Base Salary + $250K Addl. Duties Comp.)
    - Contract Year 5 (2031-32): $1,600,000 ($1.35M Base Salary + $250K Addl. Duties Comp.)

  - Retention Payments: The retention payment that currently vests February 1, 2028 will be amended to 50 percent vesting on March 15, 2027 and 50 percent on July 1, 2027. The retention payment that currently vests February 1, 2029, will vest on July 1, 2028.

  - Performance Incentives Cap: Reed-Francois may earn and be paid up to, but no more than, $250,000 per Contract Year for earned Academic and Athletic Performance Incentives.

  - Athletic Performance Incentives: Same as the Original Agreement, except for the following changes:

- U of A will pay Reed-Francois $10,000 if U of A wins the Big 12 Commissioner's Cup in any Athletic Year.

- U of A will pay Reed-Francois the highest of the following amounts earned in any Athletic Year based on the below NCAA (or Emerging Sports) post-season team achievements for team sports other than football, men's basketball, women's basketball, baseball, and softball. Reed-Francois may earn one incentive payment per team during any Athletic Year.

Achievement	**Amount**
NCAA Team Champion	$50,000
Top 8 NCAA Finish	$25,000
NCAA Post-Season Appearance	$10,000

- Academic Performance Incentives: Same as the Original Agreement.

- **Other Provisions**
  - Termination without cause by U of A, Duty to Mitigate, and Offset: Same as the Original Agreement.

  - Termination for cause by U of A: Updating language to for consistency with other contracts; otherwise same as the Original Agreement.

  - Termination by Reed-Francois: If Reed-Francois terminates the Amended Agreement during the Term, Reed-Francois shall owe to U of A the following amounts based on the Contract Year during which Reed-Francois terminates the Amended Agreement:

    - During Contract Year One: $800,000
    - During Contract Year Two: $500,000
    - During Contract Year Three: $250,000
    - During Contract Year Four: $125,000
    - During Contract Year Five: $0

  - All other terms of the Original Agreement will remain the same in the Amended Agreement.

Statutory/Policy Requirements
- ABOR Policy 6-1001 Multiple-Year Appointments of Head Coaches and Intercollegiate Athletics Directors

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - ACTION ITEM

ITEM 1.16: Request to Approve Presidents' Contracts and Notice of Appointment for the Executive Director and Action Related to At-Risk Compensation Goals

Requested Action: The board office asks the board to approve payment for achievement of 2025-2026 at-risk compensation goals assigned to the presidents and the executive director, to approve proposed at-risk compensation amounts for the previously adopted 2026-2027 at-risk goals, and to approve proposed amendments to the presidents' contracts and the notice of appointment for the executive director, as described in this executive summary.

Background

The board conducts annual performance reviews with the presidents and the executive director. As a result, the board may consider amendments to the presidents' contracts and the executive director's notice of appointment as well as the achievement of at-risk compensation goals and performance expectations.

The board previously assigned 2026-2027 at-risk compensation goals at its July 20, 2026, meeting and will assign compensation for those goals and for performance expectations as part of this item. The assigned 2026-2027 at-risk goals will be included with the amendments.

The attachments to this executive summary set forth the proposed award of at-risk compensation for achievement of the 2025-2026 annual goals; the proposed compensation for the 2026-2027 at-risk goals approved by the board on July 20, 2026; and the proposed amendments to the presidents' contracts and the executive director's notice of appointment. The attachments to the executive summary pertain to:

A. President Crow;
B. President Cruz Rivera;
C. President Garimella; and
D. Executive Director Sampson

At-risk compensation is intended to place a portion of the individual's compensation at-risk.

- Partial payment may be made for partial achievement of the annual goals assigned.
- Payment for achievement of at-risk goals will be made by December 31 of the year in which achievement is determined by the board.

Board approval of this item will authorize the chair to amend and restate the contracts for the presidents and the notice of appointment for the executive director as described in the executive summary, including attachments, and make any necessary technical or conforming changes.

Statutory/Policy Requirements

- A.R.S. §15-1626 General Administrative Powers and Duties of the Board
- ABOR Policy 6-1101 Appointment of Presidents and Executive Director

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