

JULY 18, 2022 | NEWS

Leading Voice on Sports Law Joins Shumaker

TOLEDO, OH – Robert (Bob) Boland is recognized as a national thought-leader in the emerging field of name, image and likeness (NIL), developing one of the nation's first collegiate courses in NIL—being taught this summer at Boston College—and co-authoring a forthcoming book on the topic, aimed at dispelling myths about the subject. Bob uses his keen legal insight to help others understand the often-confusing rules and state laws surrounding NIL to help others understand the issue as both an attorney and an educator.

His practice at Shumaker will center on helping clients navigate the increasingly fraught landscape of intercollegiate athletics, including investigations and policy development; advising athletic directors, coaches, and student-athletes; and helping guide clients through the complex web of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rules and state laws surrounding NIL and other sports matters. In a monumental change announced on July 1, 2021, the NCAA ushered in the “NIL era” by instituting new rules that allow student athletes to earn compensation for the use of their personas in advertising, social media, and other areas.

“As this revolution is happening in college athletics, Bob has been in the middle of it all. He’s helped institutions manage this massive change, he’s helped student athletes capitalize on the new rules, and he’s helped the public and media make sense of it all,” said Bennett Speyer, Shumaker Partner and Hospitality, Sports and Leisure Business Sector Co-Chair. “Adding Bob to our team at Shumaker will ensure that our clients continue to have truly the best insight and expertise in the country available to them.”

Before joining Shumaker, Bob served as the Athletics Integrity Officer (a first-of-its-kind role where he worked to ensure that intercollegiate sports were conducted ethically and with integrity) at Penn State University, overseeing one of the nation’s largest athletic departments as it emerged from a period of crisis in integrity matters that included Title IX, employee issues, and investigations, along with the legalization of sports betting in 2018 and NIL in 2021. The position was created as part of the university’s recovery from the Sandusky scandal.

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Robert A. Boland

MEDIA CONTACT

Wendy M. Byrne
wbyrne@shumaker.com

Bob, who will also be joining the full-time faculty at Seton Hall Law School in the fall to continue his passion for teaching, is also well known in academic circles. He has held teaching appointments at Penn State Law, Penn State's School of Labor & Employment Relations, and New York University Law School, and he previously chaired or directed sports management and sports law programs at New York University and Ohio University. His long-running desire to always be on the leading edge of sports law issues led him to develop Boston College's NIL course, with another similar program he helped develop at Ohio University likely to launch soon, and share his insight in numerous publications and in reputable journals such as *Marquette Sports Law Review*.

In his legal practice, Bob was an active player agent for over a decade and negotiated more than 100 player and endorsement agreements across a variety of sports. He also advised a range of teams and players as the Principal of Boland Sports Practice Group, LLC, where his former clients include franchise acquisition groups bidding for NFL teams such as the Buffalo Bills and the Jacksonville Jaguars. Bob also led an NFL head coaching search for the Cleveland Browns. In his consulting work, he led two college conference realignment reviews for a league and an institution. Sports teams and news publications across the nation have benefitted from Bob's innovative legal insight.