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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Xavier University of Louisiana's Cheer Team is the First HBCU to Win First Place in NAIA Cheer Championship History**

New Orleans, La. – Xavier University of Louisiana Competitive Cheer (XULA Cheer) received first place in the 2022 National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). Xavier University is the first historically Black college and university to receive this title. XULA Cheer accomplished a ground-breaking achievement with a final score of 93.70 out of a possible 100 points, setting a meet record for the highest winning score. The sixth annual NAIA Competitive Cheer National Championship featured 15 teams from across the country, where Xavier has been ranked number one in the United States all season. This is Xavier's first National Championship in school history.

"We're so happy. It started with our mission, and we really embrace the vision of our school about social justice," said **XULA Cheer Head Coach, Glenn Caston**. "Our theme this year was Black excellence. We really wanted to make sure that throughout our routine, little Black boys and girls can see themselves winning and being successful."

The Annual Competitive Cheer and Dance National Championship event was held in Ypsilanti, Michigan, at the George Gervin GameAbove Center on Sunday, March 13. Xavier qualified for the championships from a field of eight automatic qualifiers and seven at-large bids.

The NAIA is the only athletics association to offer a national championship in this sport. Announced in 2016, Competitive Cheer and Dance became the 24th and 25th National Championships in the history of the NAIA. Competitive Cheer and Dance is the first to earn national championship status in the NAIA in a span of 22 years; previously, women's golf became a championship sport in the late 1990s.

"We knew how hard we had worked over the last four months, and we knew how close we were to the title," said team member [Yaa'Ann Agyeman-Yeboah](#). "We pushed through, gave it our all, and every single person committed to focusing on one thing we wanted to improve for the final. We thought about all the people who look up to us and depended on us to bring home the very first red banner, and we internalized our love for the sport to make it happen."

Holding the new title as the first-ever HBCU to win the NAIA Competitive Cheer Competition, Xavier University of Louisiana continues to break barriers and demonstrate excellence even beyond the classroom. According to Caston, XULA Cheer has more to prove and will continue to perform at the highest level to maintain its status as one of the top competitive teams in the country.

To learn more about XULA Cheer's NAIA win, [follow this link](#). Find out more information about XULA Cheer [here](#).

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### **About Xavier University of Louisiana**

*Xavier University of Louisiana, America's only historically Black and Catholic University, is ranked among the top three HBCUs (historically Black colleges and universities) in the nation. Recognized as a national leader in STEM and health sciences, Xavier produces more African American students who graduate from medical schools each year than any other university in the United States. Additionally, Xavier's College of Pharmacy is also among the top producers of African American pharmacists in the country.*

*Established in 1925, by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament as a place for African American and Native Americans to receive quality education, Xavier has since expanded its programs in art, business, education, biological sciences, chemistry, pharmacy and political science. More recent additions in robotics, bioinformatics, engineering, data science, neuroscience and genetics, in addition to new STEM-based master's programs, have provided Xavier students (2815 undergraduates and 787 graduates) an unbeatable combination of traditional classroom study, hands-on research, service-learning opportunities and life experiences. Xavier students collaborate with world-renowned faculty, who are experts in their fields, to produce award-winning research and notable work. The winning Xavier formula is to provide students with a well-balanced curriculum and an environment that nurtures their intellect and feeds their souls, thereby facilitating a more just and humane society for all. For more information about Xavier University of Louisiana, visit us online at [www.xula.edu](http://www.xula.edu) or contact Chelsea Cunningham at (504) 520-5425 or [ccunnin@xula.edu](mailto:ccunnin@xula.edu).*



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