

Tulane part of 'big picture' for BIG EAST

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When Tulane University begins competing in the [BIG EAST](#) athletics conference in July 2014, both the Tulane athletics program and the conference will benefit as part of a larger plan, says Mike Aresco, commissioner of the BIG EAST.



"We have a strategy for expansion within our conference. We are building a national football conference that will compete at the highest level," says Aresco. "We have a seat at the table with access to New Year's Eve and New Year's Day bowl games if our teams perform as we expect them to."

The more than \$125 million in post-Katrina investments for Tulane athletics, including a new football stadium, a baseball stadium and state-of-the art practice facility, was proof enough for conference officials that Tulane is committed to improving its sports programs.

During a Tuesday (Nov. 27) afternoon teleconference with reporters across the country, Aresco said he has initiated talks with television networks eager to broadcast games. He predicts rivalries among BIG EAST teams will produce buzz surrounding the conference that has plans to continue expanding with more teams from the West.

Aresco says the conference's current goal is to include 14 teams with the possibility of expanding to 16 in the future.

“We want to identify schools that are forward-looking and that want to improve,” said Aresco. “When we look back five years from now we know that we'll see the value in Tulane joining the conference and the strength of this football league that we're putting together.”