



## Burr & Forman Represents On to Victory in First-Of-Its-Kind Name, Image, and Likeness Collective Acquisition for Auburn Student-Athletes

Results  
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Burr & Forman's Sports Law and NIL team represented an innovative team of Auburn University alumni in a deal for their name, image and likeness (NIL) collective, Friends of Auburn, LLC d/b/a ON TO VICTORY, to acquire an existing NIL collective that supported Auburn University student-athletes. ON TO VICTORY's acquisition was among the first, if not the first, acquisition of an NIL collective ever, considering the relatively recent rollout of NIL rights for college athletes on July 1, 2021.

"We were grateful to work with ON TO VICTORY and assist with its unique dedication to the student-athletes of Auburn University," said Bill Lawrence, partner at Burr & Forman, leader of the firm's Burr Sports Law and NIL team, and the collective's primary counsel in the acquisition. "We formalized our NIL practice with a primary focus on helping college athletes navigate the new and fast-changing NIL world to meet their financial, branding, and personal goals now and into the future, and we are proud to work with an organization like ON TO VICTORY that shares that objective."

ON TO VICTORY was founded by Auburn alumni, including Mike Arasin, Nick Davis, Steve Fleming, Keith Jones, Ned Sheffield, and Wesley Spruill. The management has pledged the collective exists solely to benefit Auburn student-athletes, with a commitment to efficient fiscal operations, rigorous compliance with all NIL regulations, and ownership and management who will not receive

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compensation or profit from the collective. The members acquired an existing collective, NIL-Auburn, to expand opportunities for Auburn's student-athletes. More information about the collective is available [here](#).

"In the current NCAA landscape, schools need collectives for their athletic departments to field competitive teams and succeed, and the more effectively operated collectives with thoughtful business models like ON TO VICTORY will have an even greater advantage," Lawrence said. "It has been a pleasure to work with this passionate team of Auburn alumni to help fulfill their vision for this unique NIL collective and guide it through regulatory changes and uncertainties, and we look forward to seeing all they accomplish on behalf of Auburn's student-athletes."

The deal was featured in *Law360* where Lawrence discussed his interest in NIL matters: "I got intrigued from the start about NIL work because, as a lawyer, we rarely have opportunities to get involved at the literal birth of a legal issue, which NIL deals are. I especially enjoyed the acquisition because I got to double down on a couple of firsts: representing a client in the infancy of a NIL publicity rights deal and handling one of the first, if not the very first, acquisition of a collective in the early days of NIL."

The firm's Burr Sports Law and NIL team was launched in conjunction with the July 2021 rollout of NIL regulations from the NCAA and states across the country. The group is dedicated to serving as legal partners for college athletes, their advocates, and others in the NIL field as they navigate the complex and evolving NIL rules to make smart, profitable and well-structured business deals with lasting impacts.