



## **SBRnet signs content partnership with First and Pen, site devoted to amplifying local sports stories from voices of color**

August 4, 2021

**Boca Raton, FL**---SBRnet has signed a content partnership with First and Pen, a new website from The Khanate Group devoted to amplifying local sports stories from voices of color to the national conscience. First and Pen's content will be distributed as part of SBRnet's core level subscription package to more than 220 colleges nationwide, reaching more than 250,000 students. First and Pen's content will be featured on SBRnet's home page and its newsstand directory of key sports business publications.

"We are greatly expanding our content and First and Pen has a unique approach to journalism and storytelling that we're excited to share with our audience of students and educators," said Mark Sullivan managing partner of SBRnet.

First and Pen was launched earlier this year by Yussuf Khan, who has more than 20 years of experience in the sports media field, including work with ESPN and The New York Knicks. Khan has invested the last 16 years of his career in start-up ventures, building a successful track record at companies such as CSTV (now CBS Sports Network), Interactive One (now Urban One), Big Lead Sports and The Shadow League. "I started First and Pen to help writers of color bring their stories to a national audience," Khan said. "There are so many great stories being told at a local level, but nationally we are not connected. We want to change that. We're not a traditional sports site. We want great writing and impactful storytelling and are open to giving new voices a chance to publish, whether it's professors or students."

Earlier this year, First and Pen published a story by a Detroit writer about how youth soccer programs in Michigan lose their diversity when players hit a certain age because inner city programs lack the funding to travel outside their local area. "We heard from programs all over the country that they were having the same problem," Khan said. "That made me realize that we could be a connection point for stories like that." Historical perspectives are also an important aspect of First and Pen's content. A college professor's story about Baseball's role in early Juneteenth celebrations was a major hit for the site. He also penned a story about how Tulsa became the Mecca for African American boxing in the early 1900s before the massacre destroyed the community known as Black Wall Street.

"There are so many great stories from the past that have never been shared on a national level," Khan said. "Our goal is to inform, connect and inspire by sharing them at First and Pen."

 561.990.5590

 10185 Spyglass Way,

 [info@sbrnet.co](mailto:info@sbrnet.co)

Boca Raton. FL.

Social justice is also a topic at First and Pen. “There is a rejuvenation of social consciousness by athletes today and that is part of our focus,” Khan said. “People think of Colin Kaepernick and what he did, but there are other athletes involved and we want to tell their positive, inspiring stories.”

First and Pen will also cover topics such as gender equality and devote coverage to sports and athletes traditionally ignored by mainstream media. “For example, there is a huge African American history in body building,” he said. “And we’ll feature stories on athletes who you might not otherwise read about.” Khan said the response thus far has been excellent and is hoping professors and students at SBRnet subscriber schools will consider submitting stories. “We will have a professional angle to our story telling,” he said. “We’re not looking for gossip or clickbait, but an intelligent, thoughtful approach to contemporary and historical topics.”

### **About The Khanate Group**

The Khanate Group, LLC, is a diverse company with an integrated focus upon media, sports, technology, eCommerce and health/fitness. The first brand to launch is sports media property, First and Pen ([www.firstandpen.com](http://www.firstandpen.com)), which publishes stories from local writers of color in sports and amplifies them to a national audience.

### **About SBRnet:**

SBRnet was founded in 1998 and over the past 20 years has grown to become a comprehensive online platform of nationwide sports marketing content, data and analytics research for the professional and college markets.

For more information, please contact Quentin Alleyne [sbr.quentin@gmail.com](mailto:sbr.quentin@gmail.com)

