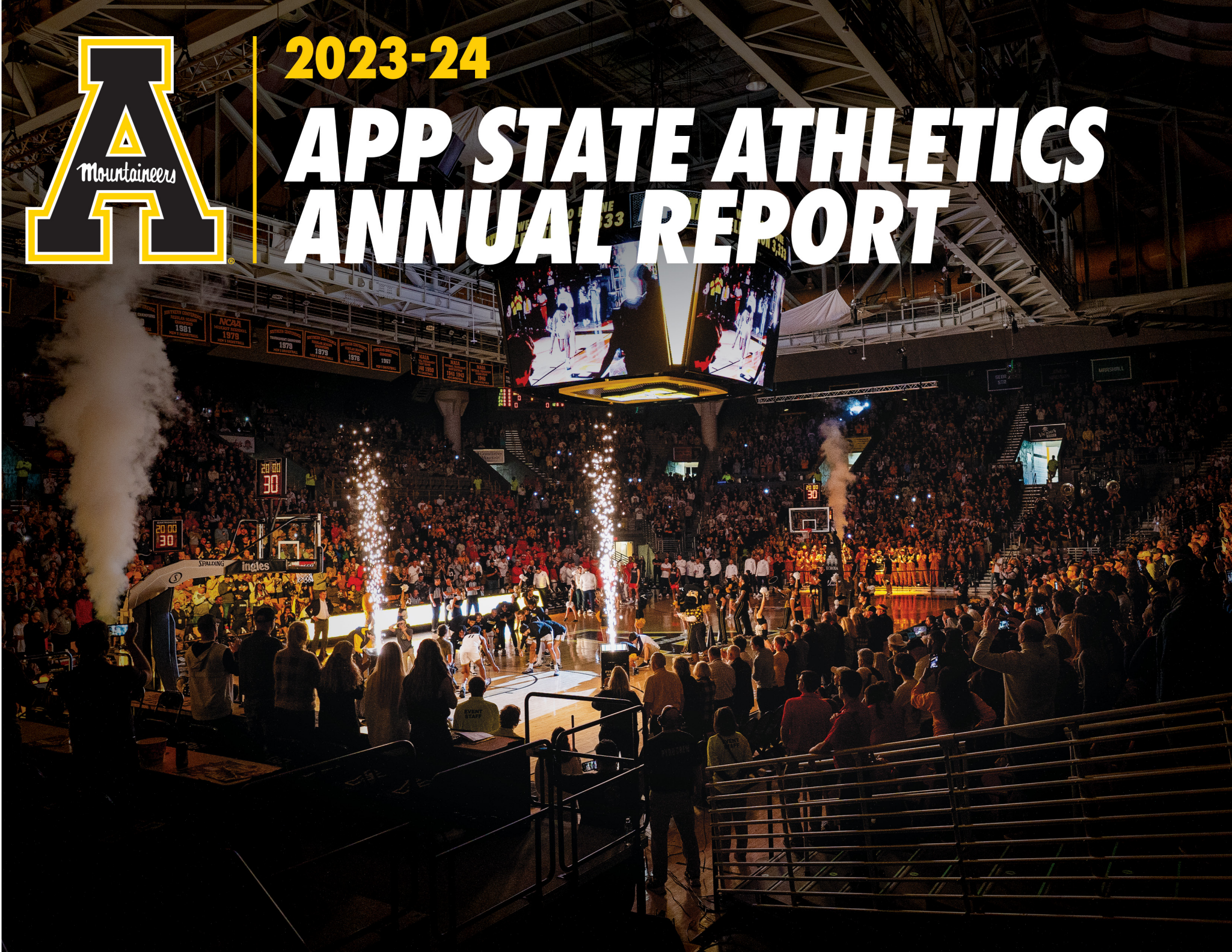




2023-24

APP STATE ATHLETICS ANNUAL REPORT



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APP STATE ATHLETICS MISSION

In support of the Educational Mission of the University...

- We protect and promote the safety, health and well-being of each and every one of our student-athletes.
- We guide and support our student-athletes in their quest for excellence – academically, athletically and socially.
- We gather and engage our University Community to become a part of our plans.

CORE VALUES

- Academic Integrity
- Competitive Excellence
- Social Responsibility
- World-Class Experience

A LETTER FROM DOUG GILLIN

Another academic year is behind us, and I could not be more proud of how our amazing student-athletes represented the A in their pursuit of excellence in the classroom, in the community, and in competition in 2023-24.

Academically, App State student-athletes continue to lead the way among our peers. This spring marked the 24th straight semester with a cumulative GPA above 3.0 among our student-athletes. We are so proud of our student-athletes, coaches and support staff for their dedication to academic integrity and excellence.

Mountaineer teams were very active in the community, ranking among the nation's top 20 athletics departments in the Division I rankings of community service hours accumulated in 2023. We are always looking for ways to engage with people and businesses in the High Country and beyond who support our teams. We believe that we need to give support if we wish to receive support. There is a direct correlation between the amount of time we spend supporting our communities and the increased attendance at our events.

Across all of our sports, there may not have been a more successful year from a competition standpoint in App State history. As the quality of competition in the Sun Belt Conference continues to ascend, our Mountaineer programs have also risen to the occasion.

Four programs won league titles in 2023-24. Men's basketball claimed its first Sun Belt regular-season championship and first outright conference title since 1979. Men's cross country won a Sun Belt championship for the third time. Field hockey earned its first MAC regular-season title. Wrestling captured the SoCon Tournament title for the second straight year and 12th time overall.

Combined with football's Sun Belt East title and a win over Miami (Ohio) in the Cure Bowl, we brought quite a few trophies back to Boone this year! And the tennis team, under first-year head coach Hannah Fetters, nearly brought home another when it won three straight matches to reach the Sun Belt Tournament Final for the first time in program history.

Four coaches were voted the best in their leagues in 2023-24. Sun Belt Coach of the Year awards went to men's basketball head coach Dustin Kerns and men's cross country coach Brad Herbster (in his first year on the job). Emily Dinsmore won MAC Coach of the Year in her first season leading the field hockey program, while JohnMark Bentley received SoCon Coach of the Year honors for the seventh time in his 15 seasons leading App State Wrestling.

We were thrilled to be able to bring in head coaches of the caliber of Alaura Sharp for women's basketball and Whitney Jones for softball this spring.

We cannot thank everyone in App Nation enough for their record-breaking support. In the past 12 months, all-time App State records were set in football attendance, Holmes Center basketball attendance, baseball attendance, volleyball attendance, wrestling attendance, Yosef Club membership and donations, and revenue from tickets, sponsorships and licensing royalties.

In May, we sold out of 2024 football season tickets - the third straight year to sell out of season tickets! We can't wait to see what's in store for our football team again this coming fall with head coach Shawn Clark at the helm and one of the nation's top quarterbacks, Joey Aguilar, back for his senior year.

The college athletics landscape is changing at its most rapid pace in history, and our goals include keeping App State relevant on the national stage, giving our student-athletes a world-class experience, and providing our fans and supporters a memorable experience at our events.

Our athletics facilities at Appalachian 105 continue to progress. In addition to the Randy Marion Track & Field Facility that opened in April 2023, construction is nearly complete for our new outdoor tennis courts and track & field fieldhouse. Construction has begun on the softball stadium and indoor tennis facility.

The planning and fundraising process for an expanded east side of Kidd Brewer Stadium is ongoing, as well as fundraising for a new 120-yard indoor practice facility that would enhance the training for a number of sports on the mountain, and an expansion of our baseball stadium.

It's great to be a Mountaineer!

Go App,



Doug Gillin
Director of Athletics



ELITE ACADEMICS

24

Consecutive semesters with cumulative student-athlete GPA over 3.0

3.20

Cumulative GPA entering 2024-25

428

Members of the Chancellor's and Dean's Lists from App State Athletics combining 2023 fall and 2024 spring

App State continues to be a leader in the Sun Belt Conference thanks to the academic honors and accomplishments of its student-athletes.

App State student-athletes extended their streak to 12 consecutive years with a cumulative GPA above 3.0 by performing well in the 2024 spring semester. Sixteen teams boasted a spring semester GPA above 3.0.

During the 2024 spring, 60 student-athletes made the Chancellor's List (GPA of 3.85 or higher in courses that earn credits toward graduation) and 142 more were honored as members of the Dean's List (GPA of 3.45 or higher while carrying 12-14 academic hours or a GPA of 3.25 or higher while carrying at least 15 academic hours).

In September, when the Sun Belt Conference last announced academic honors for its member institutions, App State ranked in the top four among the 14 football-playing members with a combined 223 honorees among the lists for the Academic Honor Roll (league-high 102 members), Commissioner's List (109 members) and 1A FAR Academic Excellence Award (12 members).



ELITE CHAMPIONS



2023-24 SUN BELT MEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS



2023 MAC FIELD HOCKEY CHAMPIONS



2024 SOCON WRESTLING TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONS



2023 SUN BELT MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONS

ELITE FOOTBALL



"Top-flight, hard-nosed football ... Able to compete with the upper echelon programs ... Legacy of winning from the FCS Championships ... An extraordinarily difficult place to play ... Passionate fans."

— Rece Davis, ESPN





ELITE COMPANY
WINNINGEST FBS PROGRAMS SINCE 2014

A 95
Mountaineers

A 127 paw print 119 FSU 115 G 114 OU 102 ND 95

3 STRAIGHT YEARS WITH A RANKED WIN

- 30-27 vs. #14 Coastal Carolina (2021)
- 17-14 at #6 Texas A&M (2022)
- 26-23 (OT) at #18 James Madison (2023)

UP TO THE CHALLENGE

Last 8 games against power conference opponents all decided by 7 points or fewer (two in overtime)

LEAGUE-HIGH 14 ALUMS ON 2023 NFL ROSTERS

“App State is a program that I really think is the posterchild for what I love about college football. Nestled in the mountains, in this small town, and they just love college football. They’ve committed to it in an unbelievable way.”

— Chris Childers, SiriusXM College Sports Radio

“App State had the greatest win in college football at the Big House, beating Michigan. And going to Texas A&M, when Texas A&M was ranked fifth, and beating them, is probably in the top five. And neither of them is as amazing to me as the last play of (the 2022 win against Troy).”

— Tony Kornheiser, ESPN



ELITE TALENT



ADDIE CLARK | FIELD HOCKEY
MAC GOALKEEPER OF THE YEAR



JOEY AGUILAR | FOOTBALL
SUN BELT NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

CONFERENCE AWARD WINNERS



JUSTIN ABSON | MEN'S BASKETBALL
SUN BELT DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR



ASHLEE OSAJI | WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD
SUN BELT OUTDOOR NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR



BANKS TOLLEY | BASEBALL
SUN BELT NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

COACHES OF THE YEAR



BRAD HERBSTER | M CROSS COUNTRY
SUN BELT COACH OF THE YEAR



EMILY DINSMORE | FIELD HOCKEY
MAC COACH OF THE YEAR



JOHNMARK BENTLEY | WRESTLING
SOCON COACH OF THE YEAR



DUSTIN KERNS | M BASKETBALL
SUN BELT COACH OF THE YEAR

AWARD WINNERS

ALL-AMERICANS



TYREK FUNDERBURK | FOOTBALL
2ND TEAM - CORNERBACK



MICHAEL HUGHES | FOOTBALL
2ND TEAM - KICKER



BANKS TOLLEY | BASEBALL
2ND TEAM - OUTFIELDER

INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS

WRESTLING

Ethan Oakley - 133 pounds
Cody Bond - 149 pounds
Tommy Askey - 157 pounds
Will Miller - 165 pounds
Tomas Brooker - 184 pounds

OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Garrett Bivens - Men's 5000m
Ethan Lipham - Men's 1500m
Ashlee Osaji - Women's Long Jump



JACKSON GREENE | FOOTBALL
3RD TEAM - SPECIAL TEAMS



WILL MILLER | WRESTLING
USA WRESTLING U23 FREESTYLE

APPSTATE



2023-24 ALL-CONFERENCE SELECTIONS

FIRST TEAM (23)

Austin St. Laurent – Baseball
Banks Tolley – Baseball
Donovan Gregory – M Basketball
Tre'Von Spillers – M Basketball
Garrett Bivens – M Cross Country
Calbert Guest – M Cross Country
Dwayne Lillie – M Cross Country
Oliver Wilson-Cook – M Cross Country
Lise Boekaar – Field Hockey (MAC)
Addie Clark – Field Hockey (MAC)
Tyrek Funderburk – Football
Isaiah Helms – Football
Andrew Parker Jr. – Football
Bucky Williams – Football
Kayt Houston – Softball
Savannah Dada-Mascoll – Tennis
Garrett Bivens – M Outdoor Track & Field
Ethan Lipham – M Outdoor Track & Field
Ashlee Osaji – W Outdoor Track & Field
Tommy Askey – Wrestling (SoCon)
Cody Bond – Wrestling (SoCon)
Ethan Oakley – Wrestling (SoCon)
Will Miller – Wrestling (SoCon)

SECOND TEAM (24)

Faith Alston – W Basketball
Jasmine Donohue – W Cross Country
Grace Ball – Field Hockey (MAC)
Sophia Baxter – Field Hockey (MAC)
Charlotte Bosma – Field Hockey (MAC)
Joey Aguilar – Football
Michael Hughes – Football
Ethan Johnson – Football
Nate Johnson – Football
Eli Wilson – Football
Izzi Wood – Soccer

Peyton Darnell – Softball
Rhys Ammon – W Indoor Track & Field
Jasmine Donohue – W Indoor Track & Field
Addison Ollendick-Smith – W Indoor Track & Field
Nicole Wells – W Indoor Track & Field
Matthew Gray – M Outdoor Track & Field
Oliver Wilson-Cook – M Outdoor Track & Field
Jayla Adams – W Outdoor Track & Field
Addison Ollendick-Smith – W Outdoor Track & Field
Sierra Smith – W Outdoor Track & Field
Daye Talley – W Outdoor Track & Field
Nicole Wells – W Outdoor Track & Field
Maya Winterhoff – Volleyball

THIRD TEAM (8)

Terence Harcum – M Basketball
Jonah Bird – M Cross Country
Jack Murphy – Football
Addison Beam – M Golf
Ashlee Osaji – W Indoor Track & Field
Jonah Bird – M Outdoor Track & Field
Harrison Robinson – M Outdoor Track & Field
Niejel Wilkins – M Outdoor Track & Field

HONORABLE MENTION (4)

Jordan Favors – Football
Santana Hopper – Football
Kanye Roberts – Football
Kaedin Robinson – Football

ALL-FRESHMAN TEAM (3)

Sophia Baxter – Field Hockey (MAC)
Florine Koopman – Field Hockey (MAC)
Tomas Brooker – Wrestling (SoCon)

RECORD GROWTH

34,734

2023 average home football attendance that broke Sun Belt and school records for the third straight year

116%

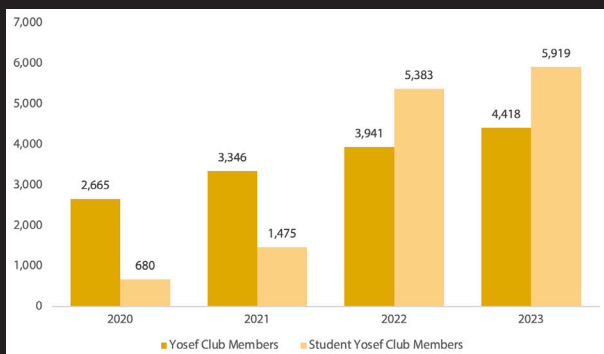
Led all FBS schools in percentage of football stadium capacity filled in 2023

RECORD REVENUE

Broke all-time records in revenue from annual giving, licensing royalties, concessions and sponsorships in 2023-24



YOSEF CLUB ANNUAL GIVING GROWTH

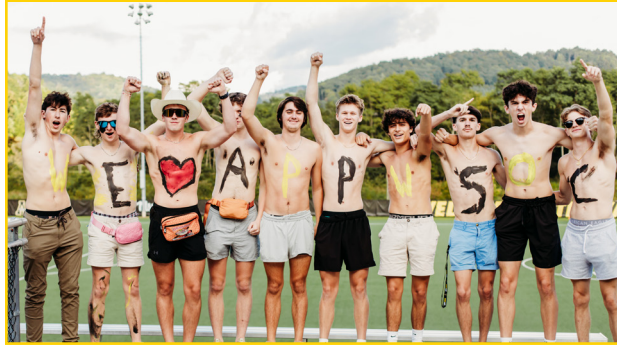


2023 Yosef Club All-Time Records:

- **4,418** members
- **5,919** student members
- **\$6.46** million revenue

Since 2020, Yosef Club total membership has grown by **209%** and revenue has increased by **42%**.





FAN SUPPORT

- All-time ticket sales records in football, volleyball, men's basketball, wrestling and baseball in 2023-24
- Sold out of football season tickets for the second straight year in 2023
- Four of the top six crowds in Holmes Convocation Center history in 2023-24
- First two Holmes Center basketball sellouts in more than a decade
- Season average baseball attendance record
- Led the SoCon in wrestling attendance



COMMUNITY IMPACT



App State student-athletes understand the importance of giving back and serving the High Country.

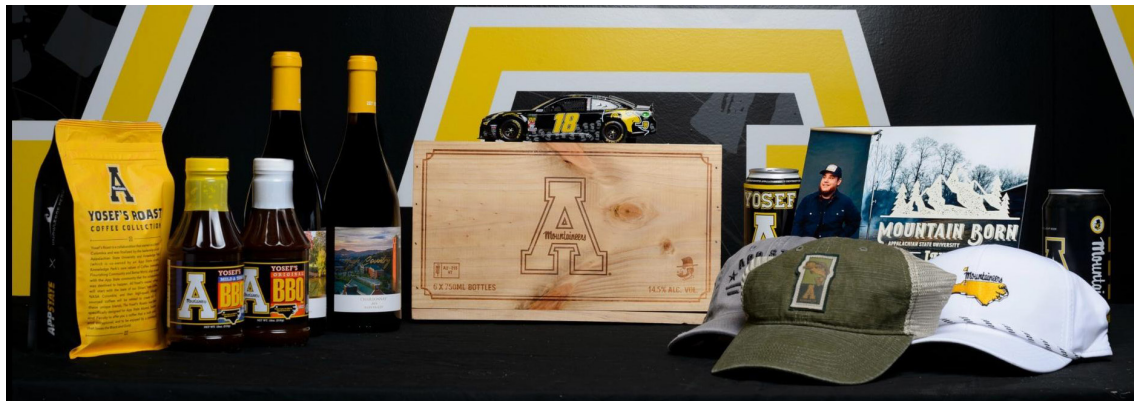
App State's teams and student-athletes contribute in many ways, including building Habitat for Humanity homes, participating in Operation Christmas Child, volunteering at local schools, keeping the area beautiful with coordinated clean-up efforts and taking part in events that benefit special causes.

In 2020, App State Athletics finished second overall in the NCAA Division I Team Works Community Service competition. App State ranked as high as No. 7 in service hours among FBS schools during the 2023-24 calendar.



CHANGING LANDSCAPE

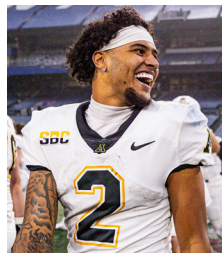
APPSTATENIL.COM



App State's "Mountain Born" licensed product collection has featured branded coffee, BBQ sauce, wine, beer, beef jerky, seltzer, bourbon and apparel partnerships with country music stars Eric Church and Luke Combs.

PORTAL SUCCESS

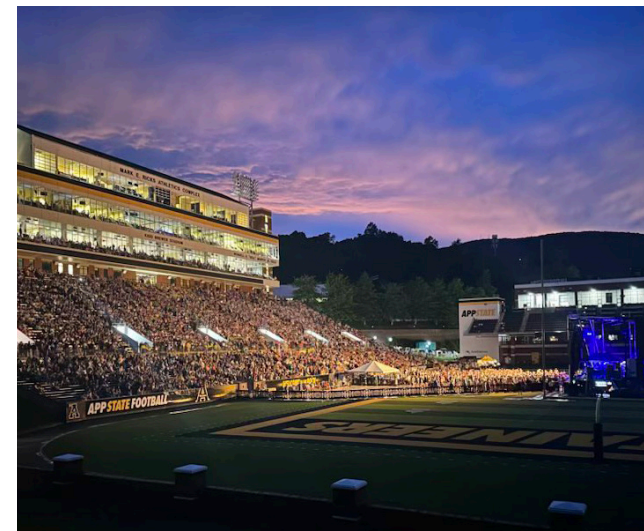
App State has benefited from many transfer portal additions, including (L-R) 2024 Sun Belt Baseball Newcomer of the Year **Banks Tolley**, 2023 Sun Belt touchdown receptions leader **Kaedin Robinson** and point guard **Myles Tate**, who helped the Mountaineers capture the 2023-24 Sun Belt men's basketball title.



As the landscape of college athletics evolves rapidly, App State is in position to be a **relevant championship contender** on the national stage for years to come.

Under Director of Athletics Doug Gillin, App State Athletics has been **innovative** in its branding, licensing and revenue generation efforts while maximizing opportunities for its student-athletes and sport programs through the new era of NIL, transfer portal and additional student-athlete financial opportunities.

A rabid, growing fan base is **investing** at all-time high levels, while the Mountaineers continue to benefit from University support, donor engagement and community and corporate partnerships to ensure the long-term success of App State Athletics.



Events like the 2023 Darius Rucker concert (above) bring in big crowds and additional revenue to Kidd Brewer Stadium each summer. Luke Combs played at The Rock in 2022, and Brad Paisley will make a visit in 2024.

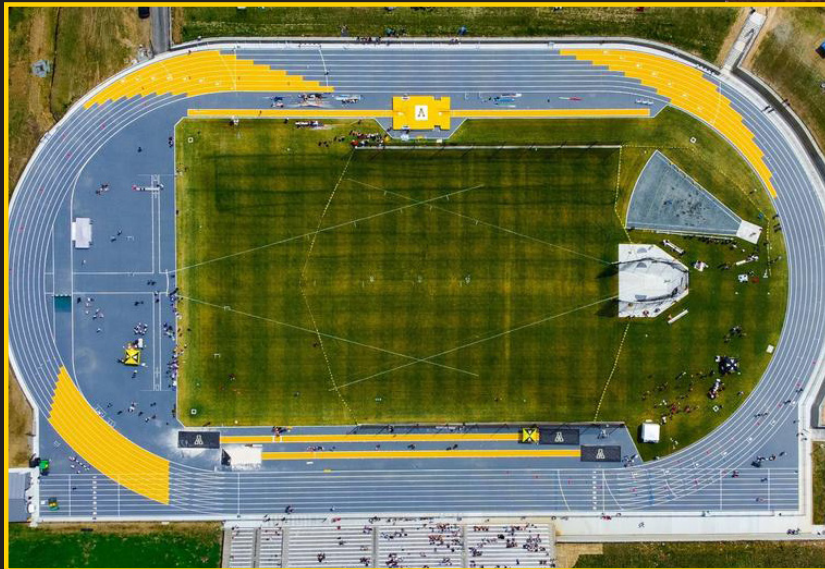
FACILITY GROWTH

Major facility projects have been completed in the last four years for football, men's and women's basketball, volleyball, track & field, baseball, field hockey and soccer.

Construction is underway for new competition and training facilities for softball and tennis. More major projects to benefit Mountaineer student-athletes are on the horizon.

For how to be involved in future projects, visit MountaineersAthleticFund.com.

The North End Zone facility at Kidd Brewer Stadium that houses football operations was completed in 2021



Randy Marion Track & Field Facility (2023)



Mark E. Harrill Basketball Practice Facility (2020)

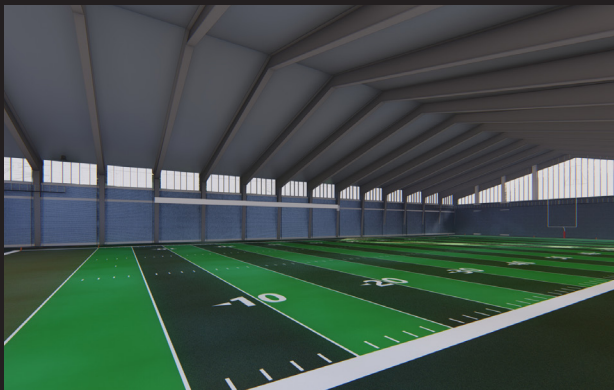


Baseball Pitching Lab (2023)

UNDER CONSTRUCTION TENNIS AND SOFTBALL FACILITIES, FIELD HOUSE



FUTURE PLANS INDOOR PRACTICE FACILITY, KIDD BREWER STADIUM EAST SIDE EXPANSION



SUN BELT CONFERENCE

EPICENTER OF THE EAST

With Sun Belt realignment, App State is located in the middle of the East Division, and all six division foes are within 350 miles of Boone.



STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

For the first time in conference history, the Sun Belt saw four representatives - Coastal Carolina, James Madison, Louisiana and Southern Miss - reach their respective 2024 NCAA Baseball Regional finals. Only the SEC, ACC and Big 12 also had at least four teams in the NCAA field of 64.

During the 2023 football season, Sun Belt programs produced a conference-record and national-best 12 Bowl Season participants, hosted ESPN's College GameDay for the third time in conference history and reaped the benefits of \$892+ million in estimated media value.

The Sun Belt was represented in the men's basketball postseason by James Madison (NCAA), App State (NIT) and Arkansas State (CBI). Those teams combined for four wins over autonomy programs during the regular season. A record six Sun Belt women's basketball programs competed in the postseason, led by league champion Marshall in the NCAA tournament.



Football
Sun Belt East Champions
Cure Bowl Champions



Men's Basketball
First Sun Belt Regular-Season Title



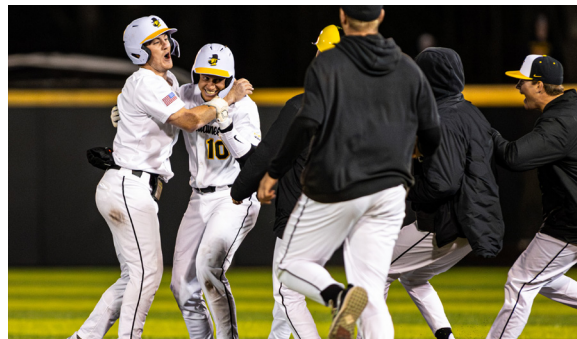
Men's Cross Country
Third Sun Belt Championship
(first since 2019)



Tennis
Sun Belt Tournament runner-up
for the first time



Soccer
Highest conference finish (third)
in program history



Baseball
Most wins (33) since 2012; second straight
SBC Tournament semifinals appearance

SUN BELT MEDIA VALUES

ESTIMATED MEDIA VALUE FOR SUN BELT FOOTBALL BRANDS - 2022-23:

1. App State - \$250.8M
2. Marshall - \$161.7M
3. James Madison - \$160.9M
4. Southern Miss - \$138.3M
5. Georgia State - \$131.4M
6. Coastal Carolina - \$124.9M
7. Old Dominion - \$98.3M
8. Georgia Southern - \$97.6M
9. Troy - \$91.4M
10. Arkansas State - \$90.3M
11. ULM - \$87.7M
12. Texas State - \$81.6M
13. South Alabama - \$71.8M
14. Louisiana - \$59.7M

SUN BELT FACULTY OF THE YEAR



DR. ZACHARY FARRIS

Associate Professor of Public Health & Exercise Science

MOUNTAINEER MEDIA

@APPSTATESPORTS



36,932

Total followers
as of early June 2024

+2,674

Followers gained
last year



48,800

Total followers
as of early June 2024

+2,375

Followers gained
last year



32,400

Total followers
as of early June 2024

+3,240

Followers gained
last year

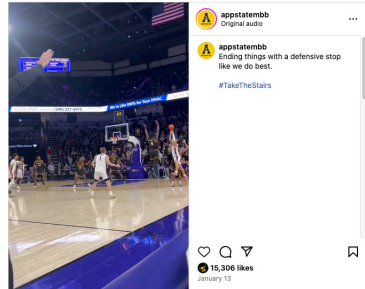


With 1.95 million viewers, the 2023 Cure Bowl on ABC was the most-watched App State game of its FBS era.

The Mountaineers went 3-0 in nationally televised men's basketball games in 2023-24, including the first two in the history of the Holmes Convocation Center.

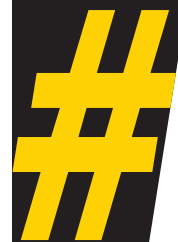


2023-24 ANNUAL REPORT



IN SOCIAL MEDIA

- The **most-followed** main athletics Instagram page within the conference
- The **most-followed** football Instagram & Facebook pages in the SBC
- The **sixth-most** followed football TikTok account in the country
- The **most-followed** field hockey Instagram page in the Mid-American Conference (MAC)





★ Today I give my
ALL for Appalachian State

