FROM DREAMS TO REALITY

DePaul Athletics’ 5 Year Strategic Plan
2021 - 2025
As I have become acclimated to the city of Chicago over the past six months, I better understand the pride that our community takes in DePaul and each of our 15 sports programs. It’s multigenerational. It has no regional boundaries. Whether I’m on the southside, the westside or the northside — Chicago wants DePaul to be great. I’m dreaming big dreams of being Chicago’s team again and I know you are too. I want that for our student-athletes who work hard day-in and day-out. I want that for our alumni and fans. And, I want that for our University in order to continue to grow its national exposure through athletics.

Over the past few months, I’ve worked diligently with our student-athletes, coaches, staff, University partners, supporters, alumni and fans to develop our plan forward. In the following pages you’ll find a transparent view of our goals for the future, how we specifically look to attain them and how you can help. I want our fans to look at this plan and see what DePaul Athletics looks like when the dreams we have become a reality.

It’s an exciting and historic time for DePaul Athletics and I can’t wait to see what we will accomplish together!

Go Blue Demons!

DeWayne
Primary to our purpose is to **maximize the great potential of our students** by exposing them to the wide variety of recreation, intramural and intercollegiate programs so vital to their total education. Complementing their more formal classroom education, the Athletic Department strives to **teach and develop lifelong values inherent in the Vincentian character**: integrity, leadership, competition, loyalty, cooperation, fair-play, self-confidence, sacrifice and physical fitness among others. At the same time, athletic participation brings together students from diverse ethnic, socioeconomic, cultural and geographic backgrounds, possessing various unique skills, **working together towards common success and a commitment to excellence**. Furthermore, athletics provides the campus community, our urban neighbors in Chicago, and alumni the opportunity for participation in the form of recreation and as spectators for intercollegiate competition.

The Athletic Department also has a unique opportunity and responsibility, as the most visible messenger of the DePaul story, to represent the highest qualities and standards of our education to an observant community, state and nation. A clear, positive exposure of DePaul University, through athletics, can enhance the University’s mission and image and directly affect the quality of faculty, enrollment and development.

Not unimportant to our Mission is the emotion, school spirit and morale, so crucial to the soul of the University, that can be uplifted through participation in athletics.
As a department, DePaul Athletics delivers on a promise of excellence. As we look towards the future and **DREAM BIG** together, we must leverage significant existing strengths that will serve as platforms from which our department will continue to deliver, build, grow and improve.

**PEOPLE**

Our people are unique in their character, capacity and commitment to DePaul Athletics.

**PASSION**

We are passionate about representing DePaul’s Catholic and Vincentian mission, the city of Chicago and the BIG EAST Conference.

**PURPOSE**

We are bound together by our deeper purpose— to transform lives and cultivate the leaders of tomorrow through college athletics.
Our values form our culture. For more than a century the values of **INCLUSIVITY, PERSONALISM** and **PROFESSIONALISM** have shaped DePaul's distinctive culture and our service to students.

Here, six values are provided to further enrich the foundation and culture of DePaul Athletics.

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Our purpose guides us. Our purpose statement articulates why we do what we do and why our organization exists.
These principles appear in a specific order to remind us that the health and safety of our student-athletes, coaches, staff and fans must be the priority in every decision we make and must never be sacrificed for another operating priority.

Our people are at the heart of everything we do. From the individualized support of student-athletes to the in-game fan experience, vincentian professionalism must be front-of-mind in each interaction.

Sport has the power to change the world. We are committed to fostering a culture that values and advances diversity, equity and inclusion. Together, we can drive meaningful cultural change and ensure DePaul Athletics is a welcoming place for all.

Our brand breathes life into events and experiences—it distinguishes us, increases our value and builds trust with our fans and the Chicago community.

By understanding our operation and using our time and resources efficiently, we can ensure our student-athletes and fans get the most out of their experience with DePaul Athletics.
Our vision for DePaul Athletics is to build a **CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURE** and become the **PREMIER PROGRAM IN THE BIG EAST CONFERENCE** by implementing **FIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESS**. As a result of this championship culture, we will win championships with integrity, build champion students through education and intentional development and continue to be an ambassador for DePaul University and the Chicago community.
Using our purpose and our mission as our foundation, five guiding principles of success have been identified to specifically articulate how we will work over the next five years (2021-2025) to achieve our vision.

1. Academic Excellence
2. Building the DePaul Brand
3. Championship Experience
4. Developing & Equipping Future Leaders
5. External Outreach

“...a great good is worth being desired.”

Vincent de Paul
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Elevate academic excellence, promote holistic development and develop the leaders of tomorrow by enabling student-athletes to achieve their educational, professional and personal goals.

- Each of our 15 teams will earn a 3.0 grade point average every year and we will make a 3.5 overall annual program grade point average our new standard.
- Comprehensive review and expansion of the Student-Athlete Development Program to ensure they are meeting the current needs of student-athletes and providing valuable, real-world skills necessary for differentiation in the marketplace.
- Restructure the Captains’ Council and re-establish the Student Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) to assist with key department initiatives.
- Expand the Athletic Academic Advising (AAA) staff to provide more full-time support in academic advising.
- Renovate AAA tutoring rooms and offices to adapt to the need for more virtual tutoring and support.
Raise the national prominence of the DePaul Athletics brand and reestablish ourselves as Chicago’s Team. Deepen our community impact by delivering professional, immersive and engaging fan experiences. Foster a culture of stewardship, align resources with expectations and achieve financial sustainability.

- **We will create an environment where coaches want to both start and finish their careers. We will be intentional in making DePaul Athletics a household name.**
- Engage in a comprehensive review of DePaul Athletics’ logo, marks and brand identity.
- Enhance apparel availability and licensing opportunities in the local and national market.
- Leverage old logos and traditions in new ways through apparel and licensing partners.
- Partner with a multimedia rights holder to expand corporate sponsorships and media rights offerings.
- Grow DePaul’s social media presence, content and following across its entire portfolio of sports.
- Redesign of DePaulBlue Demons.com, including the launch of a new, official DePaul Athletics app.
- Restructure the DePaul Athletics staff to maximize internal, external student-service needs, better align resources with expectations and to achieve a nationally recognized fan experience.
3 CHAMPIONSHIP EXPERIENCE

Develop a **students-first** championship experience that optimizes the ability for our student-athletes to work together towards common success and consistently **win** championships.

- **Within our 15 athletics programs, we will become a Top 100 program according to the NACDA Director’s Cup Standings.**

- Establish a Facilities Master Plan that outlines the facility priorities for the next ten years with a major focus on the refurbishment of the Sullivan Athletics Center and addition of a basketball practice facility.

- Form a task force comprised of both internal and external members with a goal of establishing a comprehensive DePaul Athletics Mental Health Program that will ensure DePaul Athletics has the most cutting-edge mental health resources and services in college athletics.

- Require all sport administrators to work with their respective programs to create a planning document that outlines the recruiting, student-athlete development and competitive strategies of each sport.

- Enhance the current NCAA and BIG EAST Championship bid process to ensure the best opportunity to host postseason events.

- Fully fund all 15 sports to maximize athletics scholarships.

- Establish contracts for all assistant coaches, inclusive of competitive salaries and bonus structures, to ensure nationally leading student-athlete instruction and support.
OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESS

DEVELOPING & EQUIPPING FUTURE LEADERS

Cultivate a first-class student-athlete experience and workplace culture grounded in diversity, inclusivity, integrity and compliance while deepening our commitment to DePaul’s Catholic, Vincentian and urban mission.

- We will focus more on developing leadership as a separate entity. We will be intentional in growing leaders among our student-athletes, coaches and athletic department staff.
- Require the BUILD Diversity Certificate be completed by all coaches and staff to further educate in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Create a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Community Affairs Department to spearhead initiatives which provide access and opportunity for women and underrepresented groups.
- Engage in a comprehensive review of our Gender Equity Plan and determine new initiatives or action items.
- Develop formal, written operational policies and procedures across each department.
- Create a new hire welcome and onboarding leadership program.
- Expand our ‘NCAA Compliance’ department to ‘NCAA Compliance & Leadership’ to focus intentionally on leadership growth with staff and coaches.
- Develop a student-athlete mentoring program facilitated by peers, alumni and staff.
Employ bold and innovative approaches to increase annual giving and self-generated funding necessary to accomplish our strategic goals.

- We will capture the passion of the Blue Demon community to help us reach the next phase in our development.
- Create a ‘Dream Team’ program, inclusive of a comprehensive review of donor levels and benefits.
- Establish new quarterly and annual fundraising goals necessary to supplement the department’s budget.
- Research, benchmark and implement new technologies and external vendors to support revenue growth.
- Develop a comprehensive, five-year revenue generation and ticket sales action plan to determine strategic drivers of revenue and new opportunities that assist with future sustainability and growth.
- Enhance engagement with athletics alumni through monthly team communications and the creation of annual alumni reunions and events.
- Create a fan experience committee consisting of faculty/staff, alumni, supporters, students, strategic partners and community members.
- Conduct a series of ‘town hall meetings’ throughout the region to engage with fans, hear feedback from supporters and promote new opportunities for involvement.
142K
Annual Fan Attendance

110
Home Events Annually

10.3K
Capacity of Wintrust Arena

173K
DePaul Alumni Worldwide

113K
DePaul Alumni in the Chicagoland Area

22K
University Enrollment

71
Full-Time Athletics Employees

14
Athletics Graduate Assistants

15
Division I Sports Programs

$7.2M
Average Annual Student Aid Extended

142K
Social Media Followers

60
Comprehensive Athletic Department Social Media Channels

147.5M
Audience Across DePaul’s Official Broadcast Channels of FS1 & FS2

8
DePaul Competes in 8 of the Nation’s 36 Largest Media Markets

#1 LARGEST CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN THE COUNTRY

#3 BEST COLLEGE CITY IN THE U.S.
(The Princeton Review)

8
Student-Athletes from Illinois

32
International Student-Athletes representing 18 countries
A bold vision, innovative plan and unparalleled fan support will be essential to grow into a national leader in college athletics. Growth will also come at a cost. Below you will find how you can make an instant impact for DePaul Athletics and how fundraising dollars will be spent in the immediate future.

 HOW YOU CAN HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY

- Buy Season Tickets
- Buy a Club Membership
- Make a Tax-Deductible Gift
- Host a Fundraiser
- Refer a Season Ticket Holder or Donor
- Vocalize Your Support on Social Media with the #DreamBIG and #GoBlueDemons

 HOW FUNDRAISING DOLLARS WILL BE SPENT IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE

- Scholarships & Financial Aid
- Facility Repairs, Renovations & Enhancements
- Student-Athlete Academic & Development Programs
- Student-Athlete Support Services (Sports Medicine, Mental Health & Nutrition)
- Student-Athlete Performance Tools (Sports Performance, Training Equipment & Technology)
- Supplement the Operating Budget
- Business Data & Analytics Tools
- Marketing, Advertising & Brand Enhancement Tools

Call the DePaul Ticket Office at (773) 325-7526 or visit DePaulBlueDemons.com to learn more.