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The SOAR Office of Student-Athlete Development & Letterwinner Engagement offers comprehensive support throughout the entire life-cycle of a student-athlete's journey. This initiative distinguishes itself from many Division 1 programs by committing to the holistic development of student-athletes, from their initial transition into university life, through their academic and athletic careers, and extending well beyond graduation. By maintaining strong connections with letterwinners, the SOAR Office fosters enduring relationships that benefit both current and former athletes. In collaboration with campus and community partners, Rice Athletics provides opportunities for personal growth and professional preparation, ensuring that Rice student-athletes are positioned to prosper. Supporting student-athletes' transitions in, through, and beyond Rice University, the SOAR Office provides greater access to campus and community resources, furthering Owl student-athletes' ability to think critically about their position on our campus, among elite Division I institutions, and globally.

This unique approach creates a seamless bridge between current student-athletes and letterwinners, enriching the experiences of both groups. Through collaboration with campus and community partners, the SOAR Office ensures that student-athletes receive ample opportunities for personal growth and professional readiness. This preparation equips them to thrive in their personal and professional lives, while also achieving athletic excellence. Ultimately, the program is designed to equip and empower both Rice student-athletes and letterwinners with the skills and opportunities to make meaningful contributions to their communities both between and beyond the hedges.

# - GRIT - CURIOSITY - TEAMWORK



#### PERSONAL ENHANCEMENT

Our pursuit of best-in-class excellence extends beyond competition to the personal development of our student-athletes. Through Flight Plan, SOAR delivers evidence-based programming that supports mental health and wellness, life transitions, financial literacy, identity development beyond sport, and essential life skills—ensuring student-athletes are equipped to thrive both on and off the field.



#### CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Striving for excellence in every facet, we commit to providing unparalleled career development opportunities for student-athletes. By employing personalized career counseling, cutting-edge educational workshops, industry partnerships, and unique access to R Association Letterwinners willing to support their career journeys and transition, we empower student-athletes to chart impactful career paths and become leaders in their respective fields.



#### LEADERSHIP AND BELONGING

At the forefront of our efforts is the cultivation of inclusive leaders who champion diversity, equity, and inclusion. Through innovative leadership development initiatives and experiential learning opportunities such as the Owl In Task Force, SAAC, and Affinity Groups, SOAR equips and empowers student-athletes to effect positive change in their classroom, competitions, and community.



#### **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

Embracing our role as leaders, we harness the collective power of student-athletes to drive impactful change in their communities through service-driven projects, community partnerships, and advocacy campaigns. The SOAR Office aims to instill a sense of civic responsibility, encouraging student-athletes to pursue causes that empower them to be catalysts for social progress and positive transformation



#### LETTERWINNER ENGAGEMENT

Recognizing the enduring value of alumni mentorship and SOAR's unique connection with the R Association, we aim to forge genuine connections. Leveraging the expertise and experience of these Letterwinners, the SOAR Office intentionally provides student-athletes with the opportunity to connect with Letterwinners through networking events, educational workshops, mentorship, and collaborative initiatives that strengthen the Rice Athletics community and inspire greatness in every athlete.



#### .STATEMENT FROM

## TOMMY McCLELLAND

The 2024–2025 academic year was a transformative one for Rice Athletics. Our student-athletes continued to raise the bar, excelling not only in competition but in their preparation for life beyond the hedges. With the support of the SOAR Office, they engaged in 145 educational programs, contributed 3,627 hours of community service, and achieved a 94% completion rate in our Flight Plan Student-Development Program. We also celebrated record participation in the R Association Mentorship Program, expanded career development initiatives like Beyond the Hedges, and strengthened our impact through letterwinner engagement and partnerships. These outcomes underscore the importance of supporting our student-athletes and providing them with a best-in-class experience, ensuring they thrive as competitors, scholars, and leaders. We could not be more proud of their achievements and the legacy they are building for Rice Athletics.



# BRIAN MCDEVITT

In its second year, the Flight Plan program continued to break records in student and alumni engagement. Rice student-athletes set new highs in community service hours, attendance at the Beyond the Hedges Mock Interview and Networking Event, and participation in individual counseling sessions. Our Letterwinners also increased their involvement in Rice Reunions and SOAR programming by over 10%, with a record 78 Rice Letterwinners signing up for the R Association Mentorship Program. The future of Rice Athletics is bright—thanks to the exceptional people we have both on the field as student-athletes and beyond it as lifelong Letterwinners.



# SOAR STAFF



#### **BRIAN McDEVITT**

### ASSOCIATE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR, STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPERIENCE & ENGAGEMENT

Brian McDevitt joined the Owls in May of 2022 as the Assistant Athletic Director of SOAR, Director of the R Association, and Rice Athletics' Diversity and Inclusion Designee. He came to Rice from Northeastern, where he served as the Assistant Director of Student-Athlete Support Services from 2018 to 2022.

Under McDevitt's leadership, the SOAR Office provides comprehensive support for student-athletes throughout their careers. This includes career and leadership development, DEIB education, NIL education, life skills, mental health and wellness, and senior transition services. The program aims to equip Rice student-athletes and letter-winners with the knowledge and opportunities to impact their communities positively.

In fall 2022, the SOAR Office and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee introduced four DEIB-focused affinity groups, including Rice Athletes of Color United (ROC-U), recognized as the Student Group of the Year at the 2023 Black Student-Athlete Summit. In fall 2023, the SOAR Office relaunched Flight Plan, a holistic development curriculum for student-athletes, with a 92% completion rate in its first year.

Before Northeastern, Brian held various roles, including football coach, mental performance consultant, and athletic academic advisor. He earned his BA in Philosophy and Psychology at Rhode Island, where he played lacrosse in the MCLA. Later, he obtained an MS in Exercise and Sport Psychology from Ithaca College.

Originally from Jamestown, Rhode Island, Brian resides in Houston Heights with his wife Hannah and two dogs, Chip and Salsa. He enjoys community service, golfing as much as possible, and creating supportive student-athlete environments.



#### **GILLIAN BURNS**

### ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF STUDENT-ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT & LETTERWINNER ENGAGEMENT

Burns currently serves as the Assistant Director of Student-Athlete Development and Letterwinner Engagement, a role she has held since July 2025, after spending nine months as the Coordinator of Student-Athlete Development at Rice.

As the Coordinator, Burns supports the mission of the Athletic Department's SOAR program which is designed to equip student-athletes with the training they need to thrive within and beyond the hedges. Additionally, she ensures the successful execution of Flight Plan, a program aimed at four years of personal and professional development.

Burns will also lead the Civic Engagement and Personal Enhancement pillar in the SOAR office, coordinating and maintaining programs meant to connect Rice student-athletes to the Rice and Houston communities and to help develop effective life skills.

Previously, Burns was the Assistant Commissioner of the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA). Her time with the MIAA was focused on student-athlete initiatives, coordinating conference championships, and assisting in governance operations. During her tenure at the MIAA, Burns was selected to serve as a facilitator for the 2024 NCAA Student-Athlete Leadership Forum.

In May 2022, Burns graduated with her master's degree from the University of Georgia. Prior to that, she earned the Outstanding Undergraduate award in Sport Administration and graduated with Summa Cum Laude honors from the University of Louisville in 2020.

The Alpharetta, Georgia native was a former rowing student-athlete at Louisville.

# PERSONAL ENHANCEMENT

# FLIGHT

#### WHAT IS FLIGHT PLAN?

The Student-athlete Opportunities for Advancement through Rice values (SOAR) department supports student athletes' ability to successfully navigate the transitions in, through, and beyond Rice University. Furthering the ability to think critically about our campus, community, and world, Flight Plan identifies key experiential learning opportunities that foster participation in all that Rice has to offer. Engagement with the SOAR Office and Flight Plan ensures that Rice student-athletes are positioned to prosper and that Owl alumni are equipped to soar!

#### FLIGHT PLAN CURRICULUM

Flight Plan curriculum requirements are assigned to student-athletes based on their academic class year and credits earned. Transfer student-athletes will begin their Flight Plan experience at their academic level. For example, if a transfer student-athlete completed two years of school at their previous institution, they would start their fall semester at Rice as a Third-Year in the "Look to Launch" curriculum as shown below.



#### YEAR 1: PILOT YOUR POTENTIAL

Z

- 1 Financial Literacy Event
- 1 Mental Health/ Wellbeing Event
- 4 hours Community Service

SPRING

- 1 Professional Development Event
- 2 Mental Health/ Well being Events
- 4 hours Community Service

#### YEAR 2: ELEVATE YOUR EXPECTATIONS

三

- 2 Professional Dev. Events
- 1 Mental Health/ Wellbeing Event
- Submit Resume to SOAR for Review
- 1 Resume Review Meeting (Fall or Spring)
- 4 hours Community Service

SPRIN

- 1 Professional Development Event
- 1 Mental Health / Wellbeing Event
- 1 Resume Review Meeting (If Not Completed In Fall)
- 4 hours community service

#### **YEAR 3: LOOK TO LAUNCH**

Ξ

- 2 Professional Development Events
- 1 Leadership and Belonging Event
- 4 hours Community Service

SPRIN

- Registration for R Association Mentorship Program
- 1 Professional Development Event
- 2 Leadership and Belonging Events
- 4 hours Community Service

#### **YEAR 4: TAKE FLIGHT**

7

- Participate in R Association Mentorship Program
- 1 Leadership and Belonging Event
- 1 Senior Transition Event
- 4 hours Community Service

SPRIN

- Participate In R Association Mentorship Program
- 1 Leadership and Belonging Event
- 1 Senior Transition Event
- 4 hours Community Service
- SOAR Senior Exit Survey

#### **YEAR 5: (UNDERGRAD) INCREASE YOUR ALTITUDE**

Ξ

- 1 Leadership and Belonging Event
- 1 Senior Transition Event
- 4 hours Community Service

SPRING

- 1 Leadership and Belonging Event
- 1 Senior Transition Event
- 4 hours of Community Service

#### GRADUATE/ POST-BACC: INCREASE YOUR ALTITUDE

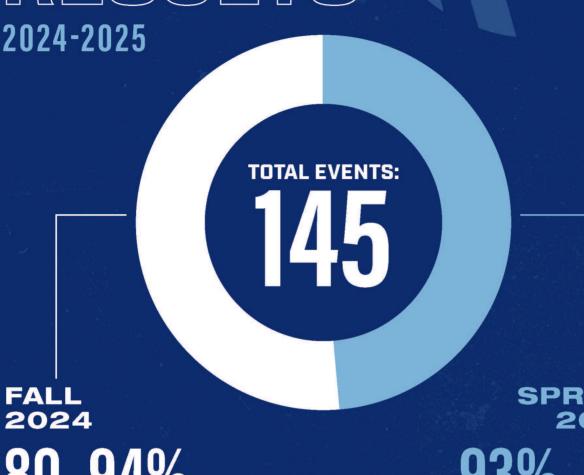
FAL

- 1 Leadership and Belonging Event
- 1 Senior Transition Event
- 1 Professional Development Event
- 4 hours of Community Service

SPRING

- 1 Senior Transition Event
- 1 Professional Development Event
- 4 hours of community Service

# FLIGHT PLARESULTS



**EVENTS** 

**COMPLETED REQUIREMENTS** 

384 Student-Athletes

**SPRING** 

**OF ELIGIBLE STUDENT-ATHLETES COMPLETED REQUIREMENTS** 

360 Student-Athletes

| 31 | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: 63 TOTAL | 32 |
|----|------------------------------------|----|
| 20 | LEADERSHIP & BELONGING: 48 TOTAL   | 28 |
| 16 | MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS: 38 TOTAL | 22 |
| 12 | FINANCIAL LITERACY: 23 TOTAL       | 11 |
| 19 | SENIOR TRANSITION: 36 TOTAL        | 17 |

# CAREER DEWELOPMENT

#### BEYOND THE HEDGES

Beyond the Hedges stands as our office's premier event, strategically crafted to provide Rice student-athletes with a secure and hands-on platform to evaluate their professional readiness. This annual event consists of an engaging "speed interview" segment followed by expansive networking opportunities, linking student- athletes with esteemed Rice University alumni, letterwinners, and professionals from diverse sectors within the Houston area.







#### **COMPANIES IN ATTENDANCE**

- Access Granted
- Accenture
- Alief ISD
- American Income Life
- · Andrews Myers
- · Bee's Believers
- BELFOR Restoration
- · Beyond 94 Feet
- Blackboxx
- Capco
- Carnite Ventures
- Chip Baker- The Success Chronicles
- · CS Disco
- · Department of Public Safety
- Deloitte
- ExxonMobil
- Full Circle Strategies
- · Goodyear
- · Graustark Laundry
- GSI Environmental
- Harris County -Houston Sports Authority
- Houston Astros
- · Houston Dynmo FC
- Houston Texans
- HISD
- HTX Sports Tech
- JPMorgan Wealth Management
- · Leave a Blessing
- Legacy Community Health
- Lockwood, Andrews, & Newnam
- McCarthy Building Companies
- McGovern Medical School
- Memorial Hermann
- Pyrophyte Acquisition Corp.
- Rice University
- Schlanger Law
- SCORE Houston
- Shell Oil
- Special Olympics Texas
- Tidal Loans
- Teach for America
- Texas Southern University
- The General
- Turner Unlimit-ED Ventures
- University of Houston
- University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Dentistry
- UTHealth Houston

#### PROFESSIONOWL DEVELOPMENT WEEK

Our ProfessionOWL Development Weeks occur biannually, providing essential career preparation programming for our student-athletes. These comprehensive weeks aim to instill confidence, foster experiential learning, and deliver vital information crucial for job and internship applications. Specifically, the Fall programming aligns with the Rice University Career Expo, while the Spring initiatives are aimed to ensure success at the Beyond the Hedges event.

#### **10 PROGRAMS**

- Field to Fashion Lunch and Learn
- NIL Office Hours with Opendorse
- WISE Houston NIL Panel
- NIL workshop with Opendorse
- CCD Expo Prep Workshop
- Accenture Consulting Workshop
- SOAR Resume, Cover Letter, and Career Planning Drop-in Hours
- Pitch Perfect: Elevator Pitch and handshake practice
- CCD Externship Lunch and Learn
- ProfessionOWL Dress
- Career Closet









# **CAREER CORNER**

The Career Corner was created to promote and market professional opportunities shared with the SOAR Office for the recruitment of Rice student-athletes and the broader student body. These opportunities include full-time positions, internships, externships, study abroad programs, scholarships, and other career-building experiences, all made accessible to our student-athletes. Delivered via email at least once a month, our aim was to feature job listings sourced directly from employers, alumni, as well as postings from the Rice University job board, 12Twenty. Beyond email distribution, our goal was to provide a centralized platform for these opportunities to be easily accessible.

#### 1 ON 1 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MEETINGS

Throughout the academic year, our office conducts numerous 1:1 career meetings with student-athletes. These sessions encompass a wide range of topics, including resume reviews, discussions about career paths, the significance of utilizing campus career resources, and other life skills. To underscore the importance of proactive career preparation, we made resume reviews mandatory for sophomore student-athletes. This initiative aims to instill a proactive mindset as they embark on their career journeys.

27 OPPORTUNITIES SENT TO RECRUIT RICE STUDENT-ATHLETES

100 + CAREER COUNSELING SESSIONS





RUF SOAR



WORKING

RAWSON MACNEILL

WORKING

**OWL SUMMER** 



WORKING



WORKING

**OWL SUMMER** 

#### WORKING **OWL SUMMER**



WORKING

**OWL SUMMER** 

# SUAR WORKING

SUMMER 2025

#### **COMPANIES RICE SOAR** STUDENT-ATHLETES INTERNED WITH INCLUDE:

- Allians Robotic (Duguit Technologies)
- Apache Corp.
- Aon
- Artemis Energy Partners
- Dr. Michael J. Egitto, DDS & Dr. Anthony M. Sconzo, DMD
- Georgia Institute of Technologu
- Houston Climate Justice Museum
- Independiente del Valle
- Iones Capital
- Legacy BioDesign LLC
- MD Anderson Cancer Center
- PHDermatology
- Rice University
- Rice University Housing & Dining
- US House of Representatives
- Veloci Running
- Viking Cold Solutions
- VMS ComputerShare

#### WORKING OWL SUMMER



JOHNSON

#### WORKING OWL SUMMER



SNAR

#### **WORKING** OWL SUMMER

SDAR

JULES

JOHNSTON



WORKING **OWL SUMMER** 

WORKING **OWL SUMMER** 



**WORKING** 

OWL SUMMER

#### WORKING **OWL SUMMER**



#### **WORKING OWL SUMMER**



WORKING **OWL SUMMER** 



WORKING OWL SUMMER

SDAR

**ARTHUS MORISSON** 

**DE LA BASSETIERE** 

**DUARTERMAN** SDAR

CAMILLE

**WORKING OWL SUMMER** 

SDAR

**WORKING OWL SUMMER** 



COLE **ANDREWS-HEITZ** SDAR

BENJAMIN **TIJERINA** SDAR

# LEADERSHIP . & BELONGING



The Owl-In Task Force is charged with addressing Rice Athletics' needs related to belonging, leadership, and community building. The Owl-In monitor, positioned above all student groups, establishes a framework that places leadership, belonging, and community building at the core of all student programming. Leaders of SAAC and its affinity groups will actively participate in, and report to, the Owl-In Task Force.





Lola Foord Co-President



Sydney Bogan Co-President



Ben Tijerina Secretary



Arayna Mickles
AAC Representative



Mark Perkins
AAC Representative



Sydney Morgan AAC Representative



Maggie Forbes
Student Associations Chair
Women's XC/T&F



Mimi Filkin DEIB Chair Swimming & Diving



Kate Twede Events Chair



Mia Nagle Community Service Chair Swimming & Diving



Riana Green Social Media Chai Wamen's XC/T&F



Christian Edgar Football Liaison



#### **OWL-IN TASK FORCE & AFFINITY GROUPS**

The Owl-In Task Force is a student- and staff-led initiative within Rice Athletics that fosters community, inclusion, equity, and belonging. It unites student-athletes, coaches, and staff to support diverse identities and drive cultural change through education and intentional programming.

#### 4 OWL-IN TASK FORCE MEETINGS

The Task Force includes four Affinity Groups:

**RICE ATHLETES WITH PRIDE (RAP): Supports** LGBTQIA+ student-athletes and allies through education, advocacy, and inclusive programming.

RICE INTERNATIONAL OWLS (RIO): Builds community for international athletes and supports cultural adjustment, career readiness, and transition resources.

RICE OWLS OF COLOR UNITE (ROC-U): Uplifts BIPOC student-athletes through dialogue, cultural celebrations, and alumni engagement.

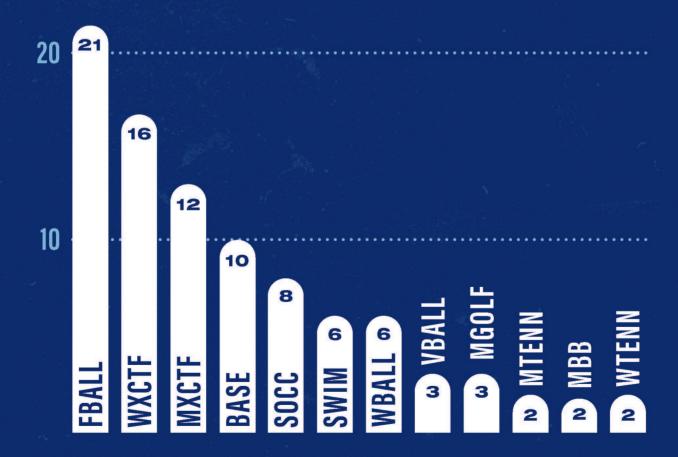
**RICE ATHLETES FOR WELLNESS (RAW): Promotes** 



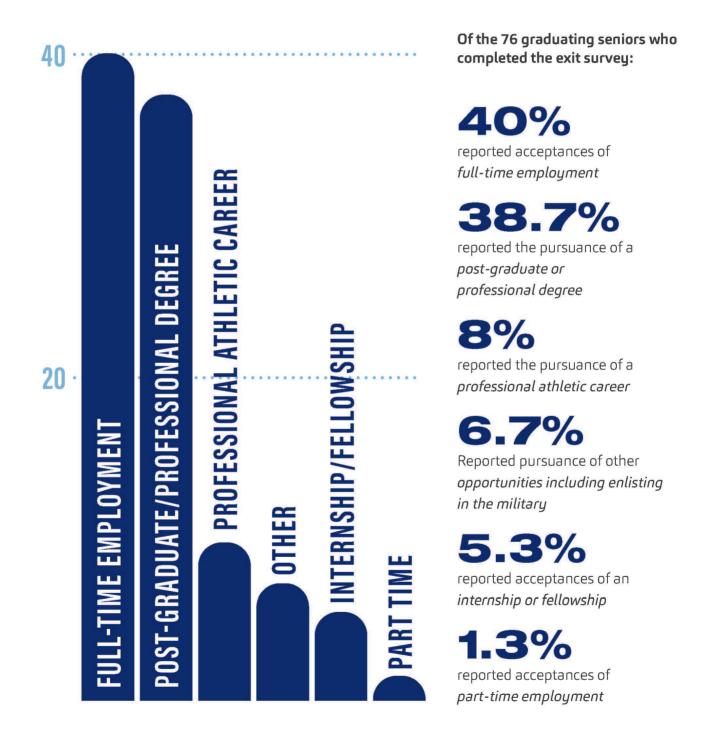
# GRADUATING SENIOR EXIT SURVEY

The 2024-2025 Graduating Senior Exit Survey was completed by 76 student-athletes representing all 14 varsity sports.. This high level of engagement ensures the reliability and accuracy of the following results concerning post graduate outcomes. Below Illustrates the number of student-athletes that graduated from each sport:

#### **GRADUATED SENIORS BY SPORT**



# POST-GRADUATING OUTCOMES



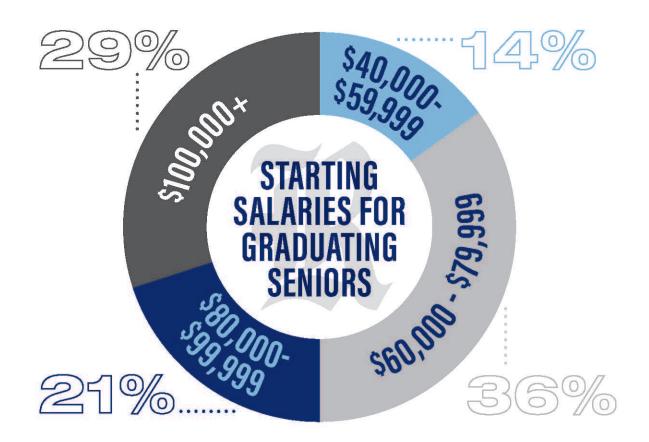
# COMPANIES & ORGANIZATIONS

#### **EMPLOYING RICE GRADUATING SENIORS**

- Accenture
- Athenian Group
- Boston Consulting Group
- Cadence Bank
- College Football Playoff
- Energy Transfer
- Ernst & Young (EY)

- Forvis Mazars
- Fortitude Systems
- Goldman Sachs
- GSI Environmental
- Houston Methodist
- INFI
- JLL

- KPMG
- PwC
- Rice University
- United Kingdom Government
- Willis Towers Watson/CRB
- · William Blair



STUDENT-ATHLETE GRADUATE AVERAGE SALARY \$82,836\*

## POST-GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS BEING PURSUED

- MASTER OF SCIENCE ENERGY GEOSCIENCE
- DOCTOR OF VETERINARY MEDICINE
- **DOCTOR OF ASTRONOMY**
- MASTERS OF DATA SCIENCE

- MASTER OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY
- MASTER OF ACCOUNTING
- JURIS DOCTORATE
- DOCTOR OF MEDICINE
- MASTER OF SOCIAL POLICY
- MASTER OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS
- MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
- **DOCTOR OF DENTAL SURGERY**
- MASTER OF MATERIALS SCIENCE AND NANOENGINEERING

## POST-GRADUATING INSTITUTION ACCEPTANCES

- THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
- CORNELL UNIVERSITY
- RICE UNIVERSITY
- PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

- UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
- TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
- UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE



Rice student-athletes logged 3,627 community service hours during the 2024-25 academic year. Rice student-athletes served at over 100 organizations spanning multiple categories. The most served organization was Hermann Park

Conservancy, and the service categories were; Food Insecurity, Environment, Children/ Youth Programs, and Houston Special Events.

3,627

Hours of Community Service for 2024-25

9.21

Average Community Service Hours per Athlete for 2024-2025



#### POPULAR EVENTS/ COMMUNITY PARTNERS INCLUDE:

- Chevron Houston Marathon
- First Tee Greater Houston
- Float2 Fly
- Foster Elementary
- Girls on the Run 5k
- Hermann Park
- Houston food Bank
- Houston Humane Society
- MD Anderson
- Rice Holistic Gardens
- Rice University Move-in Day
- Special Olympics
- Team Impact
- Wesley Community Center

# TOP 5 PERFORMING ATHLETES

**REEVE TARTER - MTFXC - 89 HOURS** 

**KATE TWEDE - WTFXC - 59 HOURS** 

**MALIA FISHER - WBB - 48 HOURS** 

**SOPHIE ZHANG - WSOC - 21 HOURS** 

**DARBY HARRIS - WVB - 20 HOURS** 

# TOP 5 PERFORMING TEAMS

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL - 11 HOURS/ATHLETE** 

MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY AND TRACK & FIELD -

WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY AND TRACK & FIELD - 10 HOURS/ATHLETE

**WOMEN'S SOCCER - 9.26 HOURS/ATHLETE** 

**FOOTBALL - 9.14 HOURS/ATHLETE** 





#### 2025 NIGHT OF THE OWL AWARDS BANQUET

As part of our commitment to highlighting and celebrating the accomplishments of our student-athletes, the "R" Association, SOAR Office, and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee presented the 2025 Night of the Owl Award Show, where we honored the moments of student-athlete excellence! Hosted by Nate Griffin, this ESPY's style award show is meant to celebrate our student-athletes, coaches, and staff for all of their amazing accomplishments.

#### **2025 AWARD WINNERS**

- Dr. Hubert E. Bray (Male) Scholar Athlete: Dominik Skorjanc
- Margie E. Sass (Female) Scholar Athlete: Julianna Dickman and Darby Harris
- Female Newcomer of the Year: Leah Chancey
- Male Newcomer of the Year: Tu Hampton
- Assistant Coach of the Year: Nick Grant
- Head Coach of the Year:Seth Houston
- Excellence in Rice Athletics Award: Bob Schlanger
- The Leland Winston, MD Courage and Diligence Award: Alli Zipoli
- Clanton/Winston Medical School Scholarship: Sydney Morgan
- Stancliff-Sass "R" Association Scholarship: Lola Foord
- Stancliff-Duckett "R" Association Scholarship: Christian Francisco
- Best Moment Award: Men's Tennis
- Joyce Pounds Hardy Award: Mckyla Van der Westhuizen
- Bob Quin Award: Arthus de la Bass









# CAMPUS PARTNERSHIPS & ENGAGEMENT

#### THE CENTER FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT (CCD)

During the 2024-25 academic year, CCD presented various opportunities for student-athletes to engage with classmates while receiving professional development and credits for the Flight Plan program. They also hosted events exclusive to student-athletes in conjunction with the S.O.A.R. department.

Highest attended events:

- Beyond The Hedges This initiative aimed to provide Rice student-athletes with a safe space to hone their interview skills while fostering meaningful connections with Rice alumni, letter-winners, and professionals from diverse industries across Houston.
- Career Expos The Center for Career Development hosts a Career & Internship Expo for all students and alumni each semester. This is a heavily attended event with students from every major and college. It is seen as the 'qame
- day' that all of the preparation events hosted by the CCD lead to.
- Elevator Pitch and Networking Workshop the workshop teaches students how properly introduce themselves in networking situations and how to tell their student-athlete story to employers.

#### DOERR INSTITUTE FOR NEW LEADERS

During the 2024-25 academic year, the Doerr office hosted two events exclusive to studentathletes in areas of Emotional Intelligence and Student Leadership Practices Inventory they also hosted several presentations during team meetings to engage with the student-athletes and highlight the different leadership programs and one-one coaching that are available to them.

#### OFFICE OF ACCESS AND INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the AIE helped students understand and appreciate racial, ethnic, gender, and other differences while creating opportunities to challenge prejudice and expand their cultural knowledge and appreciation. They hosted many programs, some aligned with our Flight Plan goals, and were brought to our attention soon enough to be eligible for credit.

#### **WELL-BEING & COUNSELING CENTER/TITLE IX SUPPORT**

2024-2025 School Year allowed for a strong connection to be made with the Rice Wellbeing Office. Rice Wellbeing came into Tudor to help with SAAC PWAA Trainings, 8 Student-Athlete Exclusive Flight Plan Mental Health & Wellness Workshops as well as hosted several Flight Plan Session open to all Rice Students.

#### OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUCCESS (OISS)

OISS consults annually with our Rice International Owls (RIO) Affinity Group facilitated by staff representative Mike Yeakel. In the fall semester we brought in OISS for a RIO Tax Meeting and Trivia night that was very well attended and well received. In the spring semester, RIO collaborated with OISS for an International Tailgate and potluck where we sources food from a variety of local international restaurants. OISS came and set up an information table for international students to ask questions and meet staff.



#### WHAT IS THE "R" ASSOCIATION?

The "R" Association is the permanent group representing and providing support for all Rice University Letterwinners. A Rice University Letterwinner is any individual who earns a letter for participation in a varsity sport. In recent years, participation has been expanded to include past student managers and trainers as well as cheer and dance team members.

#### WHO IS A RICE UNIVERSITY LETTERWINNER?

A Rice University letterwinner is any individual, male or female, who earns a letter for participation in a varsity sport. In recent years this distinction has been expanded to include individuals who also participated on "Freshman teams" as well as managers, trainers, cheer and dance team members. Honorary members are individuals selected by the "R" Association to receive an "Honorary R" for their long-standing support of Rice University.

#### WHAT IS THE MISSION OF THE "R" ASSOCIATION?

Connect, engage, honor, and support the letterwinners of Rice University to help them build and maintain affinity for Rice Athletics.

#### HISTORY- A CENTURY OF THE "R" ASSOCIATION

The Beginning: In 1913 several individuals led by Howard Fulweiler began the organization known as the "R" Association.

The Stancliff Years: In 1927, Fred Stancliff became the secretary/treasurer of the "R" Association, a position he held for 63 years. Fred and his wife, Florence, are credited for keeping the "R" Association operating through decades of Rice Athletics.

A New Direction: In 1999, the "R" Association took a new direction by hiring it's first executive director. The "R" Association board selected Don Knodel, a former men's basketball coach at Rice as its permanent administrator. Under Coach Knodel's direction, the "R" Association made countless substantial contributions to Rice Athletics and to the Rice University community.

In the spring of 2013, the "R" Association announced an affiliation agreement with the Rice University Athletics department.













Director - Wanna Hadnott, '84 Women's Tennis Director - John Coles, '71 Men's Basketball Director - Shannon Wright, '04 Women's Track & Field















#### Director - Jake Hicks, '11 Football From Left to Right:

Director - Evan Meeks, '02 Football

From Left to Right:

Director - Sharae James, 73 Women's Track & Field Director - Chance Allshous,e '23 Men's Track & Field Director - Hayley Kostyshyn, '21 Soccer Director - Brian McDevitt - Staff Emeritus - Don Knodel

#### 2024-2025

# LETTERWINNER ENGAGEMENT

#### LETTERWINNER REUNIONS

The "R" Association spearheaded 14 team-specific alumni reunions ...... throughout the academic year.

958 Letterwinners

Throughout the academic year, we engaged with an estimated total of 840 letterwinners, primarily through team reunions. This engagement showcased representation from a diverse range of graduating classes, spanning from 1959 to 2024.

In correlation with reunion registrations and team-specific giving, the total revenue reported throughout the academic year was \$25,750.

#### LETTERWINNER EVENTS AND OUTINGS

Apart from the individual alumni reunions for each team, there were 9 additional events and outings specifically crafted to involve our Rice letterwinners throughout the academic year:

- 7 "R" Association Tailgates
- · Letterwinners Day Game and On-Field Recognition
- Hoops & Hangout: Letterwinners Night at the Houston Rockets

#### SPONSORED AND COLLABORATIVE EVENTS

Working alongside campus partners, community collaborators, and internal athletic departments, the "R" Association contributed to the success of 10 events throughout the academic year:

- "R" Association Mentorship program
- "R" Association and Association of Rice University Black Alumni (ARUBA) Tailgate
- "Game Plan" Pro-Football Panel with Calvin Anderson and Peter Godber
- Talkin' Tech with Monica Bickert
- ROC-U Alumni Fireside Chat

- RIO International Alumni Panel
- Women's Leadership Panel
- 2025 Beyond the Hedges
- 2025 Night of the Owl
- "R" Association x Owl Club Social
- Wayne Graham Day and Street Dedication

#### **MENTORSHIP PROGRAM**

Officially launched this academic year, The R Association mentorship Program is meant to provide an opportunity for Rice Letterwinners to assist our current student-athletes with their personal, professional, and career growth.

We believe their diverse experiences positively impacted our Rice Owls by provided them with valuable insights on the transition to life beyond the hedges

78
Letterwinner
Mentors Signed Up

69
Senior Mentees in the cohort











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