



WICHITA STATE

ATHLETICS

2025 - 2026 Annual Report

CONTENTS

Five-Year Strategic Objectives	4
Year In Review	6
Learfield Directors' Cup	7
Shocker Spotlights	8
2025-2026 Wheaties	12
In The Community	14
Showcasing Wichita	15
Infrastructure Investments	16
Economic Impact	18
Classroom Wins	19
Degrees Earned	20
American Symposium	21
Elevating Fan Experience	22
We Fight For Wichita	23
Return of Nike	24
New Shockers/Staff Recognition	26
Passing The Mic	27

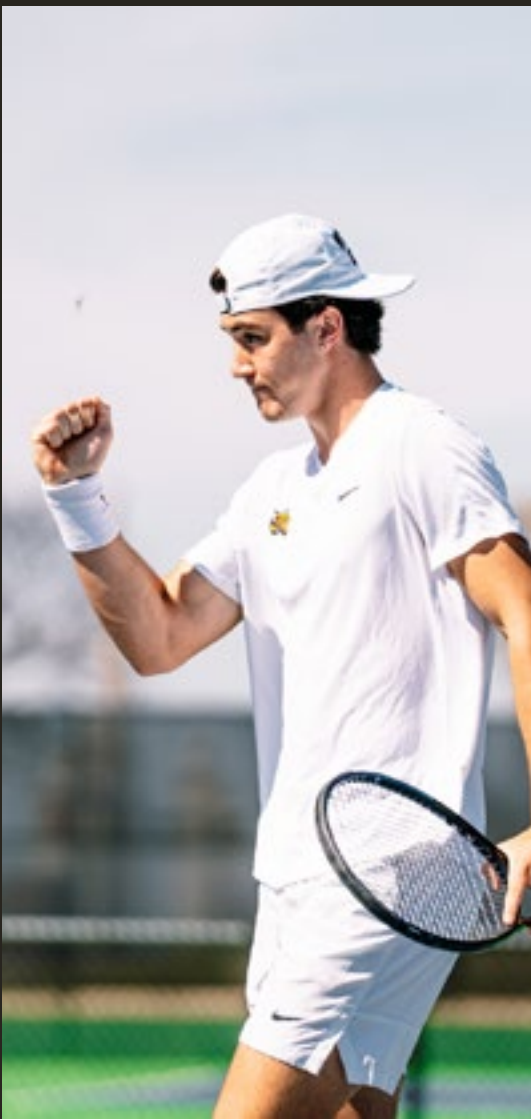
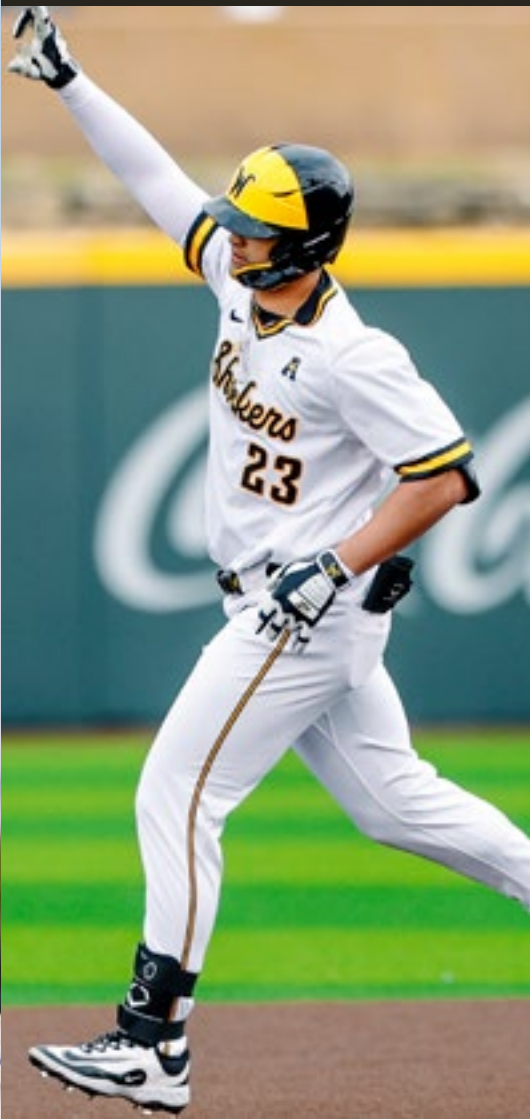


THE SHOCKER WAY

To develop young people and programs through first-class service to student-athletes, coaches and Shocker Nation.

In this publication, you will learn about how Wichita State Athletics advanced the priorities that support The Shocker Way during the 2025-26 academic year. From competitive excellence and academic achievement to community engagement and organizational growth, these pages highlight the progress made in developing young people and programs of which Shocker Nation can be proud. We are grateful for your continued support as we pursue our mission together.

Your investment is vital to the continued success of Wichita State Athletics and our commitment to providing a first-class student-athlete experience. The passionate support of Shocker Nation sets us apart from our peers and fuels opportunities for more than 270 student-athletes across 16 sport programs through scholarships, academic support, nutrition, strength and conditioning, facilities, leadership development and so much more.



FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Since launching the Wichita State Athletics Five-Year Strategic Objectives, our department has remained focused on building sustainable excellence across competition, community engagement, and academics. As we enter the final year of these objectives in 2026-2027, the following highlights the progress made during the 2025-26 academic year.



GOALS

ACADEMIC

3.00 GPA

(10 out of 10 semesters)

3.30 GPA

(5 out of 10 semesters)

3.40 GPA

(1 out of 10 semesters)

COMMUNITY

1,000

Community service hours by the athletic department, staff, and student-athletes

COMPETITIVE

15

American Conference Championships

2

NACDA/LEARFIELD Top-100 finishes

OUTCOMES

Academic Excellence

The foundation of Wichita State Athletics will always be the success of our student-athletes beyond competition, and this past year was one of the finest academic years in department history.

Our student-athletes achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.507, the highest annual GPA ever recorded by Wichita State Athletics. We also celebrated our 42nd consecutive semester with a departmental GPA above 3.0, while 83 percent of our student-athletes earned a 3.0 GPA or higher during the spring semester.

The consistency of our academic success is equally impressive. We have now achieved a departmental GPA of at least 3.3 in each of the last eight semesters, 3.4 or higher in five of the last six semesters, and 3.5 or higher in three of the last four semesters. These accomplishments reflect the discipline, commitment and culture our student-athletes and staff demonstrate every day.

Making an Impact Beyond Competition

We rely on the community for support and continue to embrace the responsibility that comes with representing Wichita. In 2025-26, student-athletes from all sports and staff members contributed 2,169.13 hours to projects throughout Wichita and the surrounding region.

Our department helped at Ronald McDonald House, Kansas Food Bank, Meals on Wheels, Starkey, Prairie Fire Marathon, and the Salvation Army, among many others. Team IMPACT matches children facing serious illness and disability with college teams, creating a long-term, life-changing experience. Track and field, baseball, softball, volleyball and baseball brought youngsters into practices, locker rooms and games in 2025-26.

Competing for Championships

Championships continue to be a defining characteristic of our department's progress. When we launched our strategic objective framework, we established an ambitious goal of winning 15 conference championships. Through the first three years of that plan, the Shockers have secured 12 championships, a testament to the commitment of our student-athletes, coaches and support staff.

That momentum continued throughout the 2025-26 academic year as we posted a 61.4 percent winning percentage in head-to-head competition, our first year above 60 percent since joining the American Conference.

Our progress is also reflected nationally. After finishing No. 247 in the Learfield Directors' Cup standings in 2023-24 and No. 151 in 2024-25, Wichita State recorded its best finish in the Learfield Directors' Cup since 2018 by placing No. 146 out of 365 NCAA Division I schools. The shockers have jumped 101 places within the last two years.

YEAR IN REVIEW



Track & Field

The Shocker men's track and field team won the American Conference outdoor championship with 171 points, 31 ahead of runner-up North Texas. It is WSU's third American outdoor title on the men's side, following 2022 and 2023. Josh Parrish led the Shockers with 26.5 points, the most by any athlete in the competition, to be named the American Conference Championship Most Valuable Performer. Parrish won the 110 hurdles and the long jump, finished fifth in the 200 and eighth in the triple jump. The Shocker women finished sixth, two points out of fourth, with Rice winning the title. Jasmine Stiede won the 800 meters and was named the meet's Freshman of the Year.

Three Shockers advanced to the outdoor NCAA Track and Field Championships in Eugene, Oregon, and all three earned All-American honors. Jason Parrish (second team All-American for a second time) placed 11th in the 400-meter hurdles. Twin brother Josh Parrish earned honorable mention All-American in the 110-meter hurdles and long jump. Jelese Alexander tied for 19th to earn honorable mention All-American honors in the high jump.



Men's Tennis

The Shocker men's tennis team finished the season No. 68 in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association rankings, its first spot in the final list since 2021. WSU went 13-10 and peaked at No. 57 in the ITA rankings.



Golf

Senior Jose Miguel Ramirez compiled a career stroke average of 71.24, best in men's golf program history. His single-season average of 71.03 is the second lowest. Senior women's golfer Mackenzie Wilson also set the career mark at 75.22. Fellow senior Kate Tilma finished her career at 75.35, second on the list.



Baseball

Three Shocker baseball players were named to the 2026 American Conference All-Conference Teams. Jayson Jones was

named first team third baseman and Newcomer Position Player of the Year, while right-handed pitchers Matthew Cuccias and Brady Pacha were named second team starting pitcher and relief pitcher. The Shockers advanced to the semifinals of the American Conference Championship with wins over FAU, Memphis and UAB.



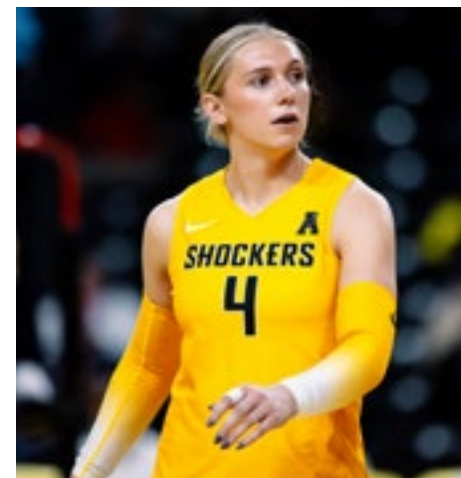
Women's Basketball

Abby Cater, Taya Davis and Maimouna Sissoko of women's basketball earned spots on the College Sports Communicator's Academic All-District team.



Cross Country

Sophomore Elkana Kipruto earned All-American recognition by finishing 24th at the NCAA Men's Cross Country Championship in November, becoming the first male Shocker since 1992 to earn All-American honors. Kipruto also won the American Conference Championship, the first ever Shocker man to do so, and was named the American Conference Runner of the Year. Kipruto, along with Adrian Diaz Lopez and Lucy Ndungu were also named All-Region, and five Shockers earned all-conference accolades. Mercy Jepkoech claimed the American Conference Women's Freshman of the Year title, and Austin Carrera was named to the All-Freshman team.



Volleyball

Right-side Brooklyn Leggett earned All-Conference honors as a senior for the Shockers after averaging 3.53 kills a set. Outside hitter Sydney Dunning, a junior, earned a spot on the second team after averaging 3.56 kills. The Shockers went 19-11, 10-6 in the American and reached the semifinals of the conference tournament.



Hall of Fame

In November, the 2026 Pizza Hut Shocker Sports Hall of Fame class was announced. Tanya Friesen (Women's Track and Field), Billy Hall (Baseball), Lew Merriman (Men's Track and Field), Damon Sublett (Baseball) and Jazreel Tan (Women's Bowling) were honored in February.

For more Shocker Spotlights see pages 8-11

(Men's Basketball p.8, Softball p.9, Women's Tennis p.10, Bowling p.11)



LEARFIELD DIRECTORS' CUP



Wichita State University recorded its best finish in the Learfield Directors' Cup since 2018 by placing No. 146 out of 365 NCAA Division I schools.

WSU improved by five spots in the national ranking of university NCAA success from 2024-25 and 101 spots from 2023-24. Our 2026 point total of 115 is our most since the 2017-18 school year.

"The hard work and commitment of our Shocker student-athletes, coaches and staff continue to elevate Shocker Athletics," Director of Athletics Kevin Saal said. "This achievement is also a reflection of the unwavering support from our fans, alumni, donors and the university. We are grateful for the investment in our programs, and everyone who supports the Shockers should take pride in the role they have played in our continued rise in the Directors' Cup standings."

Wichita State earned points for women's bowling finishing as the NCAA runner-up and women's tennis' at-large qualification for NCAA play.

Among NCAA Division I-AAA (non-football) schools, Wichita State ranks No. 19 out of the 100 institutions.

The Shockers rank No. 7 in the American Conference with 115 points.

The Learfield Directors' Cup was developed as a joint effort between the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) and USA Today. Points are awarded based on each institution's finish in NCAA Championships.

Nineteen sports are counted for the final standings, including the five countable sports (men's and women's basketball, baseball, women's soccer and women's volleyball), and the next highest 14 (max.) sports scored for each institution, regardless of gender.

SHOCKER SPOTLIGHTS



Men’s Basketball

There are many ways to measure the success of Wichita State basketball. Beyond the numbers, stick around a few minutes after a game at Charles Koch Arena and watch the kids.

In 2025-26, young Shocker fans underlined basketball’s return to a position of prominence. They asked for autographs. Coaches and players signed jerseys, shirts and shoes. They wore No. 1 jerseys for Kenyon Giles, the high-scoring guard who took a lead role to revitalize Shocker basketball in his one season.

“I love the crowds,” Giles said in March. “I love the fans. I love the community. And they love me back. It’s a one-of-one feeling.”

The crowds grew in February and into March – kids lining up by the tunnel after games as the Shockers got hot.

“Wichita State has a passionate fan base,” coach Paul Mills said. “What makes it special are the crowds.”

The Shockers earned that support with a seven-game win streak that started in February and propelled them into a tie for second place in the American Conference – their best finish since the 2021 title. WSU stood 2-3 in the conference before finishing 13-5 with a win over first-place USF and two over Memphis.

Wichita State returned to the National Invitation Tournament and defeated Wyoming and Oklahoma State before losing at Tulsa. The Shockers (24-12) passed the 20-win mark for the first time since 2019-2020 (23-8) and won postseason games for the first time since it advanced to the 2019 NIT semifinals. Giles and fellow senior Karon Boyd set the tone for success, Mills said. The Shockers have increased their win total every year under Mills, going from 15 to 19 to 24. His 58 wins are the second most for a WSU coach after three seasons (behind Eddie Fogler’s 61 from 1986-89).

Giles earned a spot on the All- Conference team after averaging 19.1 points. He set WSU’s season record for three-pointers by making 125. His season total of 689 points ranks third in the record books behind Xavier McDaniel (844 in 1984-85) and Dave Stallworth (769 in 1963-64).

Boyd, a defensive standout who improved his three-point shooting at WSU, was named Third-Team All-Conference.

“They’ve elevated the room,” Mills said in March. “They made tentative players bold.”

WSU’s momentum carried into the off-season. Ten of fifteen Shockers– including Will Berg, Dillon Battie, Michael Gray Jr., and TJ Williams, will return for next season.



Dynamo Capital Presenting Partnership

In September, Dynamo Capital started a six-year partnership as the season presenting partner for Shocker Men’s Basketball. Dynamo Capital is a private lender built by and for Wichitans. The partnership provides high-profile signage, digital and social media branding, and enhanced fan engagement promotions. The strength of this partnership is the mutual focus on improving the quality of life in Wichita and the positive connection to the impact of Shocker Athletics throughout the community.



Softball

Wichita State played 14 must-win conference softball games and won them all in 2026. That late-season streak that secured a share of the American Conference title looks very much like the first step in another strong era of softball.

“We’re very young and very stubborn,” infielder Ausha Moore said late in the season. “When Coach (Kristi Bredbenner) presented to us what we needed to do, I think instead of being nervous or scared, we just took it and ran with it. We started playing how we probably should have been playing the entire year.”

The Shockers finished 35-17, 21-6 in the American, its most wins since 2023 (44-12). Their No. 52 spot in the NCAA’s power rankings shelved them among the four teams closest to an at-large spot.

Considering the roster contained 14 newcomers, the strong closing finish and share of the title represents a success. The Shockers stood 11-10, 1-2 in the American, on March 8. A win at No. 15 Oklahoma State started a nine-game win streak and catapulted WSU into the conference race.

Much of the talent who endured ups and downs early in the season before hitting stride will return for 2027.

WSU led the conference with a .315 batting average, a .555 slugging percentage and 85 home runs. The pitching staff’s 3.79 earned run average ranked fourth.

Third baseman Kinzey Woody earned Player of the Year and Freshman of the Year honors in the American Conference. Moore, who split

time between third and designated player, and pitcher Ryley Nihart joined Woody on the all-conference team. First baseman Trinity Allen and second baseman Kammie Smith grabbed spots on the second team.

Woody also earned Freshman All-American honors from Softball America. Softball America ranked Moore No. 79 on its top 100 list from the 2026 season. Woody hit .359 with 11 doubles and 14 home runs. Moore’s 23 home runs place her third on the season list. She also led the Shockers with a .397 batting average and a .950 slugging percentage.

SHOCKER SPOTLIGHTS



Women's Tennis

Not long ago, Wichita State women's tennis expected to play in the NCAA Tournament. The Shockers qualified 12 times in 13 seasons from 2006-2018.

After dominating the Missouri Valley Conference, the road got tougher in the American Conference. A steady rebuild in recent seasons paid off this spring with WSU's return to the NCAA's for the first time since 2018, a final national ranking of No. 35 and a 21-5 record.

A superb regular-season – one featuring a 19-match win streak and wins over opponents such as No. 47 Nebraska, No. 46 Iowa, No. 39 Kansas and a split with No. 42 Rice – made the Shockers a lock for an at-large spot.

When junior Giorgia Roselli showed up to watch the NCAA selection show in the Champions Club in late May, she knew the

64-team field would include Wichita State. Instead of seeing friends on other teams celebrate, she would see the Shockers called.

"This time was more personal," she said. "Much better. I was nervous and excited that we're going to the NCAA. It's amazing."

A loss to Rice in the conference tournament final was a disappointment, but the Shockers largely fulfilled their preseason goals. New coach Jacob Eddins met with five seniors and two juniors in September and learned they had high expectations. In 2025, under coach Colin Foster, the Shockers went 13-10 and finished the season No. 60 in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association rankings.

"The team was in a great place when I got here," Eddins said. "Credit goes to the girls

and how close they are and how much they care for one another and Wichita State."

Xin Tong Wang was named American Conference Player of the Year. Giorgia Roselli and Theodora Chantava joined her on the All-Conference Team. Eddins earned ITA/Dunlop Central Region Coach of the Year honors.

In the fall, Wang and Roselli won the American Conference doubles championship. Roselli finished as runner-up in singles.

"We have a special chemistry from being here for four years," senior Kristina Kudryavtseva said. "We're seeing how the team developed, step by step, better and better every year."

The group that stuck together enjoyed the reward of returning Shocker tennis to NCAA play.



Women's Bowling

Wichita State women's bowling entered NCAA competition in 2024 with high expectations. Two seasons later, those expectations are all but realized.

The Shockers finished as NCAA runner-up in April in its second trip to the Final Four in two attempts. Of course, elite performance is what Shocker bowling is known for after the program won 11 Intercollegiate Team Championships in its time as an independent varsity sport before moving to the athletic department.

"Put our feet down and fight," coach Holly Harris said after the national semifinal win over Vanderbilt. "That's been our motto the

last two, three weeks. They do it and they do it so well."

Wichita State took the hard route to the championship match. In Arlington Regional play, it opened with a loss to Newman before defeating Bryant, Newman and Louisiana Tech twice to advance.

The Shockers opened Final Four play in Parma, Ohio, by losing to top-seeded Jacksonville State. They rebounded with wins over Arkansas State and Vanderbilt before losing the final to Jacksonville State.

Harris praised her team's ability to adjust and recover to the ups and downs of a long season after the championship defeat.

"Their response to adversity was really impressive," she said. "Every time I've asked them to do something different, they've been like 'OK, we're going to.' Their response when things get hard is like 'Yea, this is just another hard thing we get to do together. That's the trait of championship teams.'"

Aleesha Oden earned National Tenpin Coaches Association All-American honors with Sara Duque Jiménez and Ashtyn Woods on the second team. Paige Wagner, the team's lone senior, was an honorable mention pick.

2025-2026 WHEATIES

Each spring, Wichita State recognizes student-athletes from each sport for outstanding achievements on the playing surface in the classroom & community. For 13 years, the annual awards ceremony has rewarded Shockers for their work and enthusiasm.



2025 - 2026 WHEATIES AWARDS

Ausha Moore - Softball
Female Newcomer

Brady Pacha - Baseball
Male Newcomer

Sarah Bertry - Cross Country
Scholar Athlete

Theodora Chantava - Women's Tennis
Female Breakthrough Athlete

TJ Williams - Men's Basketball
Male Breakthrough Athlete

Allie Paulsen - Volleyball
Shocker Spirit Award

Trace Spires - Men's T&F
Shocker Spirit Award

Gabi Maas - Volleyball
Comeback Athlete

Emerson Wilford - Volleyball
Female Heart of a Shocker

Kenyon Giles - Men's Basketball
Male Heart of a Shocker

Mickayla Tosch - Softball
Female Iron Shocker

Brady Hamilton - Baseball
Male Iron Shocker

Raiden Bacon - T&F via "Team Impact" program
Unbreakable Spirit Award

Abby Rexford - Women's T&F
Best Dressed

Women's Golf Team
16:1 Wu-Ward

Bowling
Shocker Way Wu-Ward

Elkana Kipruto - Men's T&F/Cross Country
Male Athlete of the Year

Sara Duque Jimenez - Bowling
Female Athlete of the Year

Bowling
Team of the Year

Steve Feilmeier & Regine - Donor
Legacy Award

Kevin Saal - Director of Athletics
Best Sneakers

Co-Moments of the Year:

Giorgia Roselli & Xin Tong Wang - Women's Tennis (Match Point to win American Conference doubles championship)

Distance Medley Relay Team - Women's T&F (Indoor American Conference Championships Race Win)

Inspiration & Impact Awards:

Baseball:
Collin Wilber - Assistant Coach
Inspiration
Brady Hamilton
Impact

Men's Golf:
Mouhamad Ballout - Director of Mental Health
Inspiration
Jose Miguel Ramirez
Impact

Volleyball:
Katie Zimmerman - Assistant Coach
Inspiration
Jordan Heatherly
Impact

Women's Tennis:
Chad Kissell - Assistant Coach
Inspiration
Giorgia Roselli
Impact

Men's Basketball:
Paul Mills - Coach
Inspiration
Karon Boyd
Impact

Women's Basketball:
Jasmine Morris - Assistant Director of Sports Performance
Inspiration
Bre'Yon White
Impact

Women's Golf:
Lucy Parson - Equipment
Inspiration
Mackenzie Wilson
Impact

Softball:
Elizabeth Economon - Associate Head Coach
Inspiration
Ausha Moore
Impact

Men's Tennis:
Nick Taylor - Director of Operations
Inspiration
Alejandro Jacome
Impact

Men's T&F/XC:
Heidi Benton & Tanner Brown - Assistant Coaches
Inspiration
Trace Spires
Impact

Women's T&F/XC:
Aliyah Fertig - Assistant Coach
Inspiration
Sadie Millard
Impact

Women's Bowling:
Kat Hollowell - Assistant Director of Sports Medicine
Inspiration
Paige Wagner
Impact

IN THE COMMUNITY

Community Service

Wichita State Athletics relies on its community for support and annually returns that favor with community service projects. In 2025-26, student-athletes from all sports and staff members contributed **2,169.13 hours** to projects.

“Many of them have fallen in love with Meals on Wheels and the Ronald McDonald House and are choosing to spend their free time there continuing to make an impact even outside of required hours,” said Sydney Brummett, student-athlete experience coordinator. “It’s very heartwarming to hear about when they come in to report their hours.”

While Shockers served dozens of organizations throughout the year, three initiatives accounted for much of our community engagement:

Serve-a-Thon, which totaled 411.5 hours with 213 volunteers performing tasks such as delivering meals, cooking pancakes at the Ronald McDonald House, spreading mulch in the orangutans exhibit at the Sedgwick County Zoo and playing bingo at Starkey.

The **We Love Wichita campaign** in February put our teams back in the community helping various organizations.

Team IMPACT matches children facing serious illness and disability with college teams, creating a long-term, life-changing experience. Track and field, baseball, softball, volleyball and baseball brought youngsters into practices, locker rooms and games in 2025-26.

The Shockers helped at Ronald McDonald House, Kansas Food Bank, Meals on Wheels, Starkey, Prairie Fire Marathon, and the Salvation Army, among many others.



SHOWCASING WICHITA

While Shocker competitions command most of the attention, Wichita State is committed to hosting events that bring the community to campus, visitors to Kansas and add economic benefits to the region.

Upgraded facilities and support from the community make Wichita and Wichita State a place valued for its ability to welcome guests and host events of all sizes.

NCAA Tournament
Wichita and Wichita State will continue their history as a site for March Madness action the next two seasons.

Wichita has been selected to host opening round games for the 2027 and 2028 NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball Championship at INTRUST Bank Arena.

Wichita and Dayton, Ohio, which has served as the host city for the start of the tournament since 2001, both will host three games each day on the Tuesday and Wednesday after Selection Sunday. The change was necessitated by the decision in May to expand the tournament field from 68 to 76 teams.

Wichita State University will serve as the host in partnership with Visit Wichita, Sedgwick County and the City of Wichita.

The NCAA chose Wichita because of our city’s history of supporting college basketball. Our goal is to make the Opening Round in Wichita a part of March Madness for years to come. We are confident that a sold-out venue, community support and our state’s passion for basketball will make Wichita a signature part of the NCAA Tournament.

KSHAA State Track and Field Championship at Crossland Stadium
Each spring, the nation’s largest high school track and field meet brings an estimated 12-15,000 people to Crossland Stadium for two days at the KSHAA State Track and Field Championship. The meet brings boys and girls from all six classifications to one site to compete for titles.

With the exception of 1978 (when track renovations split the meet into three

locations), Wichita State has been the site of every state meet since 1970, and future stadium construction phases are designed to allow that run to continue uninterrupted.

Crossland Stadium is undergoing a complete renovation that, when complete in 2028, will make it one of the nation’s finest facilities. This year, the stadium upgraded from eight lanes to nine, with 48-inch lanes.

In addition to the track, the facility features two areas for the long jump and triple jump in corners on the east side, outside of the track. Pole vault pits can be set up to account for winds from all directions, eliminating the need to switch pits during a practice or meet.

“The way the whole thing lays out, with the pole vault, long jump and triple jump outside of the oval, is really special,” WSU Director of Track and Field Steve Rainbolt said. “It will create some great spectator viewing.”

Exchange zones for the 400-meter relay are colored gray, which helps the athletes and enhances the race for fans. Tiered landscaping on the south side provides fans a better place to watch.

Outside the stadium, a throwing area accommodates the javelin, with a longer runway, hammer and discus. The shot put rings move from inside the stadium. Next to the throwing area are three 80-meter warm-up lanes.

Wichita State projects the state track meet generates \$7 million in economic impact with more than 3,000 athletes and attendance averaging between 12-15,000 both days.

American Conference Championships
Wichita State will play host to four American Conference championships in 2027 and 2028.

Wilkins Stadium is first up as the site of the softball tournament in May 2027. The Shockers most recently hosted the tournament in 2024.

In the fall of 2028, Clapp Cross Country Course is the site of the American cross country meet. In the spring of 2028, Ignite at K-96

tennis facility will hold the men’s tennis tournament. The American outdoor track and field championship is scheduled for Crossland Stadium, formerly University Stadium, in the spring of 2028.

WSU previously hosted the American cross country meet in 2020 and 2024. The track championship was also in Wichita in 2019 and 2022.

Women’s Basketball Invitation Tournament
The WBIT, which started in 2024, returns to Charles Koch Arena on March 29 and 31 for its semifinals and championship.

In 2026, the 32-team field included Kansas State, Stanford, American Conference regular-season champion Rice, Harvard, Texas A&M and Missouri. BYU, Kansas, Columbia and Wisconsin advanced to Wichita. Columbia defeated BYU in the title game.

KSHSAA baseball, softball & basketball
Kansas high schools will also visit Wichita to compete for baseball, softball and basketball championships on campus.

Baseball teams played the Class 6A and 5A semifinals and finals at Eck Stadium. The same classes played in softball at Wilkins Stadium. In March, boys and girls in Class 6A and 5A competed at Charles Koch Arena.

National Baseball Congress
The National Baseball Congress World Series returns to Eck Stadium this summer from July 23-31. Championship night at Equity Bank Park is Aug. 1.

The Basketball Tournament
The AfterShocks won the 2025 The Basketball Tournament title at Charles Koch Arena and they return this summer to shoot for another title.

The AfterShocks play a best-of-3 series vs. The Enchantment (New Mexico alums) on July 20-24 in Wichita. The winner of that series advances to play either Purple Reign (Kansas State) or JHX Hoops (Kansas).

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS



Crossland Stadium

In May, Wichita State University received approval to rename University Stadium to Crossland Stadium in recognition of Crossland Construction's significant contributions and longstanding connections to the university.

Crossland Stadium is home to Shocker track and field and the KSHSAA State Track and Field Championships, the nation's largest high school meet.

In addition to its transformational philanthropic support, Crossland has played a significant role in bringing WSU's Innovation

Campus to life by developing and constructing many of the facilities that have helped transform the university and strengthen connections among education, research and industry.

Construction is underway on Phase 2 of the stadium replacement project – recently named Crossland Stadium (also formerly Cessna Stadium).

Demolition of the west grandstand began in early June. Construction of the new west

stadium will be phased to ensure that seating is available for the 2027 KSHSAA State Track and Field Championships. Construction is scheduled to be complete before the 2028 KSHSAA State Track and Field Championships.



Wilkins Stadium

Wilkins Stadium, home of Shocker softball, is also undergoing renovations. Construction is underway on the Wadsworth Team Operations Center (Phase 1B) to the south of the new indoor practice facility at Wilkins Stadium. The project is anticipated to be completed in early 2027. Last fall, the Shockers moved into the indoor facility with an infield and batting cages.

Tennis Complex

In December, Wichita State and Family Destination Development LLC (FDD), led by Marty Cornejo and Ashley Cozine, announced plans for a six-acre tennis complex located within the 35-acre "Ignite at K-96" major multi-sport athletic complex, on the southeast side of the K-96 and Greenwich corridor.

The facility will feature 12 outdoor and six indoor courts, first-class team accommodations and a spectator capacity of 1,500.

Wichita State's men's and women's tennis teams will benefit from consolidated tennis facilities, which will be used year-round. The facility represents a best-in-class collegiate tennis complex nationally, equipped to elevate recruiting, enhance the student-athlete experience and expand programming.



Eck Stadium, Home of Tyler Field at Gene Stephenson Park

The home of WSU baseball added another area for fans to congregate with the Kosich Pavilion in left field. The pavilion, funded by Shocker supporter Thomas Kosich, offers two-tiered seating area with a unique field-level sight-line.

It pairs with the Kosich Korner in right field to make Eck Stadium's outfield one of college baseball's best.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

IN THE CITY OF WICHITA

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Between FY 2021-2025, Shocker Athletics invested about \$46.3M in capital improvement projects. After indirect and induced spending this contributed about \$79.4M to the economy.

SHOCKER ATHLETICS ANNUAL INVESTMENT

Shocker Athletics contributed \$59.9M annually to the economy which includes \$19.7M in tourist visitor spending.

EXPOSURE TO WSU

In 2024, there were approximately 655,500 visits to the arena. 26% of these visits occurred from people living out-of-town (home location is 50+ miles away).

IN THE STATE OF KANSAS

**\$202
MILLION**

GENERATED IN ECONOMIC IMPACT

**1,835
JOBS**

SUPPORTED AND SUSTAINED

**\$13.3
MILLION**

GENERATED IN STATE AND
LOCAL TAXES

NATIONAL MEDIA EXPOSURE & BRAND REACH

Every broadcast, digital impression, and national storyline featuring Wichita State elevates the visibility of Wichita as a destination - for business, tourism, and talent.

\$555,262,978

Wichita State Men's Basketball 2013 Final Four run generated an estimated \$555M in national media exposure value, demonstrating the scale of visibility our brand can deliver on the national stage.

With continued investment and competitive success, this level of exposure represents a repeatable, opportunity to elevate Wichita's national profile.

CLASSROOM WINS



Academics

Wichita State University student-athletes continued their success in the classrooms during the 2025-26 school year.

The cumulative grade-point average of 3.507 is the highest for an academic year in athletic department history. The department recorded its 42nd consecutive semester with a departmental GPA of 3.0 or higher in the spring semester.

Eighty-three percent of Shocker student-athletes earned a GPA of 3.0 or higher during the spring semester.

Fall 2025

Wichita State student-athletes recorded the second-highest cumulative grade-point average in school history with a 3.51 for the Fall 2025 semester.

It was also the 41st-consecutive semester of earning higher than a 3.00 cumulative grade-point average department wide.

Of the 225 student-athletes on the honor roll (above a 3.0), 55 earned a perfect 4.0 GPA, while 163 were named to the Dean's List (3.5 GPA) and 209 were named Shocker Scholars (3.2 GPA). Eighty-five percent of student-athletes were above a 3.0 GPA.

Spring 2026

Wichita State student-athletes recorded the third-highest cumulative grade-point average in school history with a 3.504.

Of the 220 on the honor roll (above a 3.0), 55 earned a 4.0 with 206 above a 3.2 GPA. The Dean's List included 163 student-athletes with a 3.5 or higher GPA.

NCAA Academic Progress Rate

The NCAA announced Division I Academic Progress Rate (APR) information for institutions across the country. Wichita State saw two programs honored for earning a multi-year Academic Progress Rate in the top 10 percent of all squads in their sport, which were volleyball and women's golf. Eleven programs earned a perfect score of 1,000 for the 2024-25 academic year – men's cross country, men's golf, men's tennis, men's track and field, women's basketball, women's bowling, women's cross country, women's golf, softball, women's tennis and volleyball.

DEGREES EARNED

Fall Graduates:

Arnad Mulamekic, Baseball
Katherine Galligan, Volleyball, Summa Cum Laude
Brooklyn Leggett, Volleyball, Cum Laude

Spring Graduates:

Kaleb Duncan, Baseball, Magna Cum Laude
Jaden Gustafson, Baseball, Cum Laude
Brady Hamilton, Baseball, Magna Cum Laude
Heitaro Hayashi, Baseball, Cum Laude
Ryan Morrison, Baseball
Brady Pacha, Baseball
Owen Washburn, Baseball, Magna Cum Laude
Cheyenne Banks, Women's Basketball
Sophie Benharouga, Women's Basketball
Taya Davis, Women's Basketball
Treasure Thompson, Women's Basketball
Kyleigh Ortiz, Women's Basketball, Cum Laude
Maimouna Sissoko, Women's Basketball, Magna Cum Laude
Bre'yon White, Women's Basketball
Luke Bracks, Men's Tennis
Alejandro Jacome, Men's Tennis
Theodora Chantava, Women's Tennis, Summa Cum Laude
Anne Knuttel, Women's Tennis
Kristina Kudryavtseva, Women's Tennis, Magna Cum Laude
Brooklyn Benn, Women's Golf, Magna Cum Laude
Mackenzie Wilson, Women's Golf, Magna Cum Laude
Jelese Alexander, Track and Field
Ma'Liyah Anderson, Track and Field
Sarah Bertry, Track and Field
Emma Bezdek, Track and Field, Magna Cum Laude
Caden Carlson, Track and Field, Magna Cum Laude
Alexander Cobb, Track and Field
Arantxa Cortez Vidal, Track and Field, Magna Cum Laude
Adrian Diaz Lopez, Track and Field
Isabella Evans, Track and Field, Summa Cum Laude
Alexis Gagnon, Track and Field, Cum Laude
Weston Hulse, Track and Field, Cum Laude



AMERICAN SYMPOSIUM



Wichita State played host to a record-setting American Conference Academic Symposium April 16-18 on the WSU campus. The symposium featured research presentations focusing on student-athlete well-being, student-athlete panels, and a keynote presentation. The annual event is sponsored by the conference's Academic Consortium, which also funds grants for faculty researchers.

The WSU-hosted symposium set an attendance record with more than 100 registrants. It also featured two new event extensions – a pre-symposium student-athlete development program co-led by the Shocker Career Accelerator and live-streaming of the various symposium sessions to bring the event to a larger audience.



Shocker Athletics had several representatives who were part of the symposium program. Student-athletes Trace Spires (track and field) and Kayla Van de Ven (women's golf) served as panelists, discussing "Managing Stress Through Rest and Recovery," and "Constant Change in College Athletics," respectively.

Student-Athlete development coordinator Sydney Brummett moderated a panel on Building a Championship Culture and volleyball coach Chris Lamb served as a panelist for that discussion.



ELEVATING FAN EXPERIENCE



Wichita State Athletics continued its commitment to evolving and elevating the fan experience during the 2025-26 academic year. Guided by fan feedback and a vision to make supporting the Shockers easier than ever, the department implemented significant changes across ticketing, customer service, giving and technology.

From introducing online season ticket sales and digital student tickets for the first time to redesigning its giving model and assigning dedicated relationship managers, nearly every aspect of the fan experience was reimaged. The result was a more accessible, transparent and personalized experience for every member of Shocker Nation.

The department's investment produced immediate results.

Wichita State sold more than **600 new season tickets** during the 2025-26 campaign while averaging **7,500 fans** over the final four men's basketball home games. Momentum has

continued into 2026-27 with more than **200 new men's basketball season tickets** sold since they've become available in March.

Among the most significant changes was the implementation of a unified ticketing benefits and seating donation model across all ticketed sports, making the process of purchasing tickets and supporting Shocker Athletics more consistent and easier to understand. Fans also benefited from the lowest entry-level men's basketball season ticket prices in 15 years, while every account holder was assigned a dedicated relationship manager to provide a more personalized customer service experience.

One of the department's largest initiatives entering 2025-26 was simplifying how fans support Wichita State Athletics. A new giving structure created clearer benefits, expanded tax-deductible opportunities and made supporting the Shockers easier to understand than ever before. To improve transparency, Wichita State also introduced a comprehensive donor guide to better educate

fans on giving opportunities and associated benefits. After the first year of the new model, more than 70 percent of account holders voluntarily gave above the required seating donation, demonstrating strong confidence in the department's new approach. The department also successfully launched the We Fight for Wichita Fund, creating another meaningful opportunity for supporters to invest in the future of Shocker Athletics and the student-athlete experience. Following the success of its inaugural season, the popular SASO souvenir soda cup and popcorn bucket program will return in 2026-27. Complimentary popcorn and low-cost soda refills will once again be available to SASO members at the \$1,500 giving level and above.

Community Tickets Initiative

The Community Tickets Initiative allowed six non-profit organizations to hand out more than 450 women's basketball tickets and more than 3,300 men's basketball tickets in 2025-26. The generous contributions of Shane and Kianne Prill, Rick and Barbara Hemphill, Tony and Sherl Weatherbee, Tom

and Myra Devlin, and Kirsten and Larry Teague made the program possible. David Jabara, Marc Farha, and Lisa Hambelton, on behalf of Mel Hambelton Ford, contributed to cover additional associated costs to enhance the experience for all attendees. The Community Tickets Initiative is underway for 2026-27. Call the Wichita State Athletics Ticket Office at (316) 978-FANS to purchase tickets and coordinate donations.

Baseball experienced one of its strongest attendance seasons in recent years, highlighted by nearly a 300 percent increase in group ticket sales and a 47 percent increase in paid attendance over the previous season. Student attendance also continued to grow throughout the year. Softball completed its first season featuring reserved seating and rewarded fans with a memorable championship run, culminating in an American Conference regular season title.

Looking ahead, Wichita State Athletics will continue enhancing the fan experience through the launch of a recent graduate season ticket program, a season ticket referral incentive program, expanded community ticket initiatives and additional digital enhancements designed to make attending Shocker events easier than ever.



WE FIGHT FOR WICHITA

College athletics continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace, and Wichita State Athletics is committed to ensuring Shocker student-athletes have the resources necessary to compete for championships while proudly representing Wichita. To meet the changing landscape of name, image and likeness (NIL) and revenue sharing, Wichita State Athletics launched the We Fight for Wichita Fund in 2025. The fund serves as the department's primary resource for roster recruitment and retainment, giving supporters a direct and tax-deductible way to invest in the future of Shocker Athletics while strengthening our sport programs.

The launch of the We Fight for Wichita Fund represented far more than a new fundraising initiative. It established Wichita State Athletics' long-term strategy for supporting student-athletes in the revenue-sharing era by creating a unified, transparent, and donor-friendly model that recognizes past investments while positioning the department for future success.

Through the new model, supporters now receive annual membership benefits and Shocker Priority Points for qualifying

contributions through one simplified system. To recognize those who helped build Wichita State's NIL efforts from the beginning, the department also retroactively awarded Priority Points for qualifying contributions dating back to July 1, 2021, ensuring early supporters received the recognition they earned while creating a seamless transition into the next era of college athletics.

Throughout its inaugural year, the We Fight for Wichita Fund generated tremendous momentum.

One of the year's signature initiatives was the 316 Campaign, which invited supporters to make a \$316 gift in honor of Wichita's area code. The campaign united new and longtime supporters around a shared purpose while providing critical roster resources during one of the most important recruiting and retention periods in college athletics. The response welcomed dozens of new supporters to the fund, inspired existing members to increase their investment, and demonstrated Wichita's commitment to helping recruit and retain championship-caliber student-athletes.

Momentum continued to build as the athletics year came to a close. On June 29, 2026, Wichita State Athletics announced a transformational **\$500,000 anonymous challenge gift** to the We Fight for Wichita Fund. The gift launched a dollar-for-dollar matching campaign, creating the opportunity to generate \$1 million in direct support for Shocker student-athletes while providing tremendous momentum heading into the 2026-27 athletics year.

As college athletics enters a new era, the We Fight for Wichita Fund will remain one of Wichita State Athletics' most important strategic priorities. Every contribution helps recruit, retain and develop championship-caliber student-athletes while ensuring the Shockers remain competitive in an increasingly dynamic collegiate landscape. The We Fight for Wichita Fund is more than a fundraising initiative, it's a commitment from an entire community to invest in the future of Wichita State Athletics.

THE RETURN OF NIKE



The Nike Swoosh, one of the most prominent and powerful brands in sports, returned to Wichita State in 2025-26.

“Nike is the standard for what people look at in a program,” Shocker volleyball libero Gabi Maas said. “If you have Nike, it’s a bigger draw. My everyday stuff is a lot of Nike.”

The “Swoosh” always rules fashion plans for young people. The brand is an omnipresent cultural and athletic force, representing the most popular athletes, the coolest colors and the freshest designs.

“We’ve been trained – ‘Just Do It,’ from a young age,” said Dillon Battie, a forward on the men’s basketball team. “Everybody wears Nike.”

Most of the Shockers, in all sports, prefer Nike gear off the court (or field, course, lanes or track). Most of them eagerly awaited a return to Nike as WSU’s provider of uniforms, shoes and practice outfits.

If young people like it, coaches like it. In basketball, the connection with Nike and athletes starts early in life.

“Nike is a force in the basketball market,” men’s basketball coach Paul Mills said. “You get a lot of people who get an affinity for certain gear.”

In July, WSU started its Nike era for all sports. In 2017, it switched to Under Armour to end an era of sport-specific contracts (for example, men’s basketball wore Nike through 2019, baseball stayed with Under Armour and volleyball wore Adidas through 2019).

The five-year agreement with Nike provides uniforms, shoes and practice apparel for all sports. Bowling wears Nike for travel and workouts, but not competition. Many track and field athletes prefer Nike shoes because of the performance boost from the brand’s carbon plate technology.

Most prominently, Shocker men’s basketball returns to the Nike brand primarily worn since an early 1980’s switch from Converse.

Converse ruled the basketball market for decades, but that started to change in the 1970’s. Nike introduced its first basketball shoes in 1972 and began its major move in the 1980s.

Coach Gene Smithson arrived in 1978 and by 1980 the Shockers moved to Nike and stayed with the brand with brief exceptions. WSU wore Converse under coach Eddie Fogler in the late 1980s. Coach Mike Cohen took over in 1989 and switched to New Balance, a decision he said was driven by his friendship with Red Auerbach.

For coaches fighting for the slightest recruiting edge, the association with Nike is welcomed. Wearing the right shoes and gear may not seal the deal in the revenue sharing era, but it can put the Shockers in the right group of schools.

“When you talk about Nike in the basketball perspective, there are a lot more options on shoes and what players are comfortable with,” Mills said. “A lot of brands do a good job with clothes. Where Nike differentiates itself is from a shoe perspective. Basketball shoes, to basketball players, are pretty significant.”

Fans know all the reasons for the brand’s popularity. Michael Jordan. Kobe Bryant. LeBron James. Caitlin Clark. Sabrina Ionescu.

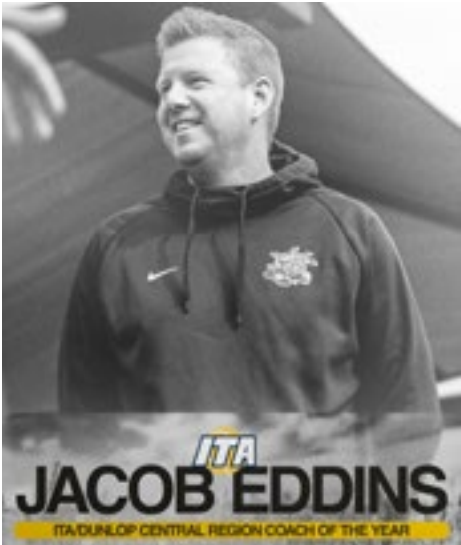
“It’s the most popular brand in the world,” women’s basketball coach Terry Nooner said. “We’ve got a lot of Kobe fans. You’ve got A’ja Wilson, who just came out with a shoe this summer. My daughter went crazy about being able to get the A’ja Wilson shoes. You’ve got Sabrina shoes.”

Nike is back at Wichita State. No matter the sport, the Shockers approve.

NEW SHOCKERS & STAFF RECOGNITION

Melanie Balcomb <i>Associate Head Coach-Women's Basketball</i>	Emily Hiebert <i>Director of Development and Roster Resources</i>	Alyssa Slayton <i>Assistant Athletic Director/Donor Experience & Premium Hospitality</i>
Mouhamad Ballout <i>Director of Mental Health and Performance</i>	Ethan Hite <i>Compliance Coordinator</i>	Connor Spensley <i>Creative Services Manager</i>
Tanner Brown <i>Assistant Coach-Track and Field</i>	Sam Kearns <i>Director of Player Development-Men's Basketball</i>	Rachel Swartz <i>Assistant Coach-Women's Basketball</i>
Sydney Brummett <i>Student-Athlete Experience Coordinator</i>	Chad Kissell <i>Assistant Coach-Women's Tennis</i>	Uyen Tran <i>Director of Operations/Assistant Coach-Women's Basketball</i>
P.J. Couisnard <i>Assistant Coach-Men's Basketball</i>	Michaela Kissell-Eddins <i>Assistant Coach-Women's Tennis</i>	Mandy Willems <i>Video Coordinator/Assistant Coach-Women's Basketball</i>
Sara Driesenga <i>Pitching Coach-Softball</i>	Josh Eilert <i>Assistant Coach-Men's Basketball</i>	Collin Wilber <i>Assistant Coach/Catching Coach-Baseball</i>
Jacob Eddins <i>Head Coach-Women's Tennis</i>	Marty Lees <i>Assistant Coach/Recruiting Coordinator-Baseball</i>	Abi Vito <i>Senior Director of Ticketing and Revenue Operations</i>
Josh Eilert <i>Assistant Coach-Men's Basketball</i>	Ainsley Malis <i>Assistant Coach/Director of Operations-Volleyball</i>	
Jason Foster <i>Pitching Strategist/Director of Analytics-Baseball</i>		

HONORS



Jacob Eddins
2026 ITA/Dunlop Central Region Head Coach of the Year for Women's Tennis



Kristi Bredbenner, Elizabeth Economon, Courtney Oliver-Elkins
American Conference Coaching Staff of the Year for Softball



Steve Rainbolt, John Wise, Heidi Benton, Tanner Brown, Aliyah Fertig, John Hetzendorf, Kirk Hunter, Adam Moore and Connor Vaughn
American Conference Outdoor Men's Coaching Staff of the Year for Track and Field

PASSING THE MIC



Mike Kennedy “an Enduring Voice”

From Antoine Carr to Kenyon Giles, from Mark Standiford to Sara Lungren, Mike Kennedy described a multitude of memorable Shocker athletic moments over the past 46 years as Voice of the Shockers.

Kennedy, 77, retired after Wichita State's baseball season to wrap up a career that included the radio calls on events such as the MTXE basketball era, the 1989 College World Series, volleyball's rise under coach Chris Lamb and the 2013 Final Four.

“I’ve gotten the opportunity to hear your voice as a fan, player and coach at WSU,” former Shocker pitcher Mike Pelfrey said. “There will never be another Mike Kennedy for Wichita State that will match your level of longevity and continued excellence. Thank you for connecting fans everywhere to Shocker nation.”

A graduate of Wichita State and Southeast High, Kennedy started doing WSU football and basketball on the radio in 1980. Since then he's been the voice of the Shockers on the radio for volleyball, men's basketball, baseball and assorted coaches shows. He also called volleyball on ESPN+ in recent years, in addition to serving as emcee and ambassador at banquets and booster events.

“You have been an enduring voice of hope, excitement and promise for hundreds of thousands of Shocker fans,” broadcast partner Dave Dahl said.

The National Sports Media Association named Mike Kennedy its 2025 Kansas Sportscaster of the Year.

He is a multiple-time Kansas Broadcaster of the Year and a 2005 inductee into the Kansas Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame. He is also a member of the Shocker Sports Hall of Fame (1995) and the Kansas Baseball Hall of Fame (2002). This summer, he will be inducted into the Kansas Sports Hall of Fame.

“Mike Kennedy is synonymous with Wichita State and his connection to – and throughout – our journey is immeasurable,” Director of Athletics Kevin Saal said. “His professionalism, authenticity, and unwavering commitment to excellence have elevated our broadcasts, uniquely connected Shocker Nation to our sports programs in authentic ways and strengthened the Shocker brand for nearly half a century.”



New Voice of the Shockers

The new Voice of the Shockers comes from a background very much like his predecessor. Denning Gerig, 32, was named Director of Broadcasting for Wichita State Athletics in June and will assume play-by-play responsibilities for men's basketball and baseball beginning with the 2026-27 season. Gerig is a 2016 graduate of Wichita State who majored in communications with an emphasis in journalism. He attended Maize South High School, where he played baseball and basketball for the Mavericks. He replaces Mike Kennedy, a graduate of Wichita Southeast High School and a 1971 graduate of Wichita State.

“Growing up in Wichita and listening to Mike Kennedy broadcast Shocker Athletics, I knew from a very young age what I wanted to do in life,” Gerig said. “I’m deeply honored to follow in Mike’s footsteps and promise to bring Shocker fans the same level of commitment, preparation and love for this university with

every broadcast. I know from experience how powerful the connection is between Wichita State and this community. There is no place I would rather be and no job I would rather have.”

Gerig has been a familiar voice to Shocker fans for more than a decade. He first began broadcasting Wichita State events in 2015 as part of the university's initial Valley on ESPN3 productions and has since called baseball, volleyball, men's basketball and women's basketball contests on ESPN+, in addition to serving as color commentator with Kennedy on the road for Wichita State baseball. In addition to his broadcasting duties, Gerig will help lead the development of original content, storytelling initiatives and coaches' programming in partnership with Shocker Sports Properties and Wichita State Athletics, creating new opportunities for fans to connect with Shocker student-athletes, coaches and programs throughout the year.

