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WARRIOR WITHIN

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TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONS**
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The Simple Lesson Of An Apple

By Rob Fournier, esq,
Director of Athletics

I have met a lot of smart people in my time. Some have even told me so. Unfortunately I have witnessed others “belittled” because of their lack of understanding of a subject, their inability to grasp the nuances of a topic, or sometimes, in the case of a student-athlete, to perpetuate a false stereotype.

Not long ago I happened to interact with a hospital resident – one of the best and brightest of our younger population. I had a question that I was not sure was in her area of expertise and thought maybe I should wait until I saw the doctor who had unexpectedly been delayed. “Go ahead and ask me your question . . . you know I am pretty smart.” I guess that kind of self-assuredness can be refreshing. In this case maybe more for her than for me. I lean more toward the “imaginary” medical doctor in the Norman Rockwell painting who seemed more patient-concerned than in their own self-aggrandizement.

Ah, the smartest person. Throughout history some have debated that reference and even identified some possible candidates. The short list – Albert Einstein, Bill Gates, Stephen Hawking. But personally that identification has never seemed the least bit interesting to me. Maybe it is because I am not that smart a guy – trust me I can find a lot of folks who agree with that perception. But I sense it was a lesson learned a long time ago on a country road, in an orchard, eating an apple.

It happened many, many years ago. And even though I was not more than five or six years old at the time, it has never left me. As it happened, my grandfather was driving the car with me in the front seat and two of my older cousins in the back. They were five or six years older. I loved to be outside and the chance to ride in a car and see even more countryside was exhilarating. There were no seatbelts, no padded dash, not even a radio. Even though I was always tall, I must have been sitting with my legs bent to see out the large windows.

We pulled into an area of trees which I learned years later was an orchard my Grandfather’s friend wanted to buy. I don’t know the farmer’s name but for purposes of the story, let’s call him “Farmer Jones.” Well as the three of us cousins ran around my Grandfather examined a document, made some changes and then said it was “ok” to sign. Farmer Jones then put his mark on the document. You see, he could not read and had asked his friend my Grandfather to look at the document to see if it was fair and met his

Maybe . . . just maybe, we might be looking for the wrong person. Maybe the search should be for the kindest person. And in the end, that reward will last a lot longer than an apple.

understanding. No lawyers, no “charge” for the review, just two friends doing what friends do for each other. It was a simpler time.

Anyway we climbed back into the car, I being rewarded with an apple I am sure I could not have reached, or cleaned properly, and we assumed our aforementioned spots. However, it was not long before my two cousins started talking loudly and making fun of Farmer Jones. When we passed a speed limit sign they might say, “I wonder if Farmer Jones knows how fast to go?” There were other childish things like: “A, B, C . . . does Mr. Jones know the next letter?” My Grandfather said nothing.

However at one point he pulled the car over to the shoulder of the road and there to our right was an expansive piece of land. He then asked matter of factly the following questions: “Do you know what is growing in that field?” My cousins either said no or shook their head. “How about what kind of tree that is growing?” Again nothing. “And that farm machinery over there . . . do you know what it does or the crops it cultivates?” And then the lesson, after a short, effective pause, “Farmer Jones does? He knows what is growing and how to grow it. He knows when to harvest it and when to fertilize it. He knows how to work that machinery and what fruit grows on that tree.”

Nothing else was said. My Grandfather started the car and I sat perfectly quiet in the front seat eating a crisp fall apple and my two cousins sat quietly in the backseat. He came from a different generation – spoke little and took care of friends and family. There were no “unimportant” people.

I am not sure why that incident has stayed with me so many years – maybe the poignancy of the moment, maybe because my own father only completed the sixth grade, or maybe it was a lesson for my future in working in Universities and maybe meeting a resident or two along the way.

The smartest person in the world. Maybe . . . just maybe, we might be looking for the wrong person. Maybe the search should be for the kindest person. And in the end, that reward will last a lot longer than an apple.





Dasha Kuznetsova

Khadija Da-Silva

Linda Liong

Women's Tennis Claims GLIAC Tournament Title

The fourth-seeded Wayne State University women's tennis team (11-2 overall) won the 2018 GLIAC Tournament title after a 4-0 win over Northwood (10-2 overall).

This is Wayne State's second tournament title for women's tennis under the league's current format with the 2014-15 squad being the previous team. WSU won seven league titles in an eight-year span from (1975-79 and 1980-82) when the regular season and tournament were combined into one championship team with fewer conference members.

In the first round of the conference championships No. 4 seed WSU earned a 4-2 win over fifth-seeded Ferris State. With senior Dasha Kuznetsova (Moscow, Russia) and redshirt sophomore Khadija Da-Silva (Burlington, Ont.) winning at the first doubles flight, and senior Astrid Ciellza (Tecumseh, Ont.) and sophomore Stephanie Stamate (Windsor, Ont.) victorious at the third flight, the Warriors took the doubles point. Freshman Laura Cazacu (London, England) (No. 2), sophomore Linda Liong (Tanjung Kidurong, Malaysia) (No. 3), and Da-Silva (No. 4) defeated the Bulldogs in singles matches.

The following day, the Warriors swept first-seeded Grand Valley State, 4-0, in the semifinals. Kuznetsova and Da-Silva once again took a No. 1 doubles win, along with Liong and Cazacu at second doubles. The singles winners included Kuznetsova (No. 1), Liong (No. 3), and Da-Silva (No. 4). Kuznetsova's opponent had not lost a GLIAC set all season until she was defeated in the semifinals (6-3, 6-2).

Wayne State blanked second-seeded Northwood in the championship match. Earning the doubles point for WSU included partners Kuznetsova and Da-Silva (No. 1), and Ciellza and Stamate (No. 3). In the singles matches, Cazacu (No. 2), Da-Silva (No. 4), and freshman Carla Jewell (Hobart, Ind.) (No. 6) defeated the Timberwolves.

Prior to the start of the GLIAC tournament, Kuznetsova was selected to the All-GLIAC First Team, and Cazacu and Liong received All-GLIAC Second Team honors. Da-Silva was named to the All-GLIAC Honorable Mention team.

During the regular season, the squad was 8-2 overall and 7-2 in league matches. On Oct. 14, WSU traveled to Grand Valley State and ended the Lakers unbeaten streak with a 4-3 win. Wayne State swept three matches, 7-0, in the regular season against GLIAC opponents including Saginaw Valley State, Davenport and Purdue Northwest.

Cazacu performed very well compiling a 12-2 singles record and a 9-5 mark in doubles with partner Liong, who went 12-3 in singles. Cazacu was named GLIAC Player of the Week on Oct. 15.

Kuznetsova also had a strong season with a 12-4 singles record at the first flight, and a 10-5 doubles record.

The Warriors receive an automatic bid into the NCAA Women's Tennis Tournament, with regional play set to take place on May 13-14, 2019.

HALL OF FAME

WAYNE STATE ATHLETICS

Class of 2019

The 44th Annual Induction Ceremony

Saturday, February 16, 2019

Historic St. Andrews

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Honoring Inductees of the Class of 2019



Anthony Bass
Baseball



Troy Burrell
Football



Ashley Corriveau
Women's Swimming



Eric Johnson
Men's Golf



Ian Larkin
Men's Basketball



Carly Sevald
Women's Diving

WSUATHLETICS.COM/HOF19

Making Wayne State Home

BY STEVE KING

The following feature first appeared in the football game program on Aug. 30, 2018.

Because, as it is at most colleges in this country, football is the biggest and highest-profile sport at Wayne State University.

This is not meant as a knock on any of the other sports at the school. It's just the way it is, and has been for some time.



With that, then, everything that happens in the football program, no matter if it is large, small or somewhere in between, takes on added significance. It is made bigger. And when it involves one of the highest-profile parts of the high-profile program, the head coach, it is bigger still.

Such was the case nearly seven years ago, when, just a week before Christmas in 2011, WSU head football coach Paul Winters seemed set to become head coach at the University of Akron. It made sense. The Zips were struggling, and they needed someone who knew how to revitalize programs. Winters had done that at Wayne State, turning the Warriors into winners.

It was a good fit in other ways, too, since Winters was an Akron guy through and through. He was born and raised there. He had played his high school football there, at LeBron James' alma mater, St. Vincent-St. Mary. And then the former running back had played in college less than a mile away at the University of Akron.

So it would be a real homecoming, one that would make headlines and pump a lot of life back into the program before Winters ever stepped onto the field.

It was a great opportunity indeed. If Winters ever wanted to coach Division I football, this was the time and place to do it.

Winters made the rounds at Wayne State and said goodbye to all the people there, who, though sad he was leaving, completely understood why.

But then something miraculous happened. Winters realized that, in many aspects, he was already home at Wayne State. He had everything he wanted, and needed, right there. So he ran a reverse and decided to say no to his hometown and yes to his adopted home by staying put.

It is the kind of story that, again with the high visibility of football, Fournier and other officials at Wayne State will point to as proof of the worth of the school not so much as a launching pad to somewhere else — somewhere bigger — but rather as a destination.

In a day and age when coaches even at big Division I schools go from one job to another almost as if it were a game of hop-scotch, it's nothing short of incredible for a Division II school to keep the revolving door from revolving much when it comes to its coaches.

However, Winters, who is in his 15th season at Wayne State, is hardly the only head coach at the school who has put down roots here. In fact, there were four coaches who, heading into the 2018-19 school year, had 21 or more years of service with the Warriors, six with 17 or more seasons, and 10 with 10 or more years.

HERE'S A LOOK AT THREE OF THOSE COACHES:



***GARY BRYCE** — women's softball — having served as coach for 37 years — Bryce's longevity is eight years more than anybody else at the school. With a record of — get this — 1,273-742-8, he is eighth on the NCAA's all-times wins list (includes any division). He averaged — averaged! — 47 wins per season for the four-year stretch from 2014-17, and his teams have captured 17 Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference championships since he took over way back in 1982.

Those are the kinds of numbers that draw the attention of Division I athletics directors, and Bryce has been approached any number of times by those schools. He came very close one time to biting.

"Bowling Green offered me the job, and I decided to take it," he said. "I was driving down there and when I got to Toledo, I stopped.

"While it was really flattering that they wanted me and it was a wonderful chance for me professionally, I started to think about it. And when I did, I realized, 'Hey, I'm from Michigan. I was born and raised here. Do I really want to leave? I already have a great job at Wayne State. Why don't I just stay here?' And so I did. I've never regretted it."

Neither, of course, has the school. He has become a legendary coach – WSU's legend, not Bowling Green State University's legend.

It's funny how one decision affects so many players at two different schools.

Now, years later, it's a case of Bryce not getting older, but getting better. His three top winning percentages have come in the last nine seasons, including his very best, .833 (50-10), in 2016.

So, in having done just about everything there is to do in college softball coaching, how much longer does he want to stay?

"I don't know. I really don't," Bryce said. "This is a great school not just athletically, but academically. Wayne State graduates such a high percentage of their student-athletes. You'd like to be part of something like that as long as you can, as long as you still enjoy doing it."

And it's even better to be a very big part of it for a very long time, as Bryce has done.



***SHEILA SNYDER** – women's tennis – having served as coach for 29 years – She is No. 2 on Wayne State's list of longest-serving coaches. Like Bryce, Snyder hasn't just stayed a long time. She has also won – a lot. She has a career record of 336-190 and has taken the Warriors to the NCAA Tournament in 10 of the last 14 seasons, including last spring.

But none of this was her focus – not even a dream, really -- when she took over in 1989, following her having played four years of both tennis and basketball at WSU.

"I had just gotten married and was going to grad school when they offered me the job," Snyder recalled. "I thought, 'OK, I'll take it and see where it goes.'"

She never expected it to go three decades. But now that it has, she expects it to go longer. She became a full-time coach in 2008. "It was tough being a coach while also raising three children," she said. "It should get easier, though, because all three kids are out of the house now."

"There is a great culture at this school and in the athletic department in particular, great kids and a great coaching staff. I'm having fun, and I'm going to coach until I'm no longer having fun."

What would she say to the newer head coaches at Wayne State?

"You've got to be happy in your job, and I just hope that the new coaches think the same way as the veteran coaches do and embrace all that's good about Wayne State," she said. "And there's a lot that's good. That's why people stay here so long."



***MIKE HORN** – men's golf – having served as coach for 17 years – Tied with David Greer (men's basketball) for fifth place on the school's coaching longevity list, he has led the Warriors to the NCAA Super Regional in 12 of the last 15 years, including eight in a row at one point.

He's also a Greater Detroit guy through and through, and proud of it.

"I grew up in Dearborn, I played golf at Wayne State and I live in Allen Park," he said. "So I'm right exactly where I want to be."

"I got into coaching a lot later than most people. I didn't start until I was 36. Being an older guy, I'm not interested in the bright lights of Division I. In golf especially, you get a lot of privileged kids in Division I – the county club kids. That's not the case in Division II. We're in the middle of Detroit at Wayne State. We're getting the working-class kids, the kids who want to work hard, get good grades and get their degrees. I really like that."

"There's not another gig I would go after. I'm very fulfilled where I'm at."

"You're expected to win and succeed here, just like you are everywhere else. But values are also important here, and that's important to me."

Other coaches with a lot of service at Wayne State include Jerzy Radz (men's and women's fencing, 27 years), Sean Peters (men's and women's swimming, 21 years), Ryan Kelley (baseball, 10 years) and Bryan Morrow (men's tennis, 10 years).

Also, there's Carrie Lohr (women's basketball, seven years), Tim Koth (volleyball, four years), Meredith Weaver (women's golf, two years) and Grant Lofdahl (cross country and track, one year).

Weaver is impressed when she looks at the names at the top of the coaching longevity list at WSU.

"That the coaches at this school are so passionate about their jobs that they stay such a long time says a lot about what's going on at Wayne State," she said.



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Detroit Pal



Keep Growing Detroit



Elementary School Reading

WSU Student-Athletes Continue Impressive Community Service Numbers

The Wayne State University student-athlete population committed over 10,000 hours of community service during the 2017-18 academic year bringing the seven-year total to 71,169 hours.

"There is a number of 'messages' coming out of intercollegiate athletics today," remarked WSU Director of Athletics Rob Fournier. "But when you look at the volunteer commitment from WSU student-athletes who have now averaged over 10,000 community service hours for the last seven years, combined with every teams' cumulative grade-point average at a 3.00 or better, and I like what that message is saying."

During the 2017-18 year (Aug. 1, 2017-July 30, 2018), Wayne State student-athletes volunteered with organizations such as Motor City Mile, Opening Doors Drive, The Birthday Party Project, Keep Growing Detroit, Team Impact, Belle Isle Conservancy, Detroit PAL, Elementary School Reading, Zoo Walk, W Food Pantry, Detroit Marathon and Be the Match Bone Marrow Drive. In addition, WSU student-athletes have participated in the #Lunchbag program (see photo above) and the annual Basic Needs Drive.

A Year to Remember

BY KARL HENKEL

The following feature first appeared in the football game program on Sept. 29, 2018.

The last two decades of Wayne State athletics has seen records shattered, championships won and history rewritten. But one year in particular stands out above the rest – the 2008-2009 academic year, when the athletic department scored its highest ever finish in the Directors' Cup standings – thanks to eight teams that qualified for NCAA playoff spots in their respective sports – and set a record with 37 All-American student-athletes.

"In the world of athletics, it all starts to blur after a while," said Rob Fournier, Wayne State Director of Athletics, of the university's 11th place finish (out of 295 athletic programs). "But I can tell you from that year, I remember certain student-athletes who were great team leaders that set an example and got others to work at their maximum abilities."

Among the Wayne State NCAA qualifying teams that year: men's and women's cross country, which each finished 12th; men's golf placed 13th; fencing (men's and women's combined) finished 14th; and women's tennis and softball both finished tied-for-17th. Topping the list, however, was men's and women's swimming and diving, which each finished second in the nation.



Cauli Bedran

"We were loaded," said Cauli Bedran, a junior that year on the men's swimming and diving team who earned six All-American honors and won two Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Association titles. "We had a really, really strong freshman class. It was just a very good confluence of guys and at some point midseason we were like, 'Hey, you know what, if we do well, we are going to have a fighting chance (to win it all).'"

There were hurdles to overcome that season, however, Bedran remembers. At the beginning of the season, the Matthaei pool's boiler broke, meaning both the men's and women's teams had to swim in chilly 68-degree water for several months, though Bedran admits that "didn't get in the team's way."

Then, at the GLIAC Championship meet, the team trailed Grand Valley State by 17.5 points heading into the final day. Bedran, a 2016 Wayne State Hall of Fame inductee, then recalled a conversation he overheard between

fellow swimmer Sebastian Rzepa and coach Sean Peters before the start of the final day.

"Sebastian asked coach, 'Do you think we can make it back?'" Bedran recalls. "And coach says, 'I don't know if you understand the juggernaut you guys are going to unleash on this pool today.'"

On that final day, Wayne State accumulated 293 points – totaling 900 for the event overall, the most in school history and second most in GLIAC history – and walloped Grand Valley State by 65.5 points.

The team then went on to the NCAA Championship meet, finishing second to Drury University by a 543-504.5 margin – the best national finish in team history. Bedran recalls having a mathematical chance to win entering the meet's final event – the 400 free relay, in which the Wayne State team of Justin Shields, Rzepa, Jesper Akesson, and Bedran finished fourth.

"I don't think we lost first," Bedran said. "I think we won second. We were never supposed to make it as close as we did."

Not to be outdone, the women's swimming and diving team also finished second at that year's NCAA Championship meet – also the best national finish in team history to that point. The 2008-09 season capped an incredible four-year run for the team, which finished 24th in the same event in 2005-2006, improved to 10th in 2006-2007, and took another step forward in 2007-2008 with a sixth-place finish.

To this day the second place national finish for the men's swimming and diving team remains the high mark, a bar that each new team targets to eclipse. Meanwhile, the second-place women's finish in 2009 started a streak of six consecutive years either finishing first or second at the national championships.



Ashley St. Andrew

"You don't really think of stuff like that when it's happening," said Ashley St. Andrew, a 2016 Wayne State Hall of Fame inductee and a junior on the 2008-2009 team. "But it's really neat to think about now, to think that I was a part of that."

St. Andrew won both the 500 and 1000 freestyles at the 2009 NCAA Championship meet, and finished second in the 1650 and fourth in the 200.

But it was actually during the GLIAC Championship meet, at Jenison High School – St. Andrew’s alma mater – that she remembers most.

In the 1000 freestyle event, Wayne State had seven swimmers in the top eight of that event, including St. Andrew, who won her third consecutive GLIAC title in that event and broke her own conference record.

“It was amazing to have that many girls up on the podium,” St. Andrew said. “That was probably my favorite swimming memory overall.”

Men’s and women’s cross country each finished 12th nationally during the 2008 campaign, backed by two standout seniors who participated in their final collegiate races.

On the men’s side, Abdullah Saleh finished 21st with a time of 31:52, besting his previous high at nationals by approximately 35 seconds. He earned All-



*Rachele (Malette)
Christensen*

America honors. On the women’s side, 2015 WSU Hall of Fame inductee Rachele Malette finished sixth, running a 6K in 21:44, which also earned her an All-America distinction for the third consecutive year.

Men’s golf finished in a 13th place tie thanks in part to senior Steve Cuzzort’s fifth place result (he tied with another golfer for fifth) that helped earn him All-American standards. The finish was the best ever for a Wayne State golfer in the NCAA Championship.

Women’s tennis advanced to the final round in the NCAA Midwest Regional – the first time in program history that WSU went to the second round of the NCAA Tournament.



Slava Zingerman

Fencer Slava Zingerman, a 2016 Wayne State Hall of Fame inductee, won his third consecutive NCAA men’s epee national title – only the second person

in National Collegiate Athletic Association men’s epee history to win three consecutive titles since the NCAA began competition in 1941.

Softball’s 17th-place finish came after a run to the NCAA Midwest Regional. Gary Bryce’s squad recorded 40 victories that season – the third-most wins in school history.



*Casey (Hanes)
Rammel*

Pitcher Casey (Hanes) Rammel, a 2017 WSU Hall of Fame inductee, was named an All-American that season after she set a then school record with 30 victories and narrowly missed etching her name atop the WSU single-season strikeout list, finishing second all-time with 283. Despite her dynamic season, Rammel said the reason for the Warriors’ success in 2009 was the team’s depth.

“The fact that we all showed up and played as a team,” Rammel said. “There really wasn’t one individual who stood out or thought the success was because of them. But we knew we had a chance to be a really great team when we showed up (at the beginning of the season).”

Wayne State’s run ended with a heartbreaking loss to Indianapolis in the Midwest Regional final, but Rammel said the 2009 season was critical to the team’s success the following season – when the Warriors made it to the 2010 Division II College World Series and set a team record with 52 victories.

While the Directors’ Cup is a data-driven look at the success of athletic departments, for student-athletes who work at or attend other WSU sporting events, all of the winning that took place during the 2008-2009 season helped bring a swagger to the department – a swagger that was contagious.

Rammel said there was a feeling within the Wayne State student-athlete community that many of the teams were close to running on all cylinders.

“I think we fed off each other with some of that winning mentality, the go-getting and wanting to do better, not just to win, but to get the Wayne State name out there, for it to be successful in future years and I feel like they’ve been extremely successful ever since.”

For Fournier, looking back at the 2008-2009 season was an encapsulation of his philosophy that every student-athlete that comes to Wayne State will have a chance to succeed and win.

“I’ve always said to the coach, we are going to give you the resources to be successful,” Fournier said. “At some schools, all the chips go into football or basketball. I think even though our athletic budget is half of some others in the conference, the combination of coaches and student-athletes and the availabilities of scholarship, every team has a chance to win a national championship.”

Warrior Academic Achievement Recipients

BASEBALL

Hunter Brown
Nolan Dill
Richard Hovde
Ryan Mergener
Josh Nelson
Devin Rose
Troy Saruna
Jared Tobey

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Nick Mutebi

MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

Ryan Mangulabnan

MEN'S FENCING

Ziad Elsisy
Pranav Gopalakrishnan
Brendan Johnson
Nader Rayyan
Brenton Villeneuve

FOOTBALL

Jake AmRhein
Stephen Charron
Drew Dowding
Randy Garvin
Paul Graham
Manny Mendoza
Preston Pelham
Logan Smith
Ryan Smith
Kyle Toth
Charlie Younger

MEN'S GOLF

Grant Haefner
Nazir Jairazbhoy
Collin Kolbe
Nikolas Senkowski
Dexter Wilson

MEN'S SWIMMING

Ahmed Ahmed
Ryan Katulski

MEN'S TENNIS

Nicholas Ang
Griffin Mertz
Jason Potter
Harvey Reed
Derek Sammons
Taylor Vane

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Alex Matus
Lyndsey Matus
Jessica Murphy
Sara Ruhstorfer
Amber Stephens
Shannon Wilson

WOMEN'S XC & TRACK

Haley Boccomino
Teresa Diehl
Jackie Feist

WOMEN'S FENCING

Bridget Gibbons
Sierra Jones
Natalie Magda
Katie Tyrrell

WOMEN'S GOLF

Rylee George
Josie Kurosky
Anastassia Lee
Chloe Luyet

Courtney Morton

Amanda Noakes
Meredith Weidner

SOFTBALL

Kylee Barrett
Rachelle Clayton
Hailey Lazarek
Kristen Lucas
Jamie MacNeil
Ashley Messina
Kelsey Ramus
Brooke Turkalj

WOMEN'S SWIMMING

Ellie Dean
Delayni Kornak-Kotarba
Meghan Lamb
Elizabeth Maraskine
Makayla Myers
Emma Weber

WOMEN'S TENNIS

Liz Ghellere
Andreea Mitache

WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD

Jordan Baker
Alexis Brown
Dazmonique Carr
Leah Coonrod
Rachel Kloski
Shanice Leach
Grace Mendoza
Dallas Porter
Karrington Seals

VOLLEYBALL

Michelle Asiedu
Natalie Breatult
Janie Bunge
Madison Kielty
Claire McWilliams
Alexa Methner
Christa Raicevich
Hailey Richardson
Karen Sidje
Haley Tenelshof



4 Points to Perfection Luncheon October 2018

D2 ADA Recognizes 94 Warriors with Academic Achievement Awards

The Division 2 Athletics Directors Association (D2 ADA) announced that a school-record 94 Wayne State University student-athletes have earned Academic Achievement Awards for their work in the classroom. The Academic Achievement Awards is a program that recognizes the academic accomplishments of student-athletes at the Division II level.

ALSO, THE STUDENT-ATHLETE MUST:

- Have a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale
- Have attended a minimum of two years (four semesters) of college level work
- Have been an active member of an intercollegiate team during his/her last academic year

"As an Officer for the D2 ADA Board, it has pleased me to see the number of student-athletes recognized for their academic achievements continue to increase," said current D2 ADA President Jim Johnson, director of athletics at Pittsburg State University. "This program is a point of pride for our current D2 ADA member institutions and a great way for their student-athletes' achievements to be recognized nationally. On behalf of the D2 ADA, we congratulate and celebrate these academic distinctions and are proud of your accomplishments."

4 Points to Perfection Student-Athletes (pictured above)

Nolan Dill, Baseball

Jacob Finkbeiner, Baseball

Tori Perez, Women's Basketball

Sara Ruhstorfer, Women's Basketball

Amber Stephens, Women's Basketball

Shannon Wilson, Women's Basketball

Emma Willett, Women's Cross Country

Gabbi Willett, Women's Cross Country

Brendan Johnson, Men's Fencing

Katie Tyrrell, Women's Fencing

Jake AmRhein, Football

Randy Garvin, Football

Paul Graham, Football

Ryan Smith, Football

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Contact Lauren Lepkowski
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From Competitor to Coach

BY KARL HENKEL

The following feature first appeared in the football game program on Sept. 15, 2018.

Mike Horn was out having dinner with his family in Canton one night in 1999 when he saw a familiar face that stood head and shoulders above everyone else in the restaurant.

It was Ron Hammye, longtime Wayne State men's basketball coach, who towered over just about everyone at 6-foot-10 inches tall. Hammye informed Horn that Wayne State's then-golf coach planned to retire, and that the athletic department was considering dropping the sport altogether.

The comment shook Horn, who played golf at Wayne State in the 1980s and was a two-time all-Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Association selection.

A week later, out once again with his family in Canton – though this time at another restaurant – Horn once again saw Hammye. Horn thought Hammye was about to deliver more depressing news, but instead got one of the biggest surprises of his life.

"He said, 'I'm the interim athletic director,'" Horn recalled. "I want to keep golf. Do you want to interview?' And it was as simple as that." He started as a part-time employee and became a full-time coach a few years later under current athletic director Rob Fournier.

Since then, in a 17-season span, Horn has won GLIAC Coach of the Year four times (2004, 2007, 2010, 2013) and has led the Warriors to the NCAA Super Regional a dozen times in the past 15 seasons.

Horn's chance meetings with Hammye nearly two decades ago brought him back to the university where he was a student-athlete, and today, Horn is one of about a dozen former Warriors (or Tartars) now working in the athletic department.

"It's a really unique place," Horn said of the athletic department and university. "We were always the underdog, certainly in the 1980s and 1990s and my first few years coaching. We were always seen as the place that was maybe your second or third choice. I think many of us have a chip on our shoulder because Detroit and Wayne State were cool back then, but nobody gave us the credit."

Horn is not alone in his story of returning to Wayne State. Former Tartars and Warriors can be found on many different WSU athletic coaching staffs.

Scott Wooster and Jon Robinson, now assistant football coaches, both played on the football team back in the 1990s and 2000s, respectively.



Nicole (Abel) Tines



Mike Horn



Bryan Morrow



Sheila Snyder



Scott Wooster



Jon Robinson

Nicole (Abel) Tines was a four-year softball player from 2007 through 2010 who is now an assistant coach under longtime coach Gary Bryce. Karen Lafata attended Wayne State in the 1970s and has been an assistant coach the past eight seasons. Bryce Pitters has been an assistant swim coach for nearly two decades.

In addition, both tennis coaches, Bryan Morrow (1987-91) and Sheila Snyder (1983-86), were WSU student-athletes. Horn and Morrow were both inducted into the WSU Athletic Hall of Fame for their student-athlete careers in 2001 and 2003, respectively.

Ten (10) other former Warrior student-athletes are serving on coaching staffs as either a graduate assistant coach working on their master's or as a volunteer assistant coach.

The stories of how student-athletes make it to Wayne State are usually pretty compelling – there are family ties, transfers and international recruitment, to name a few – but the stories of how former Wayne State student-athletes end up coming home to the athletic department are equally as fascinating. Some never leave campus, or spend just a few years away. Others are gone for decades, seemingly reconnected by nothing more than chance.

For Tines, she went from student-athlete to coach immediately following her playing career. Tines, whose undergrad degree was in teaching, had as a student-athlete asked Bryce about opportunities to remain involved with the team, but only after she had finished her on-field career did he reach out and offer Tines a chance to be a student assistant coach.

"I had always loved coaching and loved teaching, so when the opportunity arose for me to come back and work with the team and get my master's, I jumped at it," Tines said.

After one season as a student assistant, Tines for two years was a graduate assistant coach – while she pursued a sports management master's degree – before being promoted to a full-time assistant coach in 2014. She sees herself as sort of a generational translator between today's players and Bryce, Wayne State's coach the past 38 years; she understands what Bryce expects from his players and can relate with players and what they are thinking and feeling in the 2018 college environment.

But not everyone can go from playing to coaching at Wayne State overnight. Robinson, for example, departed his graduate assistant coach role at Wayne State in 2013 and spent two years in a similar role at Ball State before – you guessed it – another twist of fate opened a door for him to join Paul Winters' staff in Detroit.

Keith McKenzie, an assistant coach at Wayne State from 2008 through 2015, wanted a chance to return to his alma mater, Ball State, and when there was an opening, Robinson lobbied for McKenzie to get the gig. (McKenzie is now the defensive line coach.)

In turn, McKenzie put in a good word for Robinson, who then took over at Wayne State as linebackers coach – McKenzie's old job.

It was a natural career and personal move for Robinson, who is from Livonia and could move up the coaching rung. Robinson also acknowledged that he wanted to be a part of the program to finish what he and his teammates started in 2011 – the quest for a national championship. Robinson and his teammates went on an incredible playoff run that season, falling just short of their goal in the national championship game to Pittsburg State.

"My senior year, we didn't even win the conference championship. We blew it in the final game," Robinson said. "Coming back home is definitely big-time motivation to get the conference championship and do the things I couldn't do as a player.

"There's a lot of unfinished business and being a coach is my way of helping to get the job done."

For Horn, Tines and Robinson, it is special to be a part of something they at one time helped build as student-athletes. Tines says it is no coincidence that so many former student-athletes are now working in the athletic department.

"I think it says a lot about the athletic department," Tines said. "Going to coaches meetings and athletic meetings and seeing those familiar faces, and really understanding the direction we want Wayne State athletics to go in, it's really a testament to the staff."

Robinson says having so many former student-athletes within the athletic department – a family-like atmosphere – also helps push the program to get better and better each year.

"The people who have been around and the former student-athletes, they kind of know what Wayne State used to be and have a little more knowledge and grit," Robinson said. "We don't take anything we have today for granted."



Karen Lafata



Bryce Pitters

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For more information, please call the Athletics Development Office at (313) 577-0241.

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