

# Climbing *the* Hill



Lafayette College Athletics  
Annual Report | **2018-2019**



Dear Lafayette Leopards Family:

**IT IS AN EXCITING TIME TO BE A LAFAYETTE LEOPARD!**

The 2018-19 Lafayette athletic season saw many outstanding individual accomplishments by our incredible scholar-athletes—most notably **Will Halamandaris '20** winning the Patriot League men's golf championship and advancing to the NCAA Regionals—but the most important development for the future of our athletic programs was the unveiling of a five-year strategic plan.

Goals of this plan, titled *Creating a Championship Culture* and using the rallying cry "Climb The Hill," will position Lafayette athletics as a major competitor among Patriot League peers.

Implementation committees for each of the six goals have been meeting regularly since the strategic plan was unveiled and feature administration, faculty, coaches and student-athletes. Accomplishments of each committee are listed within this edition of *Climbing the Hill*.

**The strategic plan's goals are straight-forward:** achieve competitive excellence, strengthen academic excellence, provide the most positive student-athlete experience possible, build more community and spirit for Lafayette athletics, ensure integrity in everything we do and secure the funding necessary for success.

That success can narrowly be defined by teams competing for conference championships, but a Division I athletic program encompasses so much more. It has far-reaching implications for students, faculty and the community—strengthening enrollment, heightening Lafayette's profile and enhancing brand recognition. Athletics is an incubator for leadership, which provides an opportunity for students to excel on many levels during their collegiate

careers and in their future endeavors. We will continue to strive towards excellence in everything that we do.

I am glad to be sharing this annual update and I encourage you to be a part of what will be the most productive and exciting years in our history. Our staff and I look forward to having you on board as we all work together in support of our student-athletes!

**GO LEOPARDS!**



Sherryta Freeman, Director of Athletics



**“CLIMBING THE HILL WILL NOT BE EASY. IT WILL TAKE A TEAM OF BOTH LONG-TIME SUPPORTERS OF ATHLETICS AND NEW BELIEVERS WHO SHARE OUR PASSION FOR ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN EVERYTHING WE DO AT LAFAYETTE. TOGETHER, WE WILL CREATE A CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURE!”**

SHERRYTA FREEMAN  
Director of Athletics





**KIA DAMON**  
Head coach,  
women's  
basketball

"It's a great step in the right direction for the athletics department because the plan gives some pretty specific targets for where we'd like to be come 2023. What excites me the most are the action steps within each of the six pillars, which involve coaches, faculty, staff and student-athletes who will pitch in and help make the plan become reality. Faculty, staff and coaches love this kind of clear direction because it makes good use of individual competencies and gives us control of our success. That buy-in means we can more fully support our student-athletes to learn from the highs and lows on the courts and fields, and help them reach their full potential at Lafayette and prepare them to become great citizens and leaders."



**CINDY OAKS  
LINVILLE '80**  
Past president  
of Maroon Club

"We're in a strong position with a strategic plan and an athletic director with a clear and focused direction, and a passion and excitement to spread her vision. Sherryta has done an amazing job gaining the support of the administration. I was so pleased to see so many members of the president's cabinet at the town hall meeting showing their support for Lafayette athletics. This is not just an issue for people who support athletics, this is for people who want excellence at Lafayette. This is a call to action for alumni to show support verbally, emotionally, and with their pocketbooks. The bus is running; let's get everyone on it."

*Cindy is former captain of Lafayette women's lacrosse and field hockey teams. She and her husband, **Jud Linville '79**, endowed Oaks Leadership Academy, which develops leadership skills in Lafayette student-athletes.*



**DAVID STIFEL**  
Professor and assistant  
head  
of economics  
and NCAA  
faculty athletics  
representative

"As a member of the Athletics Review and Planning Steering Committee, I'm impressed by how Sherryta has used input from the committee to address the opportunities we have to achieve competitive excellence. It's a very positive and pragmatic approach to creating a winning environment that is consistent with who we are as Lafayette College and as a member of the Patriot League. She's making something that's workable by creating implementation committees that are tasked with achieving these strategic goals and objectives, the type of objectives that we see at other peer institutions. It's not coming at the expense of academics, which are first and foremost. While we want our student-athletes to play well, we want them to do even better by providing an outstanding academic experience."

# YEAR 1 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## CREATING A CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURE

### STRATEGIC GOAL 1 Achieve Competitive Excellence

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Created coach development program, including the **Coaches & Coffee** series with guest speakers
- ▶ Revised goal-setting and performance evaluations for the entire department
- ▶ Added Associate AD for Compliance and Student-Athlete Development for the 2019-20 academic year
- ▶ Held Athletics/Admissions/Financial Aid Retreat—May 2019
- ▶ Reviewed Vision/Mission/Core Values—June 2019



### STRATEGIC GOAL 2 Strengthen Academic Excellence

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Partnered with faculty to engage in interdisciplinary projects related to athletics (e.g. Math faculty and baseball/field hockey and men's soccer; Anthropology & Sociology faculty and men's soccer).
- ▶ Enhanced coverage on **GoLeopards.com** to celebrate academic excellence and achievements of students
- ▶ Initiated review of Oaks Leadership Academy and other leadership development opportunities
- ▶ Analyzed grade distributions and identified first-year first semester as a priority for more personalized advising
- ▶ Began discussion of first-year housing options





## STRATEGIC GOAL **3**

### Provide the Most Positive Student-Athlete Experience Possible

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Revised the Lafayette Athletics Alcohol Policy and sanctions protocol
- ▶ Launched peer education with Pards Against Sexual Assault (PASA), including guest speakers
- ▶ Created the Student-Athlete Wellness and Performance Team and operated effectively throughout the academic year to support our student-athletes
- ▶ Enhanced nutritional offerings to student-athletes through our fueling stations
- ▶ Developed plan for larger, enhanced and branded fueling stations throughout athletic facilities
- ▶ Implemented CoachMe Plus technology to increase strength and conditioning outputs
- ▶ Executed the **McDonogh Network Athletic Forum** to discuss the experiences of student-athletes of color and opportunities for them to engage with alumni

## STRATEGIC GOAL **4**

### Build More Community and Spirit for Lafayette Athletics

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Launched Faculty All-Star program to provide a platform for student-athletes to recognize faculty members that have had a tremendous impact on their academic success
- ▶ Established strong partnership with Landis Center for Community Engagement, highlighted by the **Women's Basketball School Day Game** and Men's Lacrosse 2nd and 7 program
- ▶ Received approval for position to focus on student-athlete development and engagement across campus
- ▶ Enhanced collaboration between band and spirit squad atmosphere at athletic events
- ▶ Implemented social media calendars for ticketed sports



## STRATEGIC GOAL 5

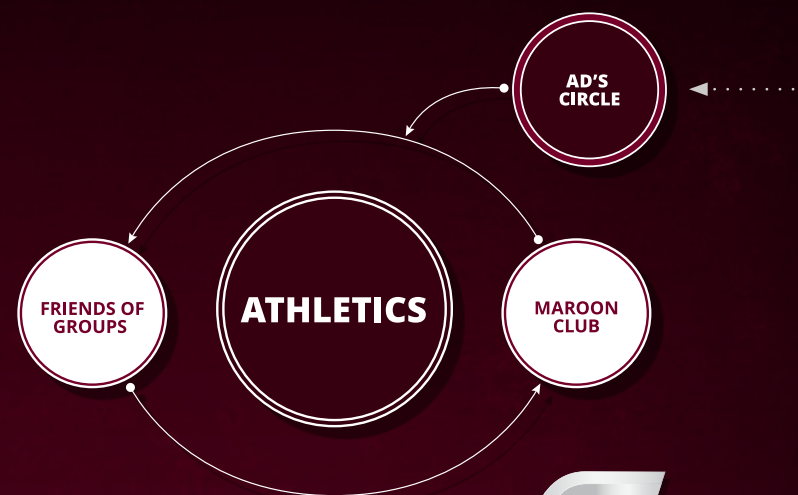
### Ensure Integrity in Everything We Do

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Addition of Associate AD for Compliance and Student-Athlete Development was approved
- ▶ Implemented peer education with **Pards Against Sexual Assault (PASA)** as well as guest speakers related to toxic masculinity and sexual harassment
- ▶ Executed the McDonogh Network Athletic Forum to discuss the experiences of student-athletes of color and opportunities for them to engage with alumni
- ▶ Coordinated opportunities for improvement and enhanced mentorship of **Athlete Ally**



**ATHLETE ALLY**



## STRATEGIC GOAL 6

### Secure the Funding Necessary for Success

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Created **AD's Circle** to increase alumni engagement and communication related to athletics operations
- ▶ Re-organized Maroon Club structure to increase engagement and participation across all sports
- ▶ Completed data analysis of Lafayette Athletics budget compared to Patriot League peers
- ▶ Initiated process for outsourcing advertising and corporate partnership sales
- ▶ Initiated process for outsourcing ticket sales
- ▶ Initiated an athletics fundraising and communication feasibility assessment in support of an athletics campaign
- ▶ Engaged with leadership groups and alumni at regional events to communicate the importance of the athletic strategic plan



# LEOPARDS ON THE RISE



PROMINENT ACHIEVEMENTS REALIZED DURING THE 2018-19 ACADEMIC YEAR

## 3 PATRIOT LEAGUE ROOKIES OF THE YEAR

➡ **MOLLY  
MCANDREW '22**  
**ONE OF FOUR** ALL-PATRIOT  
LEAGUE SELECTIONS  
ON THE TEAM



**JUSTIN  
JOHNSON '22** ➡  
**ONE OF FOUR** ALL-PATRIOT  
LEAGUE SELECTIONS  
ON THE TEAM



➡ **MALIK  
HAMM '22**  
**ONE OF 10**  
ALL-PATRIOT  
LEAGUE  
SELECTIONS



## 334 LEOPARDS

NAMED TO THE **PATRIOT LEAGUE ACADEMIC HONOR ROLL** AND **3 TEAMS** (BASEBALL, MEN'S BASKETBALL AND WOMEN'S LACROSSE) LED THE LEAGUE IN NUMBER OF HONOREES



## TEAMS RECEIVE APR AWARDS



**FOOTBALL, FIELD HOCKEY, FENCING, MEN'S SOCCER, SOFTBALL, WOMEN'S LACROSSE, AND WOMEN'S TENNIS TEAMS**

ACHIEVED THE ACADEMIC PROGRESS RATE (APR) DISTINCTION GRANTED BY THE NCAA AS A MEASURE OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT FOR DIVISION I SPORTS TEAMS.



## PEPPER PRIZE WINNER

**STUDENT-ATHLETE REEVE LANIGAN '19** ➡ (SWIMMING) **WINS** THE 2019 GEORGE WHARTON PEPPER PRIZE. LANIGAN JOINS RECENT STUDENT-ATHLETES **ZACHARY WINTHROP '13** (SOCCER), **BRAD BORMANN '14** (FOOTBALL) AND **CORY SPERA '15** (BASEBALL).



# 1 PATRIOT LEAGUE TITLE

**WILL HALAMANDARIS '20** ➔  
**WINS** PATRIOT LEAGUE MEN'S GOLF  
CHAMPIONSHIP (THE LEOPARDS' FIRST  
MEDALIST SINCE 2010)



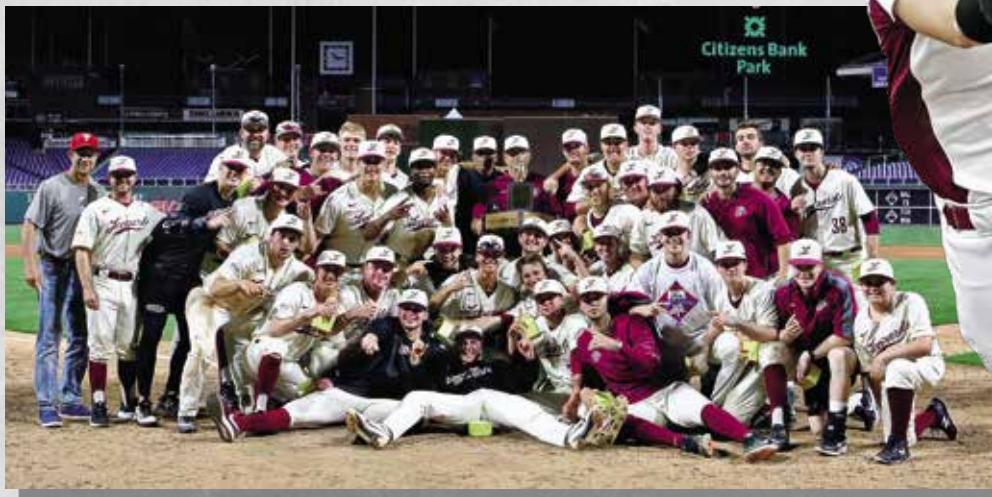
PATRIOT LEAGUE  
TOURNAMENT  
APPEARANCES

BASEBALL AND FIELD HOCKEY



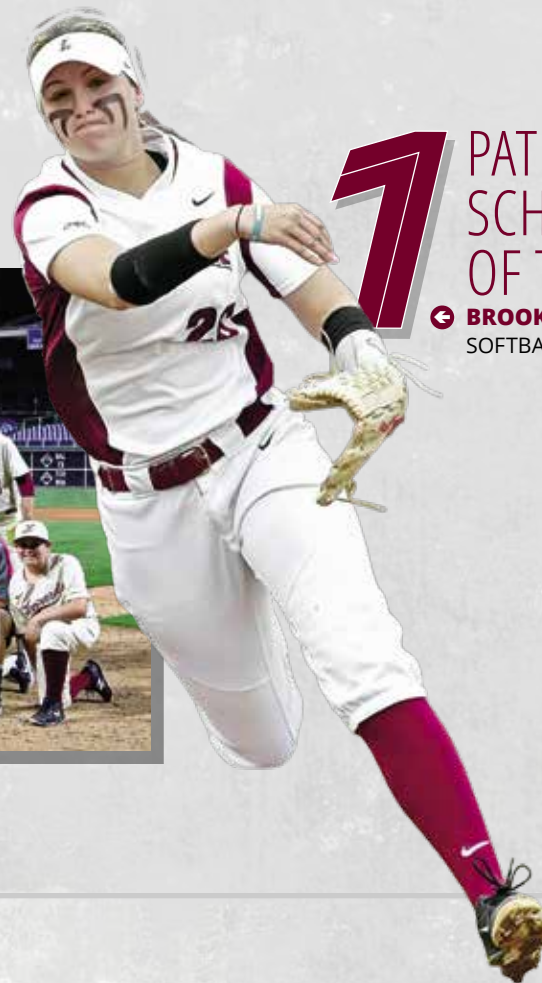
## BASEBALL

**WON THE LIBERTY BELL CLASSIC** ⬇  
FOR THE 2ND YEAR IN A ROW.



# 1 PATRIOT LEAGUE SCHOLAR-ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

➔ **BROOKE WENSEL**  
SOFTBALL







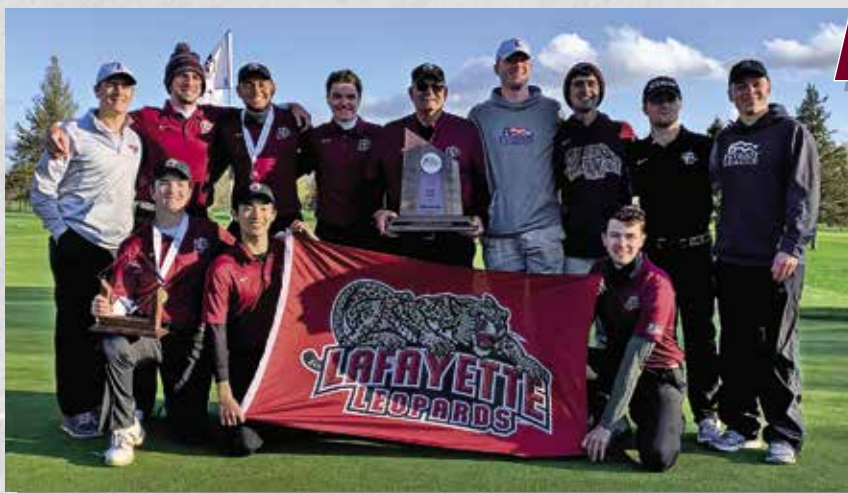
## MEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

➤ **DEFEATED LEHIGH**, EARNING  
THE **BRYAN MUNDY TROPHY**  
FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 2016.

7

## PATRIOT LEAGUE DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

**NATALIE KUCOWSKI** ➤  
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL



## MEN'S GOLF

➤ WERE THE **RUNNER-UPS**  
AT THE PATRIOT LEAGUE  
CHAMPIONSHIP.



# JOIN US!

“

CREATING A CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURE IS NOT JUST A STRATEGIC PLAN. IT'S GOING TO BECOME THE **NEW NORMAL** FOR LAFAYETTE ATHLETICS. THE VISION IS STRONG AND MOMENTUM IS BUILDING.

”



**ALISON BYERLY**  
*Lafayette College President*



**BOB SELL '84**  
*Board of Trustees Chair*

## BRIDGING THE SCHOLARSHIP GAP

While some sports are at their maximum number of scholarships, many are not. In 2017, a group of dedicated alumni contributed \$1 million to establish the **Leopard Champions Scholarship Fund**, a general scholarship for Lafayette athletics. In order to build a championship program and enable student-athletes to compete at the highest level, fundraising, most notably in the area of athletic scholarships, is critical to future successes. The Leopard Champions Fund is at the heart of Lafayette's goal of building a championship program. But, \$1 million is not enough and this fundraising continues.

“We hope to use this initial investment by our alumni as a springboard for future growth in the number of scholarships provided to student-athletes.”



**PAULO COELHO '03** | *Maroon Club President*



# ATHLETICS GIVING

## MAROON CLUB ANNUAL FUNDRAISING

2014-15 → \$1,773,318

2015-16 → \$1,564,555

2016-17 → \$1,507,896

2017-18 → \$1,590,695

**2018-19 → \$1,801,354**

2014-15 → 3,393 donors

2015-16 → 3,219 donors

2016-17 → 2,785 donors

2017-18 → 2,752 donors

**2018-19 → 3,098 donors**

## 2018-19 FACTS & FIGURES

**\$3,484,083** raised for Lafayette Athletics  
(through the Maroon Club, endowments,  
Leopard Scholarship Fund, etc.)

**\$1,801,354** raised is the highest total  
on record by the Maroon Club

**37%** of young alumni student-athletes (2009-2018) made  
a gift to Lafayette, ranking 2nd in the Patriot League\*

**35%** of alumni student-athletes made a gift to  
Lafayette, ranking 3rd in the Patriot League\*

**43%** of current parents of student-athletes made a gift to  
Lafayette Athletics, ranking 3rd in the Patriot League\*

**20%** of alumni student-athletes made a gift in support of  
Lafayette Athletics, ranking 4th in the Patriot League\*

\*Patriot League rankings reflect only the member institutions who reported data.



**#ClimbTheHill**