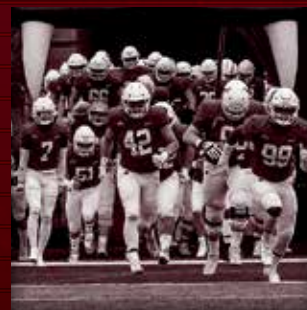


Climbing *the* Hill



Lafayette College Athletics
Annual Report | **2020-2021**



Dear Lafayette Leopards Family:

The 2020-21 school year was unlike any other. We found ourselves amid a global pandemic that disrupted academic and athletic pursuits.

Those new challenges forced us to improvise and come together as a community. We used that opportunity for personal growth and reflection through virtual programming for our staff. The time included coach- and student-led discussions about difficult topics in social justice and included staff multicultural training. Ultimately, the work led to the launch of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan. We were Climbing the Hill, just in a different way.

While we waited for medical and safety guidance to support our desire to get back in action, we continued to prepare for the moment when we would return to athletic competition. The fall seasons were postponed and the start of the winter campaigns delayed until after the new year.

As we moved to 2021, we found ourselves ready for athletic competition—with all 23 sports competing at the same time. Our “return to play” included COVID testing and indoor masking, and our student-athletes showed their adaptability and eagerness to compete. I credit our student-athletes and coaches for their ability to remain positive and show resilience during an incredibly unpredictable time.

2020-21 was also the third year of our five-year plan. In that year, we gave great attention to the overall wellness and mental health of our student-athletes, providing increased availability to health professionals to meet their ever-increasing mental health needs of our athletes.

We turned our attention to laying the foundation for an athletics fundraising campaign which is in the initial stages and with a public announcement soon to follow. It is a major step forward in providing the funds to support a championship culture and something which has not been undertaken previously at the College. Within that framework, we have begun fundraising for one of the first capital projects of the campaign, the Sports Performance and Lacrosse Center.

Externally, we found new ways to connect with our alumni, many of whom were missing their personal connections. Primetime Pards, a monthly interview show, reunited us virtually with some of our most-venerated athletic alumni, and more than 30 virtual events reached more than 3,000 alums.

Athletically, our teams did not disappoint, as men’s soccer earned a Top-25 ranking for the first time since 1996 while managing to go undefeated in Patriot League play. We featured five conference major award winners, including a Patriot League Player of the Year and WNBA draftee.

The PARDees in May marked the first time in the school year in which we gathered as a group. We honored the best of our student-athletes and ushered in the first two classes of Chi Alpha Sigma.

I am glad to share this annual update with you and I thank you for your continued support in strengthening our culture and community. We’re Climbing the Hill together and are excited about what is happening on campus as we all work together in support of our student-athletes!



GO LEOPARDS!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sherryta Freeman".

Sherryta Freeman, Director of Athletics



BILL TUCKER '81
Maroon Club President

Lafayette athletics continue to excel and climb the hill in a very competitive Patriot League. As we prepare to celebrate the 50th anniversary of women's athletics, we thank those who continue to support our 23 Division 1 sports and the student-athletes who have risen to every challenge over the past year. With the support of our alumni and Sherryta's leadership, Lafayette athletes will work each day to set the bar both on the field and in the classroom.



JENNIFER STONE '04
Head Coach Field Hockey
2019 Patriot League Coach of the Year

The past 18 months have been some of the most challenging in our lifetimes. Battling through COVID, its uncertainty and navigating the path charted ahead of us was challenging. With that said, the opportunity to play a spring season was immeasurable. Sport is more than just about the game, it's about giving direction, hope, lessons, purpose and so much more. Our spring campaign allowed us to navigate and battle through some very challenging moments as a program and a department. The perseverance of the team, department and College allowed us to be better off on the other side. It set the group up to be determined, strong, and resilient. And for that, we are grateful. The future is bright, and we are all grateful to be Leopards.



ALIX TALKOW '22
Field Hockey
Team Member

Lafayette field hockey has helped me understand the true meaning of friendship, hard work, and the value of sport.

As a team, we often talk about the importance of growth. Specifically, we talk about taking steps forward in training, in the weight room, and during competition to make us 1% better. This concept generates growth which is essential for progress. And progress is fundamental to work towards an opportunity to battle for a championship. This drive comes from a conscious decision we as student-athletes make to compete. I admire my teammates' and peers' insatiable motivation to raise the standard. There is always work to be done as we continue to climb the hill together.



ANDREW VENEZIA '22
Men's Soccer
Team Member

I am extremely grateful to have been given the opportunity to represent Lafayette College on the

soccer field. Throughout my four years, I've seen the bar for our program raised significantly, in no small part due to the dedication of Coach Bohn. He has provided us with the tools to be successful on and off the field. And I feel lucky to have been part of a program where the Athletic Department supplies its student-athletes with the necessary resources and support to succeed. I will forever cherish my memories as Lafayette Men's Soccer player.



NATALIE KUCOWSKI '21
Women's Basketball
Team Member

The increase of support by the department for its student-athletes was felt each year during my time at Lafayette.

The commitment to competitiveness was evident through the expansion of resources available to ensure peak performance. Now as an alumna, it is exciting to see this growth occur even faster, especially the support student-athletes provide for each other. This sense of unity only continues to strengthen the excitement for athletics throughout the entire Lafayette community.

YEAR 3 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CREATING A CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURE

STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Achieve Competitive Excellence

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Worked within the NCAA's revised transfer rules to recruit more transfer students
- ▶ Bolstered our need-based financial aid to help cast a wider recruiting net
- ▶ Received approval to fundraise for the Sports Performance and Lacrosse Center
- ▶ Supported a transition in the way funds from the Federal Pell Grant Program are distributed to qualifying (low-income) student-athletes



STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Strengthen Academic Excellence

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Hosted Gateway Career Center Preparing Your Brand workshops for freshman and sophomore student-athletes
- ▶ Recognized our first two classes of Chi Alpha Sigma, the national honor society for collegiate student-athletes
- ▶ Lafayette ranked first in the nation in NCAA's annual Graduation Success Rate report. Lafayette claimed a 99 percent GSR overall for its 19 sports measured and 17 achieved a graduation success rate of 100 percent.



STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Provide the Most Positive Student-Athlete Experience Possible

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- An additional strength and conditioning coach was added during the 2020-21 school year and will continue for 21-22
- Expanded student-athletes' access to sports psychology professionals, accommodating ever-increasing mental health and well-being needs
- Launched a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiative that embraces diversity, personifies inclusion, and is the destination for people of all backgrounds to come together as one team thriving in an equitable environment.
- Scored a perfect 100 on the Athlete Ally Equality Index
- Developed additional awards to recognize student-athlete achievement at the PARDees

STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Build More Community and Spirit for Lafayette Athletics

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Established Primetime Pards, a monthly interview show with a distinguished Lafayette athletics alumni
- Hosted 32 athletics-related virtual alumni events attended by more than 3,000 people
- Broadcasted 54 out of 61 home events from Jan 2 to May 9, including all home contests for FB, MBB, WBB, MLAX, WLAX, MSOC, FH, VB. Three home events were broadcast on CBS Sports Network.



STRATEGIC GOAL **5**

Ensure Integrity in Everything We Do

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Finalized a social media policy for student-athletes
- ▶ Implemented the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan
- ▶ Established Election Day as a day off from competition and practice for student-athletes and coaches.
- ▶ Hosted mandatory multicultural training workshops for all athletics staff
- ▶ Helped develop and support Athletes of Color group
- ▶ Updated student-athlete handbook to include DEI initiative, student-athlete grievance policy, social media policy and other guiding principles



STRATEGIC GOAL **6**

Secure the Funding Necessary for Success

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Shifted focus to athletics fundraising campaign that is underway
- ▶ Secured major gifts to help fund the Sports Performance and Lacrosse Center
- ▶ Finalized facility rental and procedure rates to begin to incorporate community use of athletic venues while generating additional income

LEOPARDS ON THE RISE



PROMINENT ACHIEVEMENTS REALIZED DURING THE 2020-21 ACADEMIC YEAR



54 OUT OF 61 HOME EVENTS

DURING THE SPRING SEASON THAT WERE
STREAMED ON **GOLEOPARDS.COM**



402 LAFAYETTE STUDENT-ATHLETES

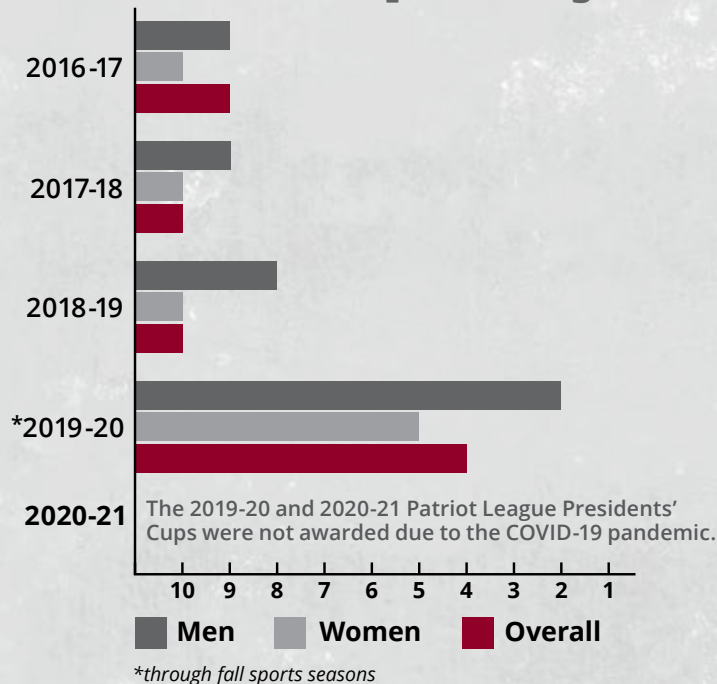
WERE NAMED TO THE **PATRIOT LEAGUE
ACADEMIC HONOR ROLL.**

117 STUDENT-ATHLETES

INDUCTED IN **CHI ALPHA SIGMA**, A NATIONAL
SCHOLAR-ATHLETE HONOR SOCIETY



President's Cup Standings



24 NATIONAL RANKING

THE **MEN'S SOCCER TEAM** BROKE INTO THE TOP 25, ITS FIRST NATIONAL RANKING SINCE 1996. THE TEAM FINISHED 7-1 OVERALL AND 6-0 IN PATRIOT LEAGUE PLAY. ➔



4 SACKS

➔ BY **DAMON WASHINGTON '23** IN A DOMINATING DEFENSIVE PERFORMANCE IN FOOTBALL'S SECOND-STRAIGHT WIN OVER LEHIGH AND FIRST EVER IN APRIL



2 CONSECUTIVE PATRIOT LEAGUE

MEN'S BASKETBALL SCHOLAR-ATHLETE OF THE YEAR SELECTIONS FOR **JUSTIN JAWORSKI '21** ➔



3 FINISH

BY THE MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY TEAM IN THE PATRIOT LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS, THE TEAM'S HIGHEST FINISH SINCE 1998. THE LEOPARDS WERE LED BY **RYAN BRANCH'S** SIXTH-PLACE INDIVIDUAL FINISH. ➔



1

PATRIOT LEAGUE COACH OF THE YEAR

SELECTION FOR **DENNIS BOHN** ➡
WHO COMPLETED HIS 20TH SEASON
ON COLLEGE HILL



19

ALL-PATRIOT LEAGUE FIRST-TEAM SELECTIONS

5

PATRIOT LEAGUE MAJOR AWARD WINNERS

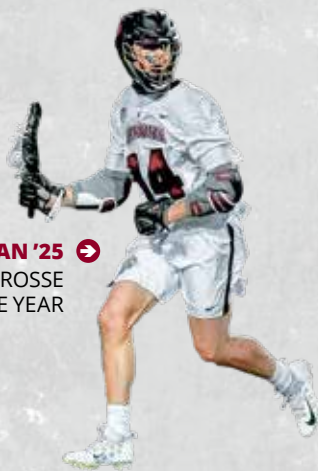
JUSTIN JAWORSKI '21 ➡
PATRIOT LEAGUE
SCHOLAR-ATHLETE OF
THE YEAR



BRENDAN CRONIN '21 ➡
MEN'S GOLF SCHOLAR-
ATHLETE OF THE YEAR



PETER LEHMAN '25 ➡
MEN'S LACROSSE
ROOKIE OF THE YEAR



➡ **NICK HAZEL '22**
MEN'S SOCCER
CO-DEFENSIVE
PLAYER OF THE
YEAR



➡ **NATALIE KUCOWSKI '21**
PATRIOT LEAGUE PLAYER OF
THE YEAR AND DEFENSIVE
PLAYER OF THE YEAR



JOIN US!

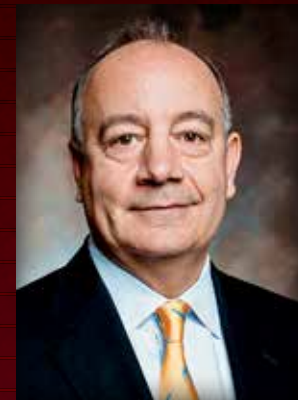
“

ATHLETICS AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ARE **INTEGRAL TO WHO WE ARE**. WITH APPROXIMATELY 20 PERCENT OF OUR STUDENTS COMPETING ON ONE OR MORE OF OUR 23 DIVISION I TEAMS, ATHLETICS CONTRIBUTES SIGNIFICANTLY TO OUR EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS AND COMMUNITY LIFE ON CAMPUS.

”



← **NICOLE FARMER HURD**
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. Fundraising, particularly for scholarships, is critical for building a championship culture and enabling student-athletes to compete at the highest level. The Leopard Champions Fund is at the heart of this. But \$1 million is not enough, and this fundraising continues.

“The establishment of the Leopard Champions Fund has been a huge step in fundraising to help our student-athletes compete for championships in our 23 Division I sports. Now we need the continued support of our loyal alumni base to build on this and help create a sustainable championship culture as we #ClimbTheHill.”

BILL TUCKER '81 | *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

2019-20 → \$1,790,448

2020-21 → **\$1,762,277**

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

2019-20 → 2,824 donors

2020-21 → **3,419 donors**

2020-21 FACTS & FIGURES

\$2,453,616 raised for Lafayette Athletics
(through the Maroon Club, endowments,
Leopard Scholarship Fund, etc.)

34% of our former student-athletes made a gift to
the College in 2020-21 (up from 32% in 2019-20)

30% of young athletics alumni made a
gift to support Lafayette athletics

19% of student-athlete alumni made a gift in support of
Lafayette Athletics (ranking second in the Patriot League)

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



#ClimbTheHill