

# Climbing *the* Hill



Lafayette College Athletics  
Annual Report | 2021-2022



Dear Lafayette Leopards Family:

The 2021-22 school year was a welcome return to normal for Lafayette athletics as the effects of the pandemic waned and our student-athletes and coaches faced fewer interruptions to the daily routine.

It was certainly a year of transition, as we welcomed five new head coaches into the Lafayette ranks. **John Troxell '94** returned home to College Hill where he had already been a Patriot League champion as a student-athlete and assistant coach. Trox brought with him 16 years of head coaching experience that included nine postseason appearances at Franklin and Marshall.

Another Leopard alum, **A.J. Miller '11**, took over the baseball program. A.J. was the Patriot League player of the year in his senior season and played professionally before getting into coaching. Miller spent seven years on the staff at Lehigh as an assistant coach, recruiting coordinator and associate head coach.

Mike Jordan took over as the men's basketball head coach, replacing Fran O'Hanlon who retired after 27 seasons. Mike, like Coach O, had vast international playing experience before jumping into coaching. The 2000 Penn graduate and member of the school's athletics hall of fame was an assistant coach at Colgate for eight seasons and Drexel for one, helping guide the programs to three NCAA Tournaments.

We also brought on a new head softball coach in Karavin Dew. Karavin is a 2013 graduate of Western Kentucky who had five previous coaching stops. Most recently, she was an assistant coach at Tennessee State, where she helped the team set a mark for its most wins since 2014.

In the competition realm, Lafayette student-athletes earned four conference major awards in 2021-22. Volleyball enjoyed unprecedented success, claiming its most wins in league history. **Leanna Deegan '22** led the nation in kills and points per set, while



claiming Patriot League Player of the Year honors and head coach Ryan Adams was the Patriot League Coach of the Year, the first conference major awards in Lafayette volleyball history. In men's golf, **Ryan Tall '22** was the Patriot League Golfer of the Year and qualified for the NCAA New Haven Regional. In field hockey, **Audrey Sawers '22** was the Patriot League Offensive Player of the Year while **Lineke Spaans '25** was the conference Rookie of the Year.

In the classroom, our student-athletes continued to excel—ranked first in the nation in 2021-22 in the NCAA's Graduation Success Rate, a measure that validates our primary educational mission at the College. Additionally, several were able to broaden their leadership experiences by attending the Black Student-Athlete Summit and the NCAA Career in Sports Forum.

Financially, we have continued to move forward with fundraising for our athletics priorities. Those efforts have been buoyed by lead gifts from **Andrew '95** and **Dina '95 Wallach** for the Wallach Sports Performance and Lacrosse Center and by **Peter Gummesson '80** for the Gummesson Grounds that will transform Lafayette's soccer venue.

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 have a lot to be excited about, yet there is still plenty of work to be done as we continue Climbing the Hill together. Thank you for all that you do in helping us to support our student-athletes.

**GO LEOPARDS!**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sherryta Freeman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sherryta Freeman, Director of Athletics



**JIM BENJAMIN '84**  
Co-Chair of Athletics Fundraising Campaign

Student engagement is an important part of the Lafayette ethos. It is impressive to listen to our students describe what they do, why they do it and how it motivates them. Our student-athletes immerse themselves in many challenging and rewarding academic and social ways and also commit a significant amount of time and focus to their sport. This dedication is tantamount to having two full time jobs! I am incredibly proud to support and advocate for our student-athletes and their coaches and administrators as they honor the school by leading the nation in graduation success rate



**CARA MCCUTCHEON '10**  
Co-Chair of Athletics Fundraising Campaign

One of the things that makes Lafayette special is that it offers Division I athletics and top-notch academics—a rare combination. I am consistently impressed by the caliber of our student-athletes on and off the field. I am honored to remain involved with supporting Lafayette Athletics because I know the impact my contributions have on the success of the teams and the college.



**JOSH WOLFE '23**  
Tennis Team Member

"It is extremely rewarding for me to compete for Lafayette playing a sport I love at such a great institution. I have also been fortunate enough to have several mentors in the athletic community that have helped me become the student, athlete, and man that I am today. Despite the pandemic putting a pause on a lot of student-athletes' careers at Lafayette, the school has made a fantastic effort to maintain every sport and make significant improvements to the student-athlete experience. Playing college tennis has given me memories for a lifetime, and I am so grateful for my coach and the school for giving me an opportunity to compete and work hard every single day."



**LEANNA DEEGAN '22**  
Former Student-Athlete

"Representing Lafayette College and its athletic program was an honor and privilege. As a team, I'm proud of the work we put in and the success we achieved, with support from the administration and Maroon Club. There is still work to be done in Climbing the Hill. After all, it is steep. But the friendships forged, values instilled and memories made will stay with us forever. I'm grateful for the experiences and support—and looking forward to seeing that grow even more!"



**NAOMI GANPO '22**  
Former Student-Athlete

"Getting the chance to share memories on the court in Kirby with my teammates and also on campus with the wonderful Lafayette community, has been a once in a lifetime experience that I am so grateful for. Being a student-athlete at Lafayette has allowed me to fully comprehend and embrace the duality of this term that is so easily used to describe us. Now, while climbing the hill wasn't a straight path and had its curves and bumps along the road, I am glad to have been able to go through this experience with the support of my community. It truly did take a village to allow this growth, and prepared me to confront whatever will be thrown in my direction. (Forever proud to be a Leopard)."

# YEAR 4 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CREATING A CHAMPIONSHIP CULTURE

## STRATEGIC GOAL 1 Achieve Competitive Excellence

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Lafayette volleyball set a program record for conference victories while also earning its best seed ever in the Patriot League Tournament guided by the Patriot League Coach of the Year Ryan Adams and the Player of the Year Leanna Deegan '22.
- ▶ Ryan Tall earned medalist honors at the Patriot League golf championships and represented the Maroon and White at the NCAA New Haven Regional.
- ▶ Continued to fund raise and plan for the construction of the Wallach Sports Performance and Lacrosse Center.
- ▶ Received the approval for two new senior level administrators in athletics while promoting several members of the athletic leadership team.



## STRATEGIC GOAL 2 Strengthen Academic Excellence

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Ranked No. 1 in the nation in the NCAA's Division I annual Graduation Success Rate (GSR) for the second straight year. Lafayette claimed a 99 percent GSR overall for its 22 sports measured. Twenty-one Leopard teams achieved a graduation success rate of 100 percent.
- ▶ Twenty athletic programs finished well above the national average in the NCAA's multi-year Academic Progress Rates, while 16 programs earned perfect scores of 1000.
- ▶ Introduced our third class, a group of 59 student-athletes, who were inducted into Chi Alpha Sigma, a national scholar-athlete society.
- ▶ Established Dean's List Recognition night at basketball games where students are invited for dinner, games, and a court appearance for their accomplishment of earning a 3.6 GPA or higher.
- ▶ Spring 2022 had the highest number of student-athletes earn a perfect 4.0 (61), setting a new department record.





## STRATEGIC GOAL 3

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

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Enlisted the services of a nutritionist to work with student-athletes
- ▶ Established several partnerships with sports supplement companies
- ▶ Added Gym Aware Flex units for velocity-based performance enhancement
- ▶ Piloted a Whoop Band monitoring system with the women's basketball team
- ▶ Sponsored three leadership speaking events with Jason Redman
- ▶ Added of new strength equipment and expansion in Kirby Sports Center
- ▶ Expanded partnership with Nike for all athletic gear

## STRATEGIC GOAL 4

### Build More Community and Spirit for Lafayette Athletics

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Hosted a sophomore huddle event for camaraderie within the athletic programs
- ▶ Continuation of Primetime Pards (Tom Villante '49, Leslie Ann Howard '76, John Troxell '94, Mike Saint Germain '07, and Jeff Sejour '06)
- ▶ Broadcasted 92 out of 112 home events on the Lafayette Sports Network and ESPN+
- ▶ Football broadcasts, including the 157th meeting of Lafayette-Lehigh, were picked up by SNY and various regional NBC Sports affiliates
- ▶ Inducted Jim Dicker '85, Ashley Harbin '08 and Jason McLaughlin '95 into the Maroon Club Hall of Fame
- ▶ Hosted soccer clinic and game at Easton Area High School's Cottingham Stadium
- ▶ Established partnership with CSMG to enhance revenue streams in the areas of advertising/sponsorships, ticket sales, naming rights, and camps.
- ▶ Added a unique partnership with the USGA to promote the 2022 US Senior Open



# STRATEGIC GOAL 5

## Ensure Integrity in Everything We Do

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Continued to support the department and College's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan
- ▶ Supported a group of eight (six student-athletes and two staff members) to attend the Black Student-Athlete Summit at Rice University
- ▶ Continued to support student-athletes in a variety of personal development workshops and conferences including Colleen McNamara (women's lacrosse) who attended the NCAA Career In Sports Forum
- ▶ Fostered an environment that has led to the development of affinity and support groups for unrepresented student-athletes



# STRATEGIC GOAL 6

## Secure the Funding Necessary for Success

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ▶ Formation of the Athletics Fundraising Steering Committee
- ▶ Utilized consulting firm to provide marketing and communications materials for athletics fundraising
- ▶ Secured lead gift for the Wallach Sports Performance and Lacrosse Center
- ▶ Secured lead gift for Gummesson Grounds
- ▶ Established partnership with CSMG to enhance revenue streams in the areas of advertising/sponsorships, ticket sales, naming rights, and camps

# LEOPARDS ON THE RISE



PROMINENT ACHIEVEMENTS REALIZED DURING THE 2021-22 ACADEMIC YEAR



## 92 OUT OF 112 HOME EVENTS

DURING THE 2021-22 CALENDAR YEAR WERE AVAILABLE ON ESPN+ THROUGH [GOLEOPARDS.COM](http://GOLEOPARDS.COM)



## 371 LAFAYETTE STUDENT-ATHLETES

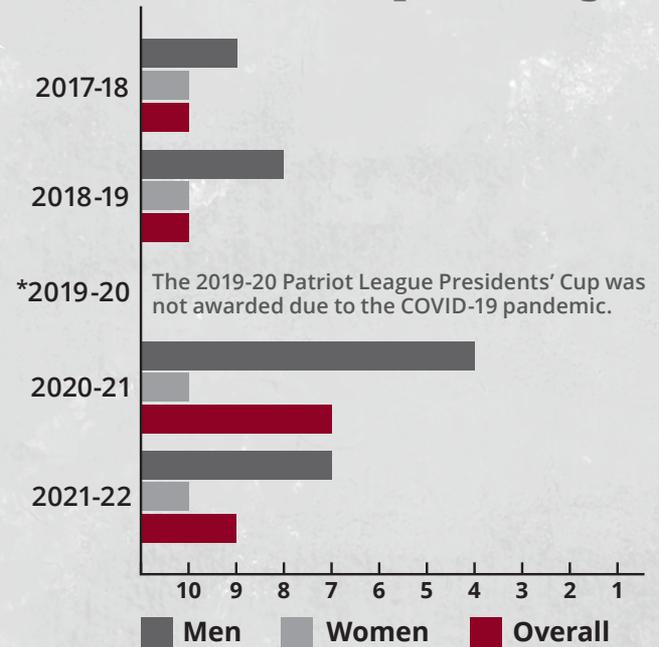
WERE NAMED TO THE **PATRIOT LEAGUE ACADEMIC HONOR ROLL.**

## 59 STUDENT-ATHLETES

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



## President's Cup Standings



*\*through fall sports seasons*



2

ALL-ROOKIE SELECTIONS

FOR THE BASKETBALL PROGRAMS: ONE A PIECE FOR THE MEN (**C.J. FULTON '25**) AND THE WOMEN (**ABBY ANTOGNOLO '25**)

1994

LAFAYETTE CLASS YEAR OF **JOHN TROXELL**, THE FRED M. KIRBY II '42 HEAD FOOTBALL COACH WHO TOOK OVER IN DEC. 2021.



27

SEASONS

FOR MEN'S BASKETBALL HEAD COACH **FRAN O'HANLON** WHO RETIRED AT THE END OF 2021-22, LEAVING AS THE PATRIOT LEAGUE LEADER IN CONFERENCE COACHING WINS



24

**MALIK HAMM '23** EARNED ALL-PATRIOT LEAGUE FOOTBALL HONORS FOR THE FOURTH TIME IN HIS CAREER, ONE OF JUST 14 STUDENT-ATHLETES TO ACHIEVE THE HONOR

12

PATRIOT LEAGUE WINS

IN A SEASON FOR THE VOLLEYBALL TEAM, SETTING A SCHOOL RECORD



1,847,877 DOLLARS

IN MAROON CLUB ANNUAL FUNDRAISING, THE LARGEST TOTAL IN SCHOOL HISTORY

# 19

**MIKE JORDAN** BECAME THE 19TH COACH IN LAFAYETTE MEN'S BASKETBALL HISTORY WHEN THE PENN GRAD ASSUMED THE ROLE IN MARCH 2022



# 36

ALL-PATRIOT LEAGUE FIRST-TEAM SELECTIONS

**RYAN ADAMS** TABBED AS THE PATRIOT LEAGUE VOLLEYBALL **COACH OF THE YEAR** IN HIS THIRD SEASON AT LAFAYETTE.



# 5

PATRIOT LEAGUE MAJOR AWARD WINNERS

**AUDREY SAWERS '22** EARNED **OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR** HONORS AND FOLLOWED THAT WITH A SELECTION TO THE CANADIAN WOMEN'S NATIONAL FIELD HOCKEY TEAM FOR THE 2022 WORLD CUP.



**RYAN TALL '22** EARNED THE PATRIOT LEAGUE INDIVIDUAL **GOLFER OF THE YEAR** AND ADVANCED TO THE NCAA NEW HAVEN REGIONAL



**LINEKE SPAANS '25** SECURED PATRIOT LEAGUE **ROOKIE OF THE YEAR** LAURELS IN FIELD HOCKEY, ONE OF FIVE LEOPARD ALL-LEAGUE HONOREES



**LEANNA DEEGAN '22** THE PATRIOT LEAGUE **PLAYER OF THE YEAR** IN VOLLEYBALL, LED THE NATION IN KILLS PER SET AND POINTS PER SET.



# 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

2021-22 → **\$1,847,877** (new record)

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

2021-22 → **3,269 donors**

## 2021-22 FACTS & FIGURES

**\$3,945,790** raised for Lafayette Athletics  
(through the Maroon Club, endowments,  
Leopard Champions Fund, etc.)

**38%** of young student-athlete alumni made a gift  
to support Lafayette athletics in 2021-22

**33%** of Lafayette former student-athletes made a gift in support of  
Lafayette College in 2021-22 (up from 30 percent in 2020-21)

**20%** of student-athlete alumni made a gift in support of Lafayette  
athletics in 2021-22 (up from 19 percent in 2020-21)

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



#ClimbTheHill