Western Kentucky University

TopSCHOLAR®

WKU Archives Records | WKU Archives

2018

UA19/16/2 Athletic Media Relations Press Releases

WKU Athletic Media Relations

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_ua_records

Part of the African American Studies Commons, Higher Education Administration Commons, Journalism Studies Commons, Mass Communication Commons, Public Relations and Advertising Commons, Race and Ethnicity Commons, and the Sports Studies Commons

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in WKU Archives Records by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact topscholar@wku.edu.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / January 9, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

*Three photos of Wes Strader are attached. Please credit WKU Athletics for all usage. Additional photos are available upon request **HERE**.*

LONGTIME "VOICE OF THE HILLTOPPERS" WES STRADER PASSES AWAY

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Charles Wesley "Wes" Strader, the "Voice of the Hilltoppers" as the radio play-by-play broadcaster for Western Kentucky University football and men's basketball for 36 seasons and one of the most prominent figures in the commonwealth of Kentucky's sports broadcasting history, passed away Tuesday evening. He was 79.

J.C. Kirby and Son on Lovers Lane in Bowling Green will handle the arrangements which are still in the process of being finalized.

Inducted into the Kentucky Athletic Hall of Fame in 2002, Strader earned a reputation as one of the outstanding radio sports broadcasters in the state through his work covering Hilltopper basketball and football, and his longtime involvement with the broadcast of the Kentucky High School Athletic Association "Sweet Sixteen" boy's state basketball championships.

"We are deeply saddened at Wes Strader's passing," said Director of Athletics Todd Stewart. "He was an iconic broadcaster in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and a loyal member of the WKU family, whose friendship and dedication to the Hilltoppers spanned decades. His Hall of Fame broadcasting career was intertwined with generations of our athletes, coaches, administration and fans and positively impacted all whom he touched. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Sue, son Chuck, and daughter, Kim."

On February 21, 2013, Strader was accorded a unique honor from his alma mater when WKU unveiled a banner bearing his name in the rafters of E.A. Diddle Arena, alongside the great athletes and coaches in the history of Hilltopper and Lady Topper basketball. To date, Strader's banner remains the only banner hung across all WKU sports for a non-player or former coach.

Over the years, Strader's career coincided with so many of WKU's all-time great coaches, administrators, and student-athletes as evidenced by the fact that 47 members of the W-Club's Hall of Fame inductees from football and men's basketball (88 total) played or coached during Strader's time behind the microphone.

A native of nearby Barren County, he grew up on the family farm near Hiseville, Ky., and was a graduate of Hiseville High School, where he played both football and basketball.

His association with Hilltopper Athletics goes back to the late 1940s when, as a 10-year-old, he began regularly attending athletic events on The Hill with his father, a season ticket holder.

His career in radio began at WKAY (now WGGC) in Glasgow in 1957 while he was in college at WKU. He enrolled at Western Kentucky University in 1955 and spent three years on The Hill before transferring to

the University of Kentucky to obtain a degree in radio arts. While in Lexington, he began his involvement with radio play-by-play of athletics, first with the campus station and later as a back-up on the UK network and doing high school games in nearby Frankfort.

Strader then returned to Hiseville to help with the family dairy business that also served the Bowling Green area. It was then that Hank Brosche, the owner of WKCT radio in Bowling Green, asked the young Strader if he would be interested in doing the play-by-play if the station added game coverage of Hilltopper events.

That was in 1964 and Strader has been associated with Hilltopper football and basketball ever since. His first game on the courtside on the air was the Hilltoppers' 1964 basketball opener, also John Oldham's first game as the Topper head coach and All-American Clem Haskins' first varsity appearance.

Strader handled WKCT (and later WBLG) Hilltopper game broadcasts for the next 36 years until the conclusion of the 1999-00 season. In 2000, Strader began an eight-year run doing a post-game call-in show following Kentucky basketball contests while maintaining his regular sports talk show in Bowling Green. Then, in 2008, he returned to The Hill to host Hilltopper pre-game and post-game call-in shows until his health declined late in 2017. Strader is also the namesake of the local "Wes Strader Schoolboy Classic" which enters its third year in 2018, a high school basketball tournament which annually features eight top local, regional, and national teams.

Strader is survived by his wife, Sue, two children, daughter Kim and son Chuck, two grandchildren, grandson Wes and granddaughter Kara, and a great granddaughter, Olivia.

KEEP OFF DO NOT CLIMB
SEC
WKCT
98 FM
HILLTOPPER
NETWORK

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / January 10, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

SERVICES FOR WES STRADER TO BE HELD ON MONDAY AND TUESDAY, JAN. 15-16

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Funeral services for Charles Wesley "Wes" Strader, the longtime "Voice of the Hilltoppers," will be held on Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 15 and 16.

All arrangements will be held at Eastwood Baptist Church (500 Eastwood Ave.) in Bowling Green and arrangements have been entrusted to J.C. Kirby and Son. Visitation will be held Monday, Jan. 15 from 2-8 p.m., and funeral services will be held at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 16. An additional visitation period will also be held Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. until funeral services begin.

The burial will be private.

Strader passed away Tuesday evening at the age of 79. He served as the radio play-by-play broadcaster for Western Kentucky University football and men's basketball for 36 seasons and was one of the most prominent figures in the commonwealth of Kentucky's sports broadcasting history.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / February 8, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

Renderings of the new videoboards are attached. All renderings are subject to change.

VIDEOBOARD UPGRADES TO BEGIN THIS SPRING ON THE HILL

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — The in-game fan experience at a number of WKU athletic events is set to take a major step forward in 2018-19 as the videoboards at Houchens Industries-L.T. Smith Stadium and E.A. Diddle Arena will undergo renovations this spring to increase the size of the viewing area by nearly 400 percent.

"We are very excited for these major upgrades to the fan experience at our two largest venues for next season," said Director of Athletics Todd Stewart. "We welcome thousands of visitors to the campus of Western Kentucky University every home event, and continuing to enhance their experience is vital. There will never be a better time to enjoy a game from the stands and feel closer to the action on the field and court than in 2018 on The Hill."

Most notably, the videoboard at Houchens Industries-L.T. Smith Stadium and the dual videoboards inside E.A. Diddle Arena will receive a complete overhaul to add state-of-the-art high definition videoboards increasing their viewing area and clarity over the current screens in the venues.

The project also includes a complete renovation of the sound system inside Diddle Arena to further enhance the in-game fan experience as well as a new scoreboard at the WKU Soccer Complex.

It will be the first major addition to Houchens-Smith Stadium since the opening of the newest side of the stadium prior to the 2008 season and first in Diddle Arena since the addition of suites in 2002.

The project will be funded through a strategic fundraising campaign handled by the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation, and donors who are interested in being involved with the project are encouraged to contact the HAF to discuss giving potential. WKU Athletics worked in conjunction with Daktronics, the world's industry leader in designing and manufacturing large screen video displays, to design and plan the project.

Barring weather issues, work is set to begin on the videoboard at Houchens-Smith Stadium on or around Feb. 12, while the project inside Diddle Arena will not begin until after May commencements.

Each year, both Houchens-Smith Stadium and Diddle Arena host more than just WKU athletic events as commencement ceremonies, conventions, local, regional and national sporting events, concerts, speakers, and even weddings and wedding receptions will all benefit from the increased clarity provided by the new videoboards.

Coca-Cola
WKU
Coca-Cola
WKU 5
WKU 20
WKU 12
WKU 10
WKU 32
WKU 23
WKU 24
usbank
FARMER OWNED
Prairie Farms
SONIC
America's Drive-In.
IGA
DAKTRONICS
EXIT

WKU
Coca-Cola
Coca-Cola
WKU
usbank
Prairie Farms
BG Home FURNISHINGS
C-USA
NCAA

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / March 6, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU ADDS ARKANSAS TO FUTURE HOME MEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE IN THREE-GAME, MULTI-SPORT SERIES

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — WKU and Arkansas have agreed to a three-game series over men's basketball and football which brings the Southeastern Conference's Razorbacks to E.A. Diddle Arena in 2019-20.

As part of the agreement, the Hilltoppers will travel to Fayetteville in 2019 for a single football game and have a home-and-home series in men's basketball. WKU will travel to Fayetteville during the 2018-19 season in men's basketball and receive a return visit the following season.

"We are always looking for compelling match ups in our football and men's basketball schedules, and adding the Arkansas Razorbacks is a very exciting addition for both programs," Director of Athletics Todd Stewart said. "There was a true rebirth in the atmosphere inside Diddle Arena this season. With Wisconsin and St. Mary's scheduled to visit next year, the addition of Arkansas in 2019-20 continues the upward trajectory of our men's basketball scheduling. The proximity of Arkansas to Bowling Green will also enable our fans to travel to Fayetteville and experience unique men's basketball and football environments."

WKU last squared off against the Razorbacks in men's basketball during the 1974-75 season when the Hilltoppers came away with a 74-63 victory inside Diddle Arena. It remains Arkansas' only visit to Diddle Arena, and the series currently sits at a 4-2 advantage in favor of the Razorbacks. It will be the first visit to Diddle Arena by an SEC team since Ole Miss during the 2013-14 season. Head coach Rick Stansbury is 16-14 all-time against Arkansas.

MATCH-UP DATES
MBB: TBD 2018-19; Fayetteville, Ark. *(or Little Rock, Ark.)*
FB: Nov. 9, 2019; Fayetteville, Ark. *(or Little Rock, Ark.)*
MBB: TBD 2019-20; Bowling Green, Ky.

The Razorbacks are one of just five current SEC members WKU has never faced on the football gridiron but will become the 10th when WKU travels to Fayetteville for the first time on Nov. 9, 2019. To accommodate the game, a previously scheduled game at Indiana has been moved to the 2022 season.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / April 2, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

A headshot of John McCammon is attached.

WKU'S MCCAMMON NAMED TO NCAA D-1 WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL COMMITTEE

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — The NCAA Division 1 Women's Volleyball Committee will have a certain Hilltopper flair next season as John McCammon, WKU's Associate Athletic Director for Compliance and Student Affairs, has been appointed to the 10-person committee.

McCammon's term on the committee will run from 2018-19 through 2021-22.

"This is a tremendous honor for John McCammon," said Director of Athletics Todd Stewart. "As our volleyball sport supervisor, John devotes a significant amount of time to the sport. It is great to see others recognize this, and it is also great that WKU will have representation on the Selection Committee."

As a member of the NCAA Division, I Women's Volleyball Committee McCammon will be charged with enhancing the development and public perception of the sport. The committee makes recommendations related to regular-season and postseason play and is responsible for selecting and seeding the field for the NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship.

"It is an honor to be selected to the NCAA Division I Volleyball Committee," McCammon said. "My love and knowledge for the game has grown so much during my years as a volleyball sport administrator working with one of the best coaching staffs in the nation. I have also been able to see firsthand the impact that the sport has well beyond the lines on the court. I am excited for this opportunity and look forward to joining this committee as we strive to continue to grow the sport."

McCammon will also assist in the oversight of a region subcommittee as well as serve as a NCAA site representative for one of the NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Regional rounds and will attend the NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship.

McCammon has served as WKU's sport administrator for Lady Topper Volleyball for the last four seasons which has included four consecutive Conference USA regular season championships and four consecutive C-USA tournament championships, including one this past season on the floor of E.A. Diddle Arena.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / April 12, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

140 WKU STUDENT-ATHLETES EARN C-USA COMMISSIONER'S HONOR ROLL RECOGNITION

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — A total of 140 WKU student-athlete's earned Commissioner's Honor Roll recognition from Conference USA for maintaining a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better during the 2017-18 academic year, the league announced on Thursday.

A total of 2,824 student-athletes across C-USA received the recognition, and student-athletes with a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or better will also receive the Commissioner's Academic Medal. Those recipients will be announced on Friday.

Over the past calendar year, 100 WKU student-athletes received their diploma from the University with 46 graduating in May 2017, 18 completed their degrees in the summer, while 35 received their degrees this past December. The cumulative GPA of the 100 graduates was 3.06.

A complete list of the honorees is attached.

WKU 2017-18 COMMISSIONER'S HONOR ROLL (140)

Evan Acosta	Baseball
Preston Boyd	Baseball
Luke Brown	Baseball
Caleb Bruner	Baseball
Richard Constantine	Baseball
Cody Cooper	Baseball
Aidan Elias	Baseball
Cody Hartness	Baseball
Paul Kirkpatrick	Baseball
Steven Kraft	Baseball
Devon Loomis	Baseball
Michael Martin	Baseball
Samuel McElreath	Baseball
Benjamin Morrison	Baseball
Dillon Nelson	Baseball
Jacob Rhinesmith	Baseball
Maddex Richardson	Baseball
Jake Ryan	Baseball
Bailey Sutton	Baseball
Patrick Thurston	Baseball
Jared Wilson	Baseball
Nicholas Coffey	Football
Jacob Collins	Football
Steven Duncan	Football
Caleb Etheridge	Football
D'Andre Ferby	Football
Jaylon George	Football
Rex Henderson	Football
Parker Howell	Football
Joel Iyiegbuniwe	Football
Seth Joest	Football
Juwuan Jones	Football
Carson Jordan	Football
Graydon Kulick	Football
Julien Lewis	Football
Joseph McIntyre	Football
Matt Nord	Football
Ryan Nuss	Football
Tyler Obee	Football
Dalton Ponchillia	Football
Benjamin Reeder	Football
Jarrett Sippola	Football
Colton Spencer	Football
Marcus Ward	Football
Steven Witchoskey	Football
Tyler Witt	Football

Dwight Coleby	Men's Basketball
Taveion Hollingsworth	Men's Basketball
Marek Nelson	Men's Basketball
Darius Thompson	Men's Basketball
Austin Brown	Men's Cross Country
Taylor Scarbrough	Men's Cross Country
Alexander Schell	Men's Cross Country
Maor Seged	Men's Cross Country
Bryce Swindell	Men's Cross Country
Thomas Bevington	Men's Golf
Stuart Easton	Men's Golf
Chase Landrum	Men's Golf
Dawson McDaniel	Men's Golf
Thomas Smith	Men's Golf
Austin Hayes	Men's Track & Field
Julius Morris	Men's Track & Field
Elizabeth Anderson	Women's Basketball
Alexis Brewer	Women's Basketball
Ivy Brown	Women's Basketball
Tashia Brown	Women's Basketball
Whitney Creech	Women's Basketball
Dee Givens	Women's Basketball
Sherry Porter	Women's Basketball
Kayla Smith	Women's Basketball
Nichel Tampa	Women's Basketball
Savannah Ames	Women's Cross Country
Rebecca Cook	Women's Cross Country
Morgan Kannapel	Women's Cross Country
Brianna Wolken	Women's Cross Country
Georgina Blackman	Women's Golf
Elizabeth Cason	Women's Golf
Caroline Cavin	Women's Golf
Megan Clarke	Women's Golf
Mary Joiner	Women's Golf
Abigail Smee	Women's Golf
Katharine Story	Women's Golf
Hannah Turner	Women's Golf
Chandler Backes	Women's Soccer
Christina Bragado	Women's Soccer
Kaylyn Bryant	Women's Soccer
Hannah Cady	Women's Soccer
Hannah Chua	Women's Soccer
Shayna Dheel	Women's Soccer
Sarah Gorham	Women's Soccer
Deven Jackson	Women's Soccer
Avery Jacobsen	Women's Soccer
Nahyo Jalajel	Women's Soccer
Aleksandra Kozovic	Women's Soccer
Ashley Leonard	Women's Soccer

Allison Leone	Women's Soccer
Megan Morris	Women's Soccer
Nicole Roseland	Women's Soccer
Brooke Tackett	Women's Soccer
Anne-Marie Ulliac	Women's Soccer
Cassidy Blackford	Softball
Paige Carter	Softball
Taylor Childress	Softball
Rebekah Engelhardt	Softball
Morgan McElroy	Softball
Kelsey McGuffin	Softball
Shelby Nunn	Softball
Kendall Smith	Softball
Tommi Stowers	Softball
Jordan Thomas	Softball
Haylee Towers	Softball
Brittany Vaughn	Softball
Jordan Vorbrink	Softball
Natalia De Ugarte	Women's Tennis
Moka Ito	Women's Tennis
Elpida Malamou	Women's Tennis
Monica Malinen	Women's Tennis
Cindy Oest	Women's Tennis
Cassie Pennington	Women's Tennis
Violetta Shatalova	Women's Tennis
Shelby Chobot	Women's Track & Field
Adarian Gray	Women's Track & Field
Kira Harman	Women's Track & Field
Morgan McIntyre	Women's Track & Field
Nicole Ogorek	Women's Track & Field
Alexis Thacker	Women's Track & Field
Rachel Anderson	Volleyball
Taylor Bebout	Volleyball
Alyssa Cavanaugh	Volleyball
Sophia Cerino	Volleyball
Taylor Dellinger	Volleyball
Sydney Engle	Volleyball
Kayland Jackson	Volleyball
Emma Kowalkowski	Volleyball
Amara Listenbee	Volleyball
Jessica Lucas	Volleyball
Mary Martin	Volleyball
Darby Music	Volleyball
Hallie Shelton	Volleyball
Maggie Singleton	Volleyball

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / April 13, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

41 WKU STUDENT-ATHLETES EARN C-USA COMMISSIONER'S ACADEMIC MEDALS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — A day after 140 WKU student-athletes were honored for their achievements in the classroom, 41 have earned additional accolades by earning a spot on the 2017-18 Conference USA Commissioner's Academic Medal list.

The 41 WKU student-athletes are a part of 708 total student-athletes across the league who received the honor for achieving a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or higher. With eight total academic medalists, the women's soccer team led all WKU sport programs while softball had six, and football, women's golf and volleyball each had four.

Over the past calendar year, 100 WKU student-athletes received their diploma from the University with 46 graduating in May 2017, 18 completed their degrees in the summer, while 35 received their degrees this past December. The cumulative GPA of the 100 graduates was 3.06.

A complete list of the honorees is attached.

WKU 2017-18 COMMISSIONER'S ACADEMIC MEDAL (41)

Devon Loomis	Baseball
Michael Martin	Baseball
Benjamin Morrison	Baseball
Nicholas Coffey	Football
Joseph McIntyre	Football
Jarret Sippola	Football
Tyler Witt	Football
Marek Nelson	Men's Basketball
Taylor Scarbrough	Men's Cross Country
Alexzander Schell	Men's Cross Country
Thomas Bevington	Men's Golf
Dawson McDaniel	Men's Golf
Thomas Smith	Men's Golf
Rebecca Cook	Women's Cross Country
Morgan Kannapel	Women's Cross Country
Caroline Cavin	Women's Golf
Megan Clarke	Women's Golf
Mary Joiner	Women's Golf
Hannah Turner	Women's Golf
Kaylyn Bryant	Women's Soccer
Hannah Chua	Women's Soccer
Sarah Gorham	Women's Soccer
Aleksandra Kozovic	Women's Soccer
Ashley Leonard	Women's Soccer
Megan Morris	Women's Soccer
Nicole Roseland	Women's Soccer
Anne-Marie Ulliac	Women's Soccer
Cassidy Blackford	Softball
Paige Carter	Softball
Taylor Childress	Softball
Morgan McElroy	Softball
Kelsey McGuffin	Softball
Kendall Smith	Softball
Moka Ito	Women's Tennis
Elpida Malamou	Women's Tennis
Morgan McIntyre	Women's Track & Field

Nicole Ogorek	Women's Track & Field
Sophia Cerino	Women's Volleyball
Sydney Engle	Women's Volleyball
Mary Martin	Women's Volleyball
Darby Music	Women's Volleyball

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / April 18, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

HILLTOPPER FOOTBALL AND BASKETBALL CELEBRATING 100 SEASONS IN 2018-19

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — It will be a historic year on The Hill in 2018-19 as both the Hilltopper Football and Hilltopper Basketball squads will field their 100th teams on the gridiron and hardwood, and WKU Athletics will take fans on trips down memory lane leading up to both seasons.

Hilltopper Football fielded its first official team in 1913 but due to World War I and World War II, no teams were fielded between 1917 and 1919 and 1943-45. On the hardwood, the Hilltoppers began play in the 1914-15 season and similarly did not field teams around the wars, making for one of college athletics most unique coincidences – a pair of 100th team celebrations.

WKU is believed to be the only FBS program to ever honor both programs in the same season and is one of three (Louisville, UCLA) to celebrate their 100th football team in 2018.

WKU Athletics will honor both programs by recognizing the great players over the decades, beginning with an All-Century Team for Hilltopper Football.

Fans will have an opportunity to place their vote for the team beginning Saturday during WKU's Red vs. White Spring Game.

The All-Century Football Team will be led by co-head coaches Jimmy Feix, the winningest coach in program history, and Jack Harbaugh, head coach of the 2002 National Championship squad. A list of more than 200 candidates was trimmed to 100 for fans to place their vote for the 12-member offense, 12-member defense, and five-member special teams squad.

Voting for the team will continue through the spring and summer with an announcement of the 29-member team coming prior to WKU's 2018 opener at Wisconsin. Themed giveaways will also dot the schedule as well throughout the year in both sports.

The 100-day countdown to the 100th season of Hilltopper Football begins May 23.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / April 26, 2018
Football / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU ROLLS OUT THE RED CARPET FOR FIRST ANNUAL TOPSY AWARDS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — WKU rolled out the red carpet, literally, on Thursday night as Hilltoppers and Lady Toppers from all of WKU's sport programs joined in an evening of dinner, highlights, memories and of course, awards.

Emceed by former WKU letterman Doug Gorman, WKU Athletics handed out 20 awards ranging from Scholar-Athlete of the Year to Rookie of the Year to Team of the Year. Beginning with a dinner and photo opportunity on the floor of E.A. Dinner Arena, WKU's student-athletes celebrated the achievements of their fellow red towel wavers.

The awards ceremony itself was held across the Avenue of Champions in the Downing Student Union Auditorium.

Beginning with the Community Outreach Award, awarded by "Hope for Harlie's" Harlie Bryant to volleyball's Sydney Engle and by WKU Best Buddies John Michael Huffman to football's Julien Lewis, the football team took home the overall community service award.

Academically, a two-way tie for the men's Scholar-Athlete of the Year resulted in baseball's Ben Morrison and football's Nicholas Coffey taking home joint honors. On the women's side, soccer's Sarah Gorham's extensive academic resume netted her the honor.

After becoming the first 1,000-1,000 club member since Jim McDaniels in 1971, men's basketball's Justin Johnson broke the football program's six-year stranglehold on the male athlete of the year award as he took home the award for Mr. Hilltopper. In a tight race with championship winners and record breakers up and down the ballot sheet, volleyball's Jessica Lucas helped the volleyball program repeat as Ms. Hilltopper.

A complete list of the winners is below:

1. Male Community Outreach Award – Julien Lewis, Football
2. Female Community Outreach Award – Sydney Engle, Volleyball
3. Team Community Outreach Award - Football
4. Male Rookie of the Year—Taveion Hollingsworth, Men's Basketball
5. Female Rookie of the Year – Raneem Elgedawy, Women's Basketball
6. Men's Scholar Team of the Year – Men's Golf
7. Women's Scholar Team of the Year – Women's Tennis
8. (tie) Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year – Ben Morrison, Baseball
9. (tie) Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year – Nicholas Coffey, Football
10. Female Scholar Athlete of the Year- Sarah Gorham, Soccer
11. Best Male Record-Breaking Performance – Taveion Hollingsworth, Men's Basketball
12. Best Female Record-Breaking Performance – Volleyball

13. Head Coach of the Year – Travis Hudson, Volleyball
14. Support Staff of the Year – Duane Hall, Strength & Conditioning
15. Administrator of the Year – Lisa Schneider, Senior Woman Administrator
16. Best Comeback Award – Track & Field
17. Best Upset Award - Men's Basketball
18. Mr. Hilltopper Award – Justin Johnson, Men's Basketball
19. Ms. Hilltopper Award – Jessica Lucas, Volleyball
20. Overall Team Performance – Men's Basketball

wkusports.com
WKU
Kentucky 811
Know what's below. Call before you dig.
usbank
2017-2011
MS. HILL

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / May 11, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

A complete list of the 64 graduates is attached.

SIXTY-FOUR HILLTOPPERS TO RECEIVE DEGREES DURING SPRING COMMENCEMENTS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – A total of 64 WKU student-athletes across 12 sports, boasting an average cumulative grade point average of 3.21, will graduate this weekend in spring commencement activities on The Hill.

Degrees obtained include exercise science, recreation and sport administration, biology, marketing, finance, chemistry, and nursing among many others. Twelve of the 64 are obtaining master's degrees with a cumulative GPA of 3.51 while six student-athletes, including two undergraduates in Ben Morrison (baseball) and Nicholas Coffey (football), will graduate with perfect 4.0 GPAs.

A total of 100 WKU student-athletes have graduated in the past calendar year, with 36 others earning their degrees in December. The average cumulative GPA of the 100 is 3.13.

Earlier this spring, WKU was recognized by Conference USA as 140 Hilltopper and Lady Topper student-athletes, nearly half of WKU's student-athletes, received C-USA Commissioner's Honor Roll recognition while 41 received academic medals for posting 3.00 and 3.75 cumulative grade point averages, respectively.

In the NCAA's latest Graduation Success Rate (GSR) released this past November, WKU Athletics posted an overall GSR of 82, maintaining its standing as one of the top producers of graduates in the NCAA. Led by perfect scores by softball, women's tennis, and women's volleyball, the Hilltoppers and Lady Toppers posted eight scores of 81 or higher. It is the third consecutive mark of 82 overall or better for WKU.

Baseball
Ben Morrison, Biology
Steven Kraft, Interdisciplinary Studies
Conner Boyd, Sport Management
Logan Weins, Sport Management
Colie Currie, Sport Management
Tyler Robertson, Interdisciplinary Studies
Austin Tibbs, Interdisciplinary Studies

Football
Nicholas Coffey, Chemistry
Jake Collins, Exercise Science
Ryan Nuss, Marketing
Joel Iyiegbuniwe, Biology
Julian Leslie, Recreation and Sport Administration
Evan Sayner, Finance
Drew Davis, Recreation and Sport Administration
Joel German, Recreation and Sport Administration
Joe Brown, Interdisciplinary Studies
Martavius Mims, Sport Management
DeAndre Farris, Interdisciplinary Studies
Nathan Roush, Interdisciplinary Studies
Masai Whyte, Interdisciplinary Studies
Dennis Edwards, Interdisciplinary Studies
Drew Eckels, Interdisciplinary Studies
Trae Jones, Interdisciplinary Studies

Men's Basketball
Que Johnson, Recreation and Sport Admin
Jabari McGhee, Interdisciplinary Studies

Men's Golf
Bryant Evans, Marketing

Tennis
Madeline Phillips, Speech-Language Pathology

Volleyball
Sydney Engle, Management
Jessica Lucas, Exercise Science
Maggie Singleton, Public Relations
Alyssa Cavanaugh, Recreation Administration
Amara Listenbee, Exercise Science

Track and Field/Cross Country
Kyle Wilson, Business Administration
Julien Cuyeu, Hospitality Management & Dietetics
Desmond Mobley, Interdisciplinary Studies
Jonathan Hayden, Criminology
Lindsey Hinken, Psychology
Morgan McIntyre, Communication Disorders
Catika Slay, Recreation and Sport Administration
Getter Lemberg, Psychology
Savannah Ames, Interdisciplinary Studies
Ariel Terrell, Sport Management
Katie Lever, Organizational Communication

Swimming
Kevin Knezevich, Recreation and Sport Administration
Davis Ranburger, Chemistry
Lucas De Brito, Architectural Science

Women's Basketball
Jalynn McClain, Recreation and Sport Administration
Tashia Brown, Physical Education

Women's Golf
Hannah Turner, Chemistry
Katie Story, Exercise Science
Elizabeth Cason, Biology
Georgina Blackman, Corporate and Organizational Communication

Soccer
Sarah Gorham, Sport Management
Olivia Fitzgerald, Nursing
Hannah Chua, Advertising
Haley Baldridge, Nursing
Iris Dunn, Nursing
Allison Leone, Finance
Nahyo Jalajel, Psychological Science
Bria Mosley, Management
Dee Green, Broadcasting

Softball
Kacie Freeman, Exercise Science
Kelsey Jernigan, Elementary Education
Taylor Borders, Nursing

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / May 16, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

FOUR WKU TEAMS RECEIVE NCAA PUBLIC RECOGNTION AWARDS ON WEDNESDAY

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – A record-high four Hilltopper and Lady Topper athletic teams were honored on Wednesday for their success in the classroom as volleyball, men's cross country, women's golf and women's tennis received NCAA Academic Performance Program Public Recognition Awards for having a multiyear Academic Progress Rate (APR) scores in the top 10 percent nationally through the 2016-17 academic year.

"I would like to congratulate the student-athletes and coaching staffs from these four sport programs for their effort and hard work in the classroom to earn this honor," Director of Athletics Todd Stewart said. "It is a testament to their determination to succeed on and off the field of play, and ranking in the top 10 percent of all programs in the nation is a terrific accomplishment."

It marks the 13th-straight year the Lady Topper volleyball program has ranked in the top 10 percent nationally, and WKU has now had multiple programs honored for four consecutive seasons for the first time since the program began. Out of 1,200 teams from 312 NCAA Division 1 schools, WKU's volleyball program is one of only 85 to earn the award in each of the 13 years of the program.

The women's tennis program has now earned the award in four consecutive season's while women's golf earned their second consecutive award.

WKU is one of three Conference USA member institutions to have four sport programs honored with Public Recognition Awards, joining Rice and UTSA. As a whole, the league had 29 sport programs honored on Wednesday, up from 27 a season ago.

The APR provides a real-time look at a program's academic success each semester by tracking the academic progress of each student-athlete on scholarship. The APR accounts for eligibility, retention and graduation and provides a measure of each team's academic performance.

The programs recognized Wednesday posted multiyear APRs in the top 10 percent of all squads in each sport. The full APR report will be released on May 23.

Over the past calendar year, 111 WKU student-athletes received their diploma from the University with 77 graduating in May 2016 and 11 over the summer session while 22 received their degrees this past December. The cumulative GPA of the 111 graduates was 3.19.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / May 23, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU ATHLETICS POSTS HIGH MARKS IN NCAA ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – As one of Conference USA's leaders in NCAA Public Recognition Awards, it is fitting that WKU would also serve as one of the league's leaders in the Annual Progress Report which was released by the organization on Wednesday.

The APR provides a real-time look at a program's academic success each semester by tracking the academic progress of each student-athlete on scholarship. The APR accounts for eligibility, retention and graduation and provides a measure of each team's academic performance. This year, the APR score was a multi-year average of the 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 academic years.

Every Hilltopper and Lady Topper program exceeded the NCAA's mandated 930 minimum and 11 programs (out of 14) surpassed that threshold by 40 points or more. WKU is one of eight C-USA member schools to have 11 programs post 970 or higher scores in the 2016-17 APR report, highlighted by four programs (volleyball, men's cross country, women's golf, women's tennis) who posted perfect 1,000 APR scores.

Last week, those four programs, a record-high, were honored for their success in the classroom and received Academic Performance Program Public Recognition Awards for having a multiyear Academic Progress Rate (APR) scores in the top 10 percent nationally through the 2016-17 academic year.

It marked the 13th-straight year the Lady Topper volleyball program has ranked in the top 10 percent nationally, and WKU has now had multiple programs honored for four consecutive seasons for the first time since the program began. WKU's volleyball program is one of only 85 to earn the award in each of the 13 years of the program.

The Division I Board of Directors set a score of 930 as the threshold for teams to meet or face possible immediate and historical sanctions. Programs falling below the 930 benchmark face penalties such as practice time reduction, scholarship reduction and possible postseason bans.

Over the past calendar year, a total of 100 WKU student-athletes have earned their degrees from Western Kentucky University, including 64 in spring commencement ceremonies. The average cumulative GPA of the 100 graduates was a 3.13, and undergraduate degrees obtained included: exercise science, recreation and sport administration, biology, marketing, finance, chemistry, nursing, among others.

WKU
VOLLEYBALL

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / June 17, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

Hatchett's headshot and two photos from the course are attached.

WKU MEN'S GOLF COACH PHILLIP HATCHETT PASSES AWAY ON SUNDAY

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – WKU Head Men's Golf Coach Phillip Hatchett was killed early Sunday morning after being struck by a vehicle while riding his bicycle with other cyclists. He was 55.

"Our hearts are broken following the tragic passing of Phillip Hatchett," Director of Athletics Todd Stewart said. "He was an outstanding individual in every respect, a kind soul liked and respected by all and someone who cared deeply for his players whom he considered family. Phillip exhibited pure class in everything he did. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Beth, and the entire Hatchett family."

Hatchett, a 1985 graduate of Western Kentucky University and four-year letterman for the men's golf program, spent eight seasons as head coach of the program and led a resurgence in recent years since taking over in 2010. WKU recorded five top-five performances as a team in 2017-18 with two 6-under outings that produced 858 totals. They finished the season with their best conference tournament round since 2008.

In 2017-18, Hatchett's top individual player, Billy Tom Sargent was named to the All-Conference USA Second Team and became the second Hilltopper to qualify for a NCAA Regional as an individual, and the first since 2008. He also tied for 11th in the 2018 Conference USA Championship – the best individual conference finish for WKU since 2010.

Perhaps more than the success on the course, education took an even greater role in Hatchett's program, and in 2012-13, 2016-17, and 2017-18, his teams were the standard for academic success on The Hill as they earned the men's sport program Academic Team of the Year award for posting the top cumulative grade point average among all WKU men's sport programs. Two individuals were also named WKU's Male Academic Student-Athlete of the Year during his tenure.

Hatchett was also a valuable member in the golf community in southcentral Kentucky where he was a regular on the courses, fostering the development of youth golf in the area. In 2008, he created the Phillip Hatchett Junior Golf Camp in an effort to stimulate the game's growth, and the camp has mentored over 200 young golfers since its inception.

Arrangements have not yet been finalized and will be announced as soon as they are available.

C-USA

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / July 2, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

NEW STATE LAW ADDS SALES TAX TO WKU TICKETS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – Beginning with the new 2018-19 fiscal year, which began July 1, the Kentucky Department of Revenue is requiring all non-profit organizations to collect a 6-percent sales tax on admissions to events hosted by the organization which includes athletic events.

With the new laws in effect, WKU Athletics will be required to add an additional 6-percent sales tax to event tickets, both single-game and season. The change will be reflected in the single-cost price of tickets but will not affect parking or donations.

Tickets purchased prior to July 1 will not be affected by this change.

For more information, contact the WKU Ticket Office at 1-800-5-BIGRED or go to WKUTickets.com. Pricing is currently being adjusted to reflect the new sales tax inclusion.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / Wednesday, July 25, 2018
Hilltoppers With Heart / Contact: Jessica Leifheit, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

Day of Caring video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SpvTE8t_lr0

HILLTOPPERS WRAP UP 2018 DAY OF CARING

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – Giving back is always in season on The Hill - even in the middle of the summer. On Wednesday, July 25, WKU Athletics teamed up with US Bank and United Way for the eighth year for Day of Caring. Student-athletes and coaches from WKU Men's & Women's Basketball, WKU Cheer, WKU Football, WKU Volleyball, WKU Softball, WKU Baseball, WKU Track & Field as well as dozens of volunteers came together on the South Lawn to put together a special day for the hundreds of visitors.

Altogether, Hilltoppers with Heart spent more than 200 hours taking part in the United Way Day of Caring. Student-athletes, coaches and athletics staff hosted more than 300 new friends from numerous area summer camps on the South Lawn of the WKU campus. Across five hours of activities, volunteers from eight different Hilltopper varsity programs were stationed at different stations including volleyball, styrofoam airplanes, hot air balloons, football and cornhole boards.

Hilltoppers With Heart, sponsored by Passport Health Plan, was founded in 2011 and is designed to give WKU student-athletes, coaches and staff the unique opportunity to make an impact in the community by volunteering time and talent with numerous organizations including United Way, Boys and Girls Clubs, local schools and many more.

Passport Health Plan is a provider-sponsored, non-profit, community-based Medicaid health plan that has been contracted with Kentucky's Cabinet for Health and Family Services to administer Medicaid benefits since 1997. Medicaid members can choose Passport to be their health care provider, and as of June 27, 2016, there are nearly 17,000 Passport members living in Region 4, which includes Warren County and the campus of Western Kentucky University.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / Thursday, August 16, 2018
General / Contact: Jessica Leifheit, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

Lucas & McIntyre headshots attached – please credit WKU Athletics.

WKU VOLLEYBALL'S LUCAS, WKU TRACK & FIELD'S MCINTYRE NAMED C-USA SCHOLAR ATHLETES

IRVING, Texas – Former WKU student-athletes Jessica Lucas and Morgan McIntyre have been named the Conference USA Scholar-Athlete of the Year in volleyball and women's track & field, respectively. Both Lady Toppers left an impact on The Hill through their contributions in the community, classroom and competition. Collectively, Lucas and McIntyre combined for 12 Conference USA Championships during their careers at WKU

C-USA Scholar-Athlete of the Year awards are presented to the top student-athletes in each conference-sponsored sport, determined by a vote of the league's 14 Faculty Athletics Representatives. The award is based on academic achievement (GPA), athletic achievement and service. Award recipients were selected from C-USA's full-time and affiliate institutions in 19 sports (combining indoor and outdoor track and field).

A senior out of Ashland, Ky., McIntyre was also named to the 2018 Conference USA Track & Field All-Academic Team, Commissioner's Honor Roll, USTFCCCA All-Academic list and earned the 2018 Commissioner's Academic Medal with a major in Communication Science and Disorders. She was also named to the 2017 USTFCCCA All-Academic Team.

In her final season on The Hill, McIntyre notched her fourth-consecutive C-USA Women's Pole Vault Championship at the 2018 Outdoor C-USA Championships. She finished the 2017-18 season with the best Indoor and Outdoor conference pole vault marks, with her best jump registering at 4.17 meters at the Hilltopper Relays this past April. She holds three of the top five best marks in WKU women's pole vault history in both the indoor and outdoor events.

WKU's second honoree, Lucas, became the first Lady Topper in volleyball program history to earn Senior CLASS First-Team All-American status while also collecting her third-straight C-USA Setter of the Year recognition in addition to her fourth-consecutive All-American nod from the AVCA. The Seymour, Ind., native is the first student-athlete in program history to earn All-American laurels from four different organizations in a single season and is one of just three four-time All-Americans in WKU Volleyball history. In her final match in the Red and White, the setter went on to set the school record for career assists with 5,338.

In the classroom, Lucas earned C-USA Commissioner's Honor Roll status, not to mention her second selection to the league's All-Academic team. Lucas graduated from WKU in May 2018 with a degree in exercise science, pre-physical therapy.

WKU is one of just four Conference USA institutions to see multiple student-athletes honored as a 2017-18 Scholar-Athlete. Rice, Middle Tennessee and Charlotte join the Hilltoppers with multiple selections.

2017-18 SCHOLAR ATHLETE AWARD WINNERS:

Baseball Nick Sandlin, Southern Miss
Men's Basketball Ed Simpson, Middle Tennessee
Women's Basketball Erica Ogwumike, Rice
Men's Cross Country Adolfo Carvalho, Rice
Women's Cross Country *Elsa Racasan, Rice
Football *Brent Stockstill, Middle Tennessee
Men's Golf Mitchell Meissner, Rice
Women's Golf Maggie Simmermacher, Old Dominion
Men's Soccer Jason Beaulieu, New Mexico #
Women's Soccer Martha Thomas, Charlotte
Softball *Haley Pace, Charlotte
Women's Swimming & Diving Anna Lynch, Marshall & Marie Claire Schillinger, Rice
Men's Tennis Eric Rutledge, Rice
Women's Tennis Lindsey Hodge, Rice
Men's Track & Field Scott Filip, Rice
Women's Track & Field **Morgan McIntyre, WKU**
Volleyball **Jessica Lucas, WKU**

** Repeat winner*
 # Affiliate member

WKU

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / August 24, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

A promotional photo of Cage the Elephant is attached. Credit "Cage the Elephant"
WKU Tickets direct link: goto.ps/MaineFBTix

WKU TO HOST GRAMMY AWARD WINNERS CAGE THE ELEPHANT FOR SPECIAL APPEARANCE SEPT. 8

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – Western Kentucky University President Tim Caboni, in conjunction with WKU Athletics, will host GRAMMY® AWARD-winning rock band – and Bowling Green natives – Cage the Elephant for a special appearance prior to WKU Football's home opener on Sept. 8.

Complete details for the appearance will be announced during the week of the game.

Fans with game tickets and WKU students with valid student IDs will be admitted into the appearance free of charge. Tickets remain available for the football game, which kicks off at 6:30 p.m., and can be purchased by calling 1-800-5-BIGRED or by going online to WKUTickets.com.

Hilltopper Athletic Foundation members will retain their original parking places, but fans should allow extra time and expect delays when entering campus that day due to an expected influx of attendees for the game and special appearance by the band.

ABOUT CAGE THE ELEPHANT:
Cage The Elephant received their first GRAMMY® AWARD for Best Rock Album for their fourth studio album, Tell Me I'm Pretty, which was produced by Dan Auerbach of The Black Keys. At radio, Cage The Elephant holds the record for the most #1 Alternative songs of any artist this decade. Tell Me I'm Pretty's first two singles "Mess Around" and "Trouble," both topped the Alternative charts at #1 ("Mess Around" also hit #1 at Triple A). In addition, "Trouble" maintained its bullet on the Alternative radio chart for an astounding 41 weeks. "Cold Cold Cold," went top 5 at both Alternative and Triple A. Watch the video for "Cold Cold Cold" and "Trouble," both directed by singer Matt Shultz.

Cage The Elephant consists of singer Matt Shultz, guitarist Brad Shultz, drummer Jared Champion, bassist Daniel Tichenor, lead guitarist Nick Bockrath and Matthan Minster on keyboard and backing vocals. Long celebrated as one of the most explosive live bands in the world, Cage The Elephant have sold out several headlining runs including a summer 2016 arena tour and recent sold out UK and European tour. Additionally, Cage The Elephant's self-titled debut album was recently certified RIAA platinum."

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / September 4, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU Tickets direct link: goto.ps/MaineFBTix

DETAILS ANNOUNCED FOR CAGE THE ELEPHANT SPECIAL APPEARANCE AT FOOTBALL HOME OPENER

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – GRAMMY® AWARD-winning rock band – and Bowling Green natives – Cage the Elephant will play a pre-game set ahead of WKU Football's season opener on Saturday, Sept. 8, at 4:30 p.m. on the campus of Western Kentucky University.

Fans with game tickets and WKU students with valid student IDs will be admitted into the appearance free of charge. Tickets remain available for the football game, which kicks off at 6:30 p.m., and can be purchased by calling 1-800-5-BIGRED or by going online to WKUTickets.com.

The band will perform on South Lawn, directly across from Houchens-Smith Stadium, and normal tailgating rules and regulations will apply on South Lawn. The lone exception to those policies is that tailgating tents will **not** be allowed during this event on the lawn.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Where can we park? Free parking is available in the University Blvd Lot, Creason Lot, Russellville Rd West Lot (next to Arby's), Adams Street Lot, Kentucky Street Lot and Alumni Square Garage. A free trolley service is also available beginning at 4 p.m. from the parking garage in downtown Bowling Green. The trolley runs from the garage to campus and will return back downtown immediately after the football game.

I already have reserved game day parking, is that still available? Yes! Hilltopper Athletic Foundation members with reserved parking spaces will still be able to use their spaces, including those in the South Lawn and Avenue of Champions lots. However, fans should allow extra time and expect delays when entering campus that day due to an expected influx of attendees for the game and special appearance by the band.

Is tailgating allowed? Tailgating across campus remains unchanged, and normal tailgating rules will still apply. However, due to the expected crowds, tailgating tents will not be allowed on South Lawn.

When can we begin staging for the event? Normal tailgating policies will apply to South Lawn that day, and tailgating opens campus-wide at 8 a.m.

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / September 17, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU ATHLETICS ANNOUNCES HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2018

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – Three great names in the history of Western Kentucky University Athletics will be inducted as the 28th class into the WKU Athletic Hall of Fame in ceremonies set for Homecoming Weekend this fall.

The 2018 class includes Crystal Kelly (women's basketball), Matt Wilhite (baseball) and Rick Yeloushan (swimming).

The induction of the 2018 class will bring the number of former WKU athletes and coaches to earn berths in the school's Athletic Hall of Fame to 152 since its founding in 1991.

The induction ceremony will highlight the annual W-Club Homecoming Brunch, set for 10 a.m. CT, Saturday, Oct. 27, on John Oldham Court in E.A. Diddle Arena.

Tickets for the event, which is open to the general public, are $20 each and can be purchased and/or reserved:
• online at alumni.wku.edu/wclubbrunch18 (then click on the "Registration" box and fill out the reservation form)
• by calling 1-888-WKU-ALUM (1-888-958-2586) or, locally in the Bowling Green area, 270-745-4395;
• or, by contacting either W-Club Treasurer Bill Edwards (270-791-9881; bill.edwards@wku.edu) or W-Club Secretary Paul Just (270-792-4247; paul.just@wku.edu).

Each W-Club member who has paid his/her 2018-19 dues may claim two complimentary tickets to the event; however, seating is limited and reservations *MUST* be made — either online, by phone with the Alumni Association, or with Edwards or Just — to ensure seating is available. Non-members, and the general public, are welcome, but must purchase tickets *(see above)*. Letterwinners who have not yet paid their '18-19 dues may do so online via credit card (at alumni.wku.edu/joinwclub) or at the door *with a prior reservation*.

The inductees will also be honored in ceremonies on Jimmy Feix Field at halftime of the annual Homecoming Football Game, set to kickoff at 6:30 p.m. Head Coach Mike Sanford will pit his Hilltoppers against Conference USA foe Florida International at Houchens Industries - L.T. Smith Stadium. Tickets for the game are available by calling 1-800-5-BIG-RED (or 270-745-5222). A reminder: W-Club members with a valid 2018-19 membership card may claim one complementary ticket to the football game and purchase additional tickets at a discounted rate.

The 2018 WKU Athletic Hall of Fame class:

Crystal Kelly *(Basketball, 4 letters, 2005-08)*
Kelly made an impact on Lady Topper basketball as a freshman in and went on to become one of the most decorated athletes in program history. A three-time All-American (2005, '07, '08) and four-time

first-team All-Sun Belt Conference selection, she was the SBC Player of the Year as a senior (averaging 22.6 points and 10.5 rebounds an outing while leading the nation with her 64.4% school record field goal percentage). Going out in style, she scored a school record 42 points in her final home game. She set WKU career marks for both scoring (2,803 points, also a SBC record and the 12th highest total in NCAA Division I history) and rebounding (1,258). She ranks #1 and #2 in the Lady Topper season books for points (770 and 767) and per-game scoring (24.1 and 22.6). And, she holds WKU standards for season scoring for a freshman, sophomore, junior and senior. Overall, she set 19 school records. She is the only Lady Topper to post single season field goal percentages of 60%-or-more — a feat she achieved all four of her years on The Hill. She is the only Lady Topper to lead the club in rebounding all four years; and, she and Lilllie Mason are the only two to lead the team in scoring all four years. A jersey bearing her # 42 is retired and hanging in Diddle Arena. A product of Sacred Heart Academy in Louisville, was drafted by the Houston Comets of the WNBA and played four seasons of pro ball. She is now an assistant coach at Xavier University.

Matt Wilhite ***(Baseball, 4 letters, 2000-03)***
Wilhite earned All-America honors as a senior after being named the Sun Belt Pitcher of the Year to become the first releiver in league history to win the award. Twice named the SBC Relief Pitcher of the Year (‘02 and ‘03), he was a two-time All-South Central Team selection and All-Sun Belt pick, making him the only pitcher in WKU history to be named first-team All-SBC twice. In 2006, he was one of three Hilltoppers (the only pitcher) named to the Sun Belt 30th Anniversary Team. He holds WKU records for both season (37) and career (110) appearances as well as career saves (23). He led the Hilltoppers in appearances three times — as a rookie in ‘00 (27) and in both ‘02 (33, tying the school record) and ‘03 (37, setting a new school standard). He was tops on the club in ERA in both ‘02 (2.20) and ‘03 (1.77). His eight wins was the team-high for ‘03; and, he led WKU in saves 3 times — ‘00 (8), ‘02 (7) and ‘03 (11 — the second highest total ever for a Topper). A prominent figure on the school all-time leaders lists for single season appearances (first and third); saves (second, fifth and ninth); and ERA (seventh). He signed as a free agent with the Anaheim Angels and played eight seasons in the minor leagues (five at the AAA level) for the Angels and the Colorado Rockies. A former WKU softball assistant, Wilhite lives in nearby Franklin, his hometown, where he is the athletics director at Franklin-Simpson High School.

Rick Yeloushan ***(Swimming, 4 letters, 1971-74)***
A member of Coach Bill Powell’s first recruiting class in 1970, Yeloushan came to The Hill from Tampa, Fla., and developed into the outstanding Hilltopper swimmer in the early years of the sport on The Hill. He set school records in both the 50 and 100 freestyle on his way to becoming the first Hilltopper to qualify for the NCAA Championships — a feat he achieved in both his junior (1973 — in the 100) and senior (1974 — in the 50) seasons and an accomplishment only eight Toppers managed to duplicate in the next 40-plus years. He was also a part of school record-setting quartets in the 400 individual medley and in the 400 freestyle. The four teams he competed on combined to win 40 of 54 dual meets (74%), finishing as runner-up in the Kentucky Intercollegiate Championships in both 1973 and ‘74. As a senior, he became the first of just seven Hilltopper swimmers to be honored as The University’s Male Athlete-of-the-Year. He was named the Toppers’ Most Valuable Swimmer three straight years (1972, ‘73 and ‘74), a feat duplicated just four times in later years, two of those by WKU Athletic Hall-of-Famers Steve Crocker and Kicker Vencill. Yeloushan lives in Lutz, Fla.

WK

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / September 25, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

A photo of Randy Lee at the Rick Stansbury Radio Show is attached (Credit: WKU Athletics)

"VOICE OF THE HILLTOPPERS" ON TEMPORARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – The "Voice of the Hilltoppers," veteran play-by-play man Randy Lee, is taking a temporary leave of absence from his role as the radio voice of Hilltopper football and men's basketball.

A timetable for Lee's return has not been set, but all of WKU Athletics is hopeful for Lee's speedy return to the microphone.

Lee, who works for the Hilltopper IMG Sports Network, has served as the lead network play-by-play broadcaster since 2007 and has been on the call for every major historical event in the Hilltoppers' FBS football history. He has also been on the call for numerous major achievements and championships with the Hilltopper men's basketball program.

WKU
WKU
McCafé
McCafé

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / October 1, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

A photo of the Micatrotto family is attached. L-to-R: Sunshine, Kai, Rocco, and Joe.

MICATROTTO FAMILY MAKES $1 MILLION GIFT TO SUPPORT WKU ATHLETICS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Western Kentucky University has received the largest outright gift from a former student-athlete with a gift of $1 million from Joe and Sunshine Micatrotto of Las Vegas, Nev. The Micatrotto gift includes support for capital projects, the WKU Football and Volleyball programs and the WKU Opportunity Fund.

Joe Micatrotto originally started his college career at Kent State University on a football scholarship, but something about WKU always stood out to him. He transferred to WKU after his freshman year and played football at WKU from 1993 to 1997.

"I didn't take an official visit to WKU, but my family and I were able to spend some quality time with Coach Jack Harbaugh and Coach Doug Mallory," said Joe Micatrotto. "When I decided to transfer, it was an easy choice. I would be able to immediately play for high-quality coaches and men."

Joe Micatrotto, who has a Bachelor of Science in Hotel, Restaurant & Tourism from WKU, credits both his academic department and WKU Football for helping him successfully enter the workforce.

"I'm one of the few people I know who does professionally what I studied in college," shared Joe Micatrotto. "The combination of the lessons I learned on the field with the lessons I learned in the classroom really prepared me for my career. From a work ethic and education standpoint, WKU really set me up for the hospitality field."

Joe Micatrotto, who is President and CEO of MRG Marketing & Management, Inc., said the idea of making a significant gift to the University had always been a dream for him and his wife, Sunshine.

"Joe and Sunny Micatrotto are impacting WKU Athletics in a multitude of ways," shared Todd Stewart, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. "This remarkable commitment, the largest from a former student-athlete in our history, will help to usher in a new era of philanthropy and support. Joe has been a mainstay around our program in a variety of ways, contributing his time and talents. This gift and their commitment, not just to our 16 teams and nearly 350 student-athletes but to our entire campus and community, is truly appreciated."

"We are extremely thankful to the Micatrottos for this substantial gift that will affect so many of our student-athletes," said WKU President Timothy C. Caboni. "Private support is critical to ensuring we can provide our students with the best educational opportunities available."

"The state is cutting support, and we saw it as a great time to be able to touch academics and sports," said Joe Micatrotto.

“Our attraction to Football and Volleyball is simple: Mike (Sanford) and Travis (Hudson),” he continued. “Supporting the football program is easy because it is so close to my heart. My family has had a relationship with the Sanford family dating back to 2005 when Mike Sr. was coaching in my current home city of Las Vegas. Sunshine and I have become very close with Mike, Anne Marie and the entire family. I support Coach and I believe in his leadership and where he will have this program over the years to come.”

Of the three areas outlined in the gift, one is capital support for scoreboard and technology enhancements for E.A. Diddle Arena, Houchens-L.T. Smith Stadium and the WKU Softball and Soccer complexes. Ultimately, the facilities for six athletic teams will see improvements, and student-athlete and fan experiences will be dramatically elevated.

“We are so thankful as a football family for the contributions of Joe and Sunny Micatrotto,” said Mike Sanford, WKU Head Football Coach. “My relationship with Joe goes back over a decade, both at WKU and other institutions, and it has been fantastic to see our relationship grow even stronger over these past 18 months. As a former WKU player, Joe’s willingness to give back to our program is a powerful testament to what our student-athletes can accomplish with an incredible work ethic and a degree from this great institution.”

Both the WKU Football and Volleyball programs will also receive support through their respective team Excellence Funds, which provide unrestricted funding for each team and program.

“Travis and Cindy Hudson are plain and simple what WKU is all about,” said Joe Micatrotto. “What Travis and his girls have done over the past 20-plus years is nothing short of bronze-statue-worthy. My wife was born and raised in Hawaii where volleyball is right behind surfing in the passion department. She recently got to spend time with Travis and the team, and the passion for WKU Volleyball hit her head on.”

Travis Hudson, the Head Coach for Women’s Volleyball, says the Micatrotto gift is a game changer for the program.

“We feel like we’ve completed every facet of what it takes to be a high-level volleyball program in terms of success, NCAA volleyball tournaments and graduation rates, but the one piece to this puzzle is making sure we have the same facilities and resources used by bigger schools,” said Hudson. “This gets us back in the game in regard to those elements.”

Hudson said they are planning some facility enhancements for the spaces the players utilize daily, which will be impactful not just for the players in the program now, but also for future student-athletes.

“I don’t think the Micatrotto family can fully understand the lift that it gives to our team when someone shows them love and support,” said Hudson. “Our kids and our staff have worked really hard for many years to make WKU Volleyball a nationally competitive program. To see someone notice and give back to us raises morale throughout the program from one end to the other. Although Joe has gone on to do many great things, he’s never forgotten that he’s a Hilltopper, and I think this is a great testament to that.”

Through this gift, the couple has also established the Micatrotto Family Opportunity Fund for Athletics, part of the WKU Opportunity Fund campaign to raise $50 million to benefit WKU students. The

Micatrotto Family Opportunity Fund for Athletics will benefit student-athletes, with first preference given to WKU Football student-athletes, and provide access to applied experiences and other relevant financial needs related to their educational pursuits. This gift marks the first gift to the WKU Opportunity Fund to support WKU Athletics.

When asked what inspired them to make a gift to support the WKU Opportunity Fund, Sunshine Micatrotto says that being able to provide students with a "yes" is very important to her.

"I'm a first-generation college graduate, and without support from people around me, that wouldn't have happened," said Sunshine Micatrotto. "Not everyone has parents who can afford to send them to college. When we heard about the WKU Opportunity Fund, we wanted to help give kids a 'yes.'"

"We've come to know the Cabonis over the past year, and we love their passion and want to support what Kacy and President Caboni are creating for WKU students," added Joe Micatrotto. "Our kids are 12 and 10 years old, and they have probably never heard 'no' except when they do something wrong. A lot of kids never hear a 'yes,' and this Fund is a way to say 'yes' a lot more often."

"Money for books or a little tuition help is a big deal for a lot of students," continued Sunshine Micatrotto. "Things like this can be taken for granted, but these little things add up to the larger picture."

Joe Micatrotto, who attended WKU on a full football scholarship, says he always felt like WKU paid it forward to him and that this was an opportunity to help pay it forward to other WKU students.

"Supporting my alma mater makes me proud and excited, but more than anything it has allowed me to help something I'm so passionate about," said Joe Micatrotto. "We are blessed to be able to do something like this. Being a part of the WKU family is a real thing to our family."

"I stepped foot in Bowling Green for the first time 13 years ago, and it felt like home," added Sunshine Micatrotto. "I'm really excited to be more engaged in the community."

Joe and Sunshine Micatrotto are Lifetime Members of the WKU Alumni Association, and he currently serves on the WKU Alumni Association National Board of Directors.

WKU
WKU
WKU
WKU
WKU
HILLTOPPERS

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / Tuesday, October 30, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Jessica Leifheit, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

Cavanaugh headshot and action shots attached.
Sign up to see if you're a match: https://goto.ps/BoneMarrowRegistry

BONE MARROW REGISTRY EVENT SCHEDULED TO FIND DONOR FOR ALYSSA CAVANAUGH

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – As former Lady Topper Volleyball All-American Alyssa Cavanaugh continues her battle with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL), WKU Athletics has teamed up with Be The Match and the Cavanaugh family to host a Bone Marrow Donor registry event to find a donor for Alyssa.

Three different WKU teams will take the court four times in E.A. Diddle Arena across a four-day span from Thursday-Sunday this week and WKU Athletics will have Be The Match registry tables set up at every entrance for fans to sign up to help find a donor match for Alyssa.

BONE MARROW DONOR REGISTRY EVENTS:

- Thursday – Women's Basketball Exhibition vs. West Virginia State – 6 p.m. CT
- Friday – Volleyball vs. FIU – 6 p.m.
- Saturday – Men's Basketball Exhibition vs. Kentucky Wesleyan – 2 p.m. CT
- Sunday – Volleyball (Senior Day) vs. Florida Atlantic – Noon CT

WHAT TO EXPECT:
Registry tables will be set up by every normal entrance used for each sport's home events in Diddle Arena and will be ready for fans when gates open. The doors for the women's basketball game and the two volleyball matches will open an hour out while the doors for Saturday's event will open at 12:30 p.m. CT. Registry tables will stay open to sign up throughout the duration of each event.

Fans can use their phones to text "Cure154" to 61474 to begin the sign-up process. QR codes will also be posted that fans can scan. Additionally, laptops will be available for anyone that doesn't have a smart phone in hand.

The online registration process takes less than 10 minutes. Once registered, a cheek swab kit will be sent to your address within 3-7 business days. When the kit arrives, swab the inside of your cheek and return it then sit back and wait to be called if you are a match.

DONOR RESTRICTIONS:
Anyone between 18-44 years old is the best donor candidate as research has found donors in this window provide the highest transplant success.

1 IN 430:
About one in every 430 Be The Match Registry members in the United State go on to donate to a patient. WKU Athletics will give a free, red shirt reading "I believe in Alyssa Cavanaugh" and "#Win124" (similar to WKU Volleyball's new warm-ups) to the first 430 individuals that complete the registration process to be a potential donor at this week's events.

LOOKING AT THE STATISTICS:
Seventy percent of patients in need of a bone marrow transplant depend on the Be The Match Registry for a live-saving donor match because only 30 percent of the time is a donor match found within the immediate family. Cavanaugh is among that 70 percent in search of a donor with no matches found in her family.

A patient's likelihood of having a match, available donor on the Be The Match Registry ranges from 76-97 percent depending on race and ethnicity.

IF YOU'RE A MATCH:
Bone marrow can be donated two different ways. The more common approach – used 75-80 percent of the time – is an outpatient procedure similar to donating platelets or plasma. Between 20-25 percent of the time, a surgical, outpatient procedure is used.

MORE INFORMATION:

- Alyssa Cavanaugh – a 2017 WKU graduate who was a four-time All-American on the Lady Topper Volleyball team – was been diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) on Sept. 5, 2018.
- Cavanaugh is now undergoing treatment at a facility in her hometown of Louisville, Ky,. as well as a center in Cincinnati, Ohio.
- Anyone wishing to send cards can address them to:

  Alyssa Cavanaugh
  10804 Meeting Street
  Prospect, KY 40059

LADY TOPPER
VOLLEYBALL
LADY TOPPER
VOLLEYBALL
LADY TOPPER
VOLLEYBALL

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / November 14, 2018
Athletics / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

WKU ATHLETICS POSTS HIGHEST GRADUATION SUCCESS RATE IN PROGRAM HISTORY

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — Achieving off the field of play has always been the goal for the Hilltoppers and Lady Toppers, and WKU's student-athletes are doing it at the highest rate in school history as the NCAA announced WKU's Graduation Success Rate (GSR) is at its all-time high.

WKU Athletics posted an overall GSR of 85, increasing on last year's reported score of 82, to improve on the program's standing as one of the top producers of graduates in the NCAA. Four WKU sport programs posted perfect GSR scores: women's basketball, women's soccer, women's tennis, and women's volleyball.

"This is a tremendous accomplishment for our student-athletes, coaches, and athletic program as a whole," said Director of Athletics Todd Stewart. "Along with leading Conference USA with 24 total championships since joining the league in 2014, our student-athletes are also achieving at their highest levels in the classroom as well. It is a true testament to their dedication and hard work during their time on The Hill.

WKU's three point improvement in the GSR is the second largest year-to-year leap since the report began in 1998. The program improved on a score of 76 to 80 between 2000 and 2001.

Volleyball extended its streak of perfect GSR scores to 13 years and has posted a perfect score every year the program has been eligible to report. Women's tennis posted a perfect GSR score for the fourth consecutive season and for the sixth time in program history. Joining them in the category, women's soccer posted its seventh perfect score since 2001, and women's basketball posted a its third all-time perfect score.

WKU is one of eight C-USA programs to have at least four sport programs with perfect scores.

The GSRs released Wednesday are based on the four freshmen classes in Division I entering from 2008 to 2011. The NCAA calculates the rates based upon the number of student-athletes who graduated within six years after initially enrolling, in addition to those who left an institution prior to graduating but would have been academically eligible to compete.

The largest jumps year-to-year in WKU's GSR report came on the hardwood where men's basketball improved by 10 points this season to an 85 overall score, and the Lady Toppers improved on their already high mark of 90 to the perfect 100 this season.

ABOUT THE NCAA GRADUATION SUCCESS RATE

The Division I Board of Directors created the GSR in response to Division I college and university presidents who wanted data that more accurately reflected the mobility of college students than the federal graduation rate did. The federal rate counts as an academic failure any student who leaves a

school, no matter whether he or she enrolls at another school. Also, the federal rate does not recognize students who enter school as transfer students.

The GSR formula removes from the rate student-athletes who leave school while academically eligible and includes student-athletes who transfer to a school after initially enrolling elsewhere. This calculation provides a more accurate look at student-athlete success.

The rate also allows for a deeper understanding of graduation success in individual sports than the federal metric, which provides only broad groupings.

The federal graduation rate, however, remains the only measure to compare student-athletes with the general student body. Using this measure, student-athletes graduate at a rate 2 percentage points higher than the general student body — 68 percent compared with 66 percent.

Graduation Success Rate Report

2008 - 2011 Cohorts: Western Kentucky University

Men's Sports

Sport	GSR	Fed Rate
Baseball	83	41
Basketball	85	47
CC/Track	77	62
Fencing	-	-
Football	74	55
Golf	77	69
Gymnastics	-	-
Ice Hockey	-	-
Lacrosse	-	-
Mixed Rifle	-	-
Skiing	-	-
Soccer	-	-
Swimming	-	65
Tennis	-	67
Volleyball	-	-
Water Polo	-	-
Wrestling	-	-
Men's Non-NCAA Sponsor. Sports	-	-

Women's Sports

Sport	GSR	Fed Rate
Basketball	100	50
Bowling	-	-
CC/Track	91	59
Crew/Rowing	-	-
Fencing	-	-
Field Hockey	-	-
Golf	88	64
Gymnastics	-	-
W. Ice Hockey	-	-
Lacrosse	-	-
Skiing	-	-
Soccer	100	83
Softball	95	71
Swimming	-	88
Tennis	100	67
Volleyball	100	92
Water Polo	-	-
Women's Non-NCAA Sponsor. Sports	-	-

WKU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / December 13, 2018
ATHLETICS / Contact: Kyle Neaves, WKU Athletic Communications/Media Relations

HILLTOPPER STUDENT-ATHLETES SET FOR WINTER COMMENCEMENT WITH HIGH ACADEMIC MARKS

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – Twenty-two WKU student-athletes, sporting a cumulative grade point average of 3.22, are expected to participate in commencement ceremonies and receive their degrees from Western Kentucky University on Saturday.

Three of the 22 student-athletes will be receiving their master's degrees while 19 others are graduating for the first time. Degrees obtained include economics, physics, recreation and sport administration, sport management, systems management, applied data analytics, mathematics, psychology, exercise science, management, nursing, physical education, and visual arts.

In the past year, WKU Athletics posted the program's highest graduation success rate, as reported by the NCAA, with a score of 85. It was a three-point improvement over the previous year's already high score of 82, and it represented the second largest year-to-year leap since the report began in 1998.

Four WKU sport programs posted perfect GSR scores and all four have at least one student-athlete participating in this week's commencement ceremonies: women's basketball, women's soccer, women's tennis, and women's volleyball.

Over the 2018 calendar year, 86 student-athletes have earned their degrees from the institution and have combined for an overall grade point average of 3.21. Among those completing their undergraduate coursework, baseball's Devon Loomis headlines the Hilltopper graduates with a 3.72 cumulative GPA in Physics while soccer's Annie-Marie Ulliac's 3.83 in Psychology is the Lady Topper high mark.

Baseball
Paul Kirkpatrick, Economics
Devon Loomis, Physics
Michael Martin, Recreation and Sport Administration (Master's)

Football
Dylan Ferguson, Sport Management
Jaylon George, System Management
Joel German, Recreation and Sport Administration (Master's)
Hunter Holland, Management
Devin Nixon, Sport Management
Ryan Nuss, Applied Data Analytics
Cullen Reynolds, Management
Evan Sayner, Organizational Leadership
R.J. Scaife, Management
Heath Wiggins, Interdisciplinary Studies

Track and Field
Peter Agaba, Mathematics (Master's)

Eli Minor, Interdisciplinary Studies

Women's Basketball
Ivy Brown, Physical Education

Women's Soccer
Shayna Dheel, Visual Arts
Anne-Marie Ulliac, Psychology

Softball
Shelby Maggard, Nursing

Women's Tennis
Cassie Pennington, Management
Violetta Shatalova, Exercise Science

Women's Volleyball
Rachel Anderson, Sport Management