

Athletic Advantage Program

The Athletic Advantage Program (AAP), a student centered program, is designed to support the Wesleyan athletic mission of pursuing “excellence, and striving to be the most innovative and successful athletic program in the prestigious New England Small College Athletic Conference and a leader at the national level. AAP is implemented by the Department of Athletics and Physical Education and the Career Resource Center with support from the Athletic Advisory Council and University Relations. Coaches Joe Reilly and Geoff Wheeler coordinate the program.

Wesleyan’s student-athletes have a unique advantage in obtaining mentoring, guidance and counsel from coaches and athletic alumni. The program provides the student-athlete significant support in exploring career options as well many networking opportunities. This unique approach to helping students form a career path can be very strong recruiting tool for it gains the interest of both applicants and parents. It sends a signal that Wesleyan can, in a very personal way, help prepare students for a career.

Also, the AAP gets alumni reengaged with Wesleyan. It provides them with an opportunity to become more familiar with the current student life at Wesleyan.

The following are the components of the AAP.

- **Wes Shadow** –The objective of this program is to provide a structure to the process through which coaches help students make connections with Wesleyan athletic alumni. Normally, the athlete is invited to the alumni/nae work place for a day or two. This can occur during a Wesleyan academic vacation period or during the summer. However, the connection can occur through email exchanges, phone conversations or meetings that may lead to internships.
- **Wesleyan Internship** – Similar to Wes Shadow, however in this program the alum arranges for a paid or non-paid internship. The internships can be for a few weeks during winter or spring vacation or more extended periods, six weeks or more, during the summer.
- **Mini clinics** – Wesleyan Career Resources Center conducts short clinics at the Freeman Athletic Center at the end of practices. Topics range from resume writing, job search, networking, interviewing, etc.
- **Athletic Alumni Mentoring** – Alumni come to campus to meet with athletes and serve as mentors. However, the mentoring connection can also be via email or phone.
- **Wesleyan Athletic Player Receptions** – Small group gatherings at the home of an alumnus where an individual alum or a group of alumni meet with a 5 to 6 athletes to discuss career opportunities. The organization of these events is ongoing.
- **Speaker Series** – Former athletes or current parents come to campus to speak about their career paths, leadership, and decision-making, etc. These occur in two ways. A coach invites alumni/parent to come to campus and speak with his or her team, or the Athletic

Department, in coordination with University Relations, and CRC invites speakers to present to a group of student-athletes.

- Community Engagement – The newest component to the AAP, community engagement has become a campus wide initiative. Following the principles of service learning, teams will be involved in community programs. A coach or team leader coordinates these volunteer activities. Teams will incorporate the educational values that are the foundation for sports at Wesleyan as a part of the volunteer projects. Teams will promote these values and utilizes these experiences as part of the preparation for life after Wesleyan.

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