

# STUDENT-ATHLETE MENTORS: AN OPPORTUNITY TO INTEGRATE ATHLETICS AND STUDENT AFFAIRS



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# GRINNELL COLLEGE



- Highly-selective, residential college
- Grinnell, Iowa, population <10,000
- 1650 students
- ~400 student-athletes in 20 sports
- NCAA Division III
- Athletics does **not** report to student affairs
- “Athlete/non-athlete divide”



# THE ORIGIN OF AN IDEA

- NCAA Choices grant
- NCAA Apple conference
- “Aha!” moment
- Rethinking the SAMs model
- Building on student affairs residence life training
- What’s in a name?

Student. Athlete. Mentors.



# DEFINING THE NEED ON OUR CAMPUS

## STUDENT-ATHLETES = STUDENTS

- Self-reported sleep difficulties
- Alcohol and other drug use
- Academic load
- Identity development, etc.

*(SSAN, Fall 2014;  
ACHA-NCHA-II, Spring 2015)*

## UNIQUE NEEDS

- Less self-reported anxiety and depression (less likely to seek help?)
- Less loneliness (but still 65%)
- Injury
- Transition from sport
- Performance-related eating issues
- Extracurricular involvement negatively affecting academic performance (23.2% vs. 13.9%)
- Stereotypes (20% withholding identity)

# CREATING A SAM PROGRAM

- Approaching student affairs/residence life
- Approaching athletics
- Selection process
- Designing training
- Engagement opportunities



# THE INVITATION

## **Students. Athletes. Mentors.**

Congratulations on being chosen to represent your fellow student-athletes as an inaugural Student Athlete Mentor! We are excited to have you as a part of this new "team" on campus and hope that you will be a valuable resource to your peers. But first, here is a brief outline of where the group came from and where we are headed:

### **Where did we come from?**

In 2012, Grinnell College was awarded an NCAA CHOICES Grant to help prevent alcohol abuse. In the spirit of Grinnell, we took that grant and applied it toward all-encompassing wellness programs focused on more than just alcohol. A few things that the grant helped us purchase include the Student-Athlete Social Norms Survey, which has been administered each of the last two years, and two trips to the NCAA APPLE Conference, focused on best practices around alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. It was from the APPLE Conference that Grinnell student-athletes realized the lack of resource-centered outreach toward members of the campus athletic community. We wanted to dedicate leadership positions to student-athletes in order to create a more visible bridge between the athletic teams and the plethora of wellness, academic, social, and athletic resources at Grinnell. Through cooperation of the CHOICES Committee, administration, and coaches, the Grinnell SAM program was born!

### **Why us?**

The CHOICES Committee sought intelligent, thoughtful, and caring members of the athletic community to represent their teams as mentors. Above all, however, we sought people who were excited about the position and who would be valuable members of this new program. All members of the SAM team fit the bill and bring diverse experiences to the table to help us produce truly useful resources to the athletic community.

### **Where do we go from here?**

Thanks to the relationships built throughout the expenditure of the CHOICES Grant, we were able to partner with a variety of groups on campus to put our program together. Each SAM will receive training tailored to our needs, encompassing the best that Students Affairs, Academic Affairs, Wellness, and Athletics have to offer. You will be the liaison for your respective team to all of these resources, as well to other SAMs who might have more expertise in certain areas. All in all, your duty is to make sure all student-athletes are aware of the numerous resources we have on campus, how to get there, and who to talk to for help.

**Thank you for being a part of the team. We are excited to see where this program takes our community!**

-Matt Schaeffer '14, Jordan Young '14, Michael Hurley '16, Kristina Weber '16



# TRAINING

## RESOURCES

- Student affairs case manager
- Student Health and Counseling Services
- Academic advising and academic resource centers
- Disability resources
- Center for Religion, Spirituality and Social Justice
- Dean of the College
- Athletic director, assistant athletic director, SWA, Faculty Athlete Representative (FAR)
- Athletic trainers
- Director of diversity and inclusion in athletics
- Advocates
- Title IX team
- Careers, Life, & Service

## SKILLS & EDUCATION

- Active bystander training
- Motivational interviewing
- Student wellbeing data
- Alcohol/other drugs + athletic performance
- Campus navigation



# SAM-SPECIFIC TRAINING







## REMEMBER EVERYTHING YOU WERE TRAINED ON?

Yeah, we didn't think we would either.

So that is why we created the "SAM-UAL"

Otherwise known as the SAM Manual

This contains a list of all of the sources on campus that were discussed in training

YES ALL OF THEM

This also included pictures of the people in charge of the resource, the location, and ways to get in contact with them.

# CREATING AWARENESS

- SWAG (t-shirts, sling bags, magnets for lockers and residence hall rooms)
- Helped with move-in
- Introduced at NSO welcome ceremony
- Co-facilitated floor sessions at NSO
- Introduced at SAAC night
- Introduced to teams
- Strategic outreach



# CHALLENGES AND MISSTEPS

- Selection process
- Selection on small teams
- Coordinating training with residence life
- Defining roles at New Student Orientation
- Confusion/perceived redundancy with SAAC (Student Athlete Advisory Committee)
- Sustainability of campus outreach
- Engagement with respective teams
- Training conflicts for fall sport athletes
- SAMs who are also in residence life
- SAMs who study abroad
- Monthly meetings at 9:00pm
- Babysitters for drunk teammates?





# UNANTICIPATED BENEFITS & SUCCESSES

- Immediate recognition by student affairs staff
- Rapid institutionalization by college
- Building a bridge between academic affairs and athletics
- Athletics platform for engagement with topical issues
- Meeting attendance
- NSO leadership opportunities
- Inter-team relationship building
- Training future team captains
- Student affairs having a contact with each team
- Scheduling AOD/bystander sessions
- Increased requests for my outreach
- Focus group participants
- SAM leadership
- Transition/selection process



# NCAA STUDENT-ATHLETE WELLBEING RESOURCES

- Mental health  
<http://www.ncaa.org/health-and-safety/medical-conditions/mental-health>
- Hazing prevention  
<http://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/hazing%20prevention%20handbook%2057315.pdf>
- Sexual assault and interpersonal violence prevention  
<http://www.ncaa.org/health-and-safety/violence-prevention>
- Step Up! Active bystander training  
<http://stepupprogram.org/>
- NCAA Choices grant  
<http://www.ncaa.org/health-and-safety/policy/ncaa-choices-grants>
- NCAA Apple conference  
<http://apple.studenthealth.virginia.edu/>



- What's next for SAMs
  - Questions?
  - THANK YOU!
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