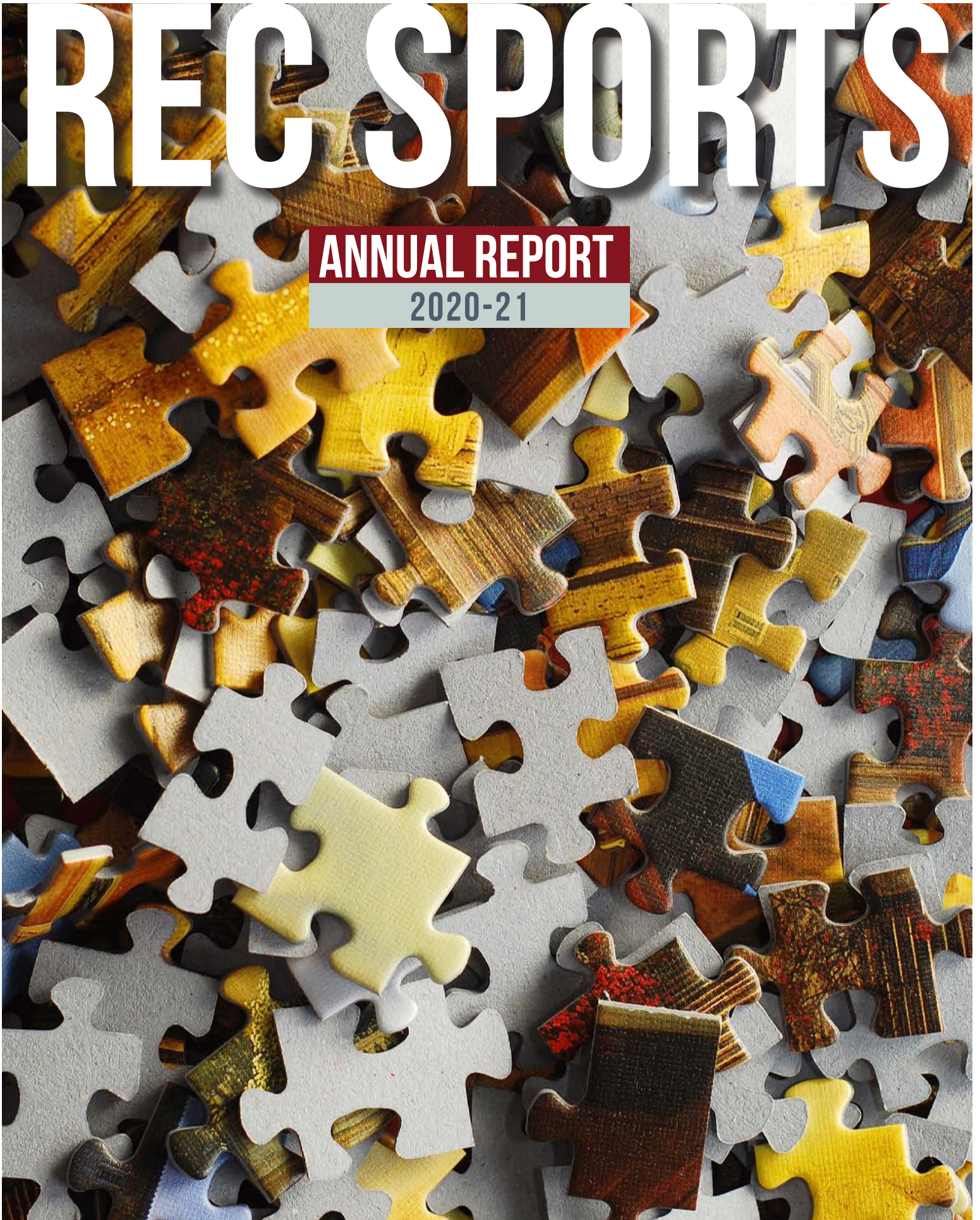


BUILDING A THRIVING COMMUNITY ENJOYING ACTIVE AND HEALTHY LIVES

# REG SPORTS

**ANNUAL REPORT**

2020-21





# UW-LA CROSSE RECREATIONAL SPORTS DEPARTMENT

## VISION

A thriving community  
enjoying active and  
healthy lives.

## MISSION

The Recreational  
Sports Department  
enhances the UW-La  
Crosse experience  
by offering diverse  
programs, innovative  
services, growth  
opportunities and  
welcoming facilities.

## CORE VALUES

Fun

Wellness

Integrity

Collaboration

Inclusion

Leadership  
Development

Customer Service

LET'S **PLAY**

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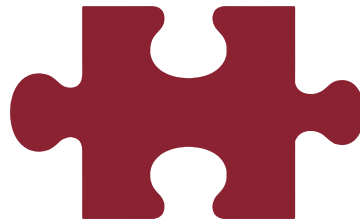
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REC SPORTS

MESSAGE FROM  
**THE INTERIM DIRECTOR**

•  
*Mo McAlpine*

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One piece at a time! Such was the common theme and ongoing approach to 2020-2021. In a historical year that will be remembered for COVID-19 and social unrest, we solved many puzzles while striving to create a quality Rec Sports experience for the UWL campus community. On a regular basis, we worked together to assemble puzzles of all sizes, seeking solutions and alternatives to maintain our greatest priority - the health and safety of staff and patrons. As a pro staff, student staff, and custodial team, we supported each other and always went above and beyond our typical job responsibilities to keep our community as active and engaged as possible despite the many challenges and restrictions.

As the interim director, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to an amazing Rec Sports team who worked incredibly hard every day. It took all of us to be resilient, to think of alternatives, and to bring our best approach to solving the puzzles. There's no doubt we are excited to look ahead as we transition to a new director, a slightly new structure for pro staff, an Esports and gaming area, a remodeled Outdoor Connection, employing over 250 students, and programming again. Thank you UWL for believing in us and for complying with the many precautions that ultimately solved the biggest puzzle of all - keeping the REC open during a pandemic. Bring on 2021-2022!



  
**READY  
FOR USE**  
THIS MACHINE HAS  
BEEN CLEANED

U W LA C...





As referenced in the introduction, the health and safety of patrons and staff was the priority for Rec Sports this year. In an effort to help participants understand the many pre-cautions taken and to promote compliance with the subsequent policies and procedures, we developed the Play Safer series. The origin of this tagline was related to safe programming with intramural sports, but it quickly grew into a branding that stood for safe participation in the REC as well as in programs. Special thanks to Nathan Barnhart, Assistant Director, for his talented and creative artwork that became a symbol of safety for Rec Sports.

We are grateful for the compliance of users and the hard work of pro staff, student staff, and the custodial team that ultimately kept the REC open and allowed for safe programming. Below is a list of the pre-cautions as well as a summary of the impact on facilities and programs.

### PRE-CAUTIONS

The following precautions were in place and required for use of the building and for participation in programs:

#### REC

- Patrons and staff were required to wear face coverings at all times
- Signage and decals indicated traffic flow and zones were designated to maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet; strength and cardio equipment pieces were moved at least 10 feet apart
- Temperature checks were required at the entrances to the turnstiles and conditioning room (cycling classes)
- Contactless entry at the turnstile was available with the UWL REC app
- Plexiglass was installed at all the service counters
- All rooms and spaces beyond the turnstile had limited capacity
- Advance reservations were required for most spaces
- Hand sanitizers were available throughout the building
- Day use lockers were limited; locker room lockers were available for rental only
- Restroom sinks and stalls were restricted as closed by Facilities Management
- No check out of soft equipment throughout the entire building
- Rigorous cleaning, sanitizing

and disinfecting schedules were implemented throughout the building and required teamwork with patrons, staff and custodians

- Signage was placed on each piece of equipment to indicate clean/used; patrons were encouraged to clean equipment before and after use; once completed with workout, patrons were to flip the sign; staff then cleaned equipment and flipped sign to indicate equipment was ready for use

#### INTRAMURAL SPORTS

- Each activity was staffed and supervised, which allowed them to be managed at all times to ensure compliance to safety policies
- Interaction was kept to a minimum with contests that originally lasted no longer than 15 minutes each
- All participants and staff were required to wear face coverings at all times
- Temperature checks were conducted during check-in
- Hand sanitization stations were set up and required as part of check-in
- Participants were assigned their own equipment and did not share with their competitor(s) or teammate(s)
- Physical identifiers and barriers

were used to identify “safe” zones

#### SPORT CLUBS

- Safeguards: included physical distancing, face coverings, individual temp checks, and hand sanitation
- Supervision: two student staff members checked in participants upon arrival to the MAC and ensured compliance at all times; supervisors tracked attendance and confirmed testing form had been submitted prior to admittance
- Small numbers: maximum of 10 participants per pod in 15,000 square foot multi-activity space; numbers were expanded to 15 participants once activities moved outdoors
- Limited activities: conditioning activities, non-contact skill drills (primarily individual work), and group fitness classes that adhered to the current practices for group fitness classes
- Pre-participation prerequisites: included paperwork, a leadership meeting, COVID education information, and submission of activity plan to Ali Tackett, Coordinator of Competitive Sports, for approval
- Testing: adhered to UWL protocol with testing frequency and contact tracing; all participants were

required to submit compliance testing form

- Equipment: all pieces were sanitized before and after use; shared equipment was originally restricted to 15 minutes; expanded to 50 minutes once outdoors
- Violation progression: participants who chose not to comply impacted team access and privileges for their club and if severe enough, for all clubs

## CLIMBING WALL

- Small numbers: facility was limited to 6 people (1 staff and 5 climbers)
- Climb time was limited to 1 hour
- Loose chalk was not allowed
- Climbing shoes were sanitized and removed from inventory for 24 hours

## OUTDOOR CONNECTION

- Small numbers: service was limited to 1 person at a time
- Limited equipment: rental equipment was reduced to only “hard” goods such as boats, bikes and inline skates
- Items were sanitized and removed from inventory for 24 hours
- Did not run trips until the final weeks of Spring Semester

## FACILITIES

During the summer of 2020, the strength and cardio equipment was moved to at least 10 feet apart. To accommodate that amount of distance in the Fitness Center and the upper level, many pieces of cardio were moved to court 4 and the multipurpose room. Some pieces were taken off-line as indicated with signage or were moved to the basement. The turf was sectioned off to allow one per zone and a maximum capacity of 10 people.

Courts 1 and 2 as well as the MAC were available for individual use. Until late spring semester, only one person

was allowed per hoop/half court and an advance reservation was required. In April when the reactivation plan was launched on campus, numbers were expanded to two per half court and a volleyball net was set up on court 1; only 2 people were allowed to play volleyball and physical distancing was still enforced. Court 3 was originally taped to create workout zones for students to stretch and complete individual workouts as desired. However, due to lack of interest, the tape was removed, and the basketball hoops were lowered for multipurpose use. Racquetball court 1 was available for single use only; court 2 was taken off-line and utilized for storage.

In the lobby, furniture was spread out to maintain distance; tables only had one chair; tables for table tennis were removed; and the shuffleboard table remained covered. In April, table tennis was allowed for one-on-one play only; shuffleboard was available but not used.

Additional facility information and the impact of COVID-19 is further noted in the fitness program report.

## SAFETY ATTENDANTS

With all of the new modifications, policies, and safeguards pertaining to COVID-19 in place, it became clear that additional helping hands were going to be needed in order to ensure the health and safety of all staff and users of the facility. A brand new student position was created to support these endeavors. Under the supervision of the Rec Sports athletic trainer, 32 students graciously stepped up to serve as “safety attendants” during the fall semester; 20 of the 32 remained with us during the spring. This group was made up of current service staff members, activity staff members who had worked as intramural officials and/or scorekeepers previously, and several students new to the Rec Sports family.

Safety attendant responsibilities included the following: checking students in for their reservation times in the Fitness Center, tracking capacity numbers and limits for all of our facility spaces, enforcing face covering, physical distancing, capacity, and equipment sharing policies and protocols, and adhering to









**TURNSTILE ENTRIES**

*Turnstile numbers for the year, displayed without data from last year since COVID has no comparison.*

	<b>Total Entries</b>	<b>Students</b>
June	0	0
July	0	0
August	777	432
September	5,663	5,575
October	14,623	14,511
November	12,710	12,589
December	8,573	8,401
January	3,583	2,072
February	20,503	20,276
March	19,178	18,953
April	17,058	16,849
May	6,778	6,646

a rigorous cleaning schedule. Cleaning tasks included sanitizing machines and equipment in the Fitness Center during reservation times and in between sessions, making rounds to all other areas of the facility to sanitize cardio equipment and fitness machines, and sanitizing all equipment that had been used after each group fitness class, such as cycles, yoga mats, and individual pieces of strength equipment.

**INFORMAL RECREATION**

Informal recreation was extremely limited with the requirement of physical distancing and capacities throughout the entire year. As stated previously only one person was allowed per half court on courts 1, 2, and the MAC, which typically consisted of patrons shooting hoops. Once expanded to two users in April, students were excited to share the space with a friend, yet still challenged by keeping their distance from each other. There’s no doubt our students are ready and anxious to return to playing games, be it one on one or five on five.

Throughout the planning conversations last summer, our prediction was that the track and surrounding equipment would be extremely busy, making the decision about capacity a difficult one. However, that did not prove to be the case and



capacity on the upper level was never a concern. Yet it was an appropriate overflow area that accommodated those students who were more comfortable working out there and/or those who were unable to reserve the Fitness Center when it was booked.

Overall, compliance with the COVID-19 policies and procedures was high. However, there were challenges with distancing and face coverings, especially in the beginning of the year. This initiated a stricter policy as developed by the Rec Sports Student Advisory Council (SAC). For those patrons who did not have their face covering over their nose and mouth, did not maintain six feet, and/or were sharing equipment, they were given one warning that included education on the policy; if a second warning was needed during the same visit, patrons were asked to leave the facility and were suspended for that day plus the next. Once warned, staff members would submit a report that held the following consequences: first report – email reminder of the policy and warning that an additional report would result in a possible suspension and meeting with Mo McAlpine, Interim Director; second report – email reminder of policy, suspension, meeting with Mo, and warning that persistent non-compliance would result in a referral to the Student Life Office for violation of the COVID-19 Community Safety and Accountability policy; third report – referral to the Student Life Office. The student staff is

to be commended for supporting the policy and educating patrons as their efforts resulted in immediate and overall improvement. Mo met with five students and two students were referred to the Student Life Office.

At the start of the year, no equipment was allowed to be checked out from the Information Counter since they were all considered soft goods (i.e. basketballs, volleyballs, etc.). With the launch of the campus reactivation plan in April, students were allowed to check out soft goods. Once returned, the equipment was cleaned and kept out of circulation until air dried.

As stated previously, informal recreation was extremely limited and impacted by COVID-19. Many students as well as faculty/staff members simply did not come into the REC. For those who did, there were restrictions with precautions and capacity limits while the building remained safe and open. The Mitchell Hall pool was closed the entire year so there was no lap swimming.

### INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The two primary courses in our instructional programs include self-defense and certification classes for first aid/CPR/AED. Due to COVID-19, we were unable to offer self-defense for three semesters. However, we were able to continue with the certification courses, which were very successful with near capacity registrations in the spring (see

numbers below). Additional certification courses were taught for group fitness instructors and service staff. Precautions included a 50% reduction in students (12 instead of 24), temperature checks prior to entering the room, physical distancing, face coverings, and continued use of individual manikins. Instructors were Kylie Doberstein (coordinator of certification courses), Ali Tackett, Mo McAlpine, and Nick Berg who modified materials and methods to accommodate a safe experience for all.

#### First aid/CPR/AED participation:

Fall 2020	Spring 2021
3 classes	5 classes
18 registered	52 registered

### COMPETITIVE SPORTS

Competitive sports in a pandemic looked vastly different than past years. For intramural sports, we offered limited programming based on the approved parameters of the Play Safer Series. In-person programs offered include: badminton, bag toss, croquet, bocce ball, table tennis, HORSE, sport buckets, pickleball, and a 3-point contest. Virtual programs offered include: chess tournament, NCAA bracket challenge, Esports tournaments, jeopardy, and trivia. Bryce Baldwin and Kara Gilmeister served as student coordinators for the Intramural Sports Program and did superbly throughout the year.







After an entirely virtual fall for sport clubs, some teams were able to begin in-person practices in February. Men's and women's lacrosse, men's and women's ultimate, table tennis, women's rugby, and women's basketball all participated in indoor practices in the MAC. In March, some practices moved outside and restrictions were adjusted to allow more people to participate. A few more teams joined in on practices, including men's and women's soccer, Olympic weightlifting, archery, and men's and women's volleyball. Two members of the Olympic weightlifting team, Ellie Rohman and Lizet Moreno, competed in the National Garage Championship, a meet completed entirely through video chat.

In December, Whitney Burress took a job in her home state of Kentucky. For the spring semester, Ali Tackett oversaw the Sport Club program. Moving into next year, Ali's job will officially entail overseeing all of competitive sports with intramural and club operations. Ali is very excited for this opportunity to grow the competitive sports program here at UWL. KJ Kleveland served as a student coordinator for the sport club program and was a phenomenal help to Ali throughout the spring semester.

## OUTDOOR CONNECTION TRIPS

The Outdoor Connection suspended all outdoor trip programming for the majority of the semester. Although small groups participating in outdoor activities proposed low COVID spread potential, we still needed to get staff and participants to trailheads and river put-ins. Unfortunately, we couldn't do that without transporting students in vehicles. Transportation presented two main challenges: 1) reducing the number of people allowed in a vehicle increased trip expenses beyond what registration fees would generate, and 2) it was impossible to maintain physical distancing protocols. Therefore, we deemed it an unnecessary risk.

Suspending programs significantly impacted our ability to provide positive and healthy outlets for students and leadership opportunities for our staff. Most staff join for the chance to share their passion for the outdoors and lead group activities. However, numerous staff members opted to continue their studies at home virtually or decided it was too risky to work the service desk and opted not to work. As a result, we had only one newly hired staff join us for the Fall Semester. The shortage of new staff and the graduation of others means we must begin to rebuild the program nearly from

scratch.

As the pandemic subsided, the Outdoor Connection provided three outings at the end of the spring semester:

- 
- Two evening kayaking outings
  - A day hike in collaboration with the International Education and Engagement Office

Although very few students got to participate, those that did were very grateful.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

The Special Events Program offers a variety of activities that focus on unique opportunities, such as life-size battleship, road races, and sports tournaments. Special events provide students with the opportunity to try something new in a single day or evening activity with little to no cost and can attract a diverse population that may not typically use the REC.

The Events team persevered through this year's challenges to bring UWL fun, interactive and unique events, both virtually and in-person. We collaborated with various campus departments through the year and we are excited to



continue to grow in our partnerships. One example of this came in February when we partnered with CAB for our annual Night on the Slopes event at Mt. La Crosse. CAB was generous in donating \$1,500 towards the event so students could receive a \$10 discount on top of an already discounted event rate. On both nights we met our capacity limit of rentals. This was a great success to kick-off spring semester.

Our success continued throughout the semester when we collaborated with CAB, Green Fund, and Peer Health for our Earth Day Clean Up event. It was one of the first in-person events we could hold this year and we were able to clean up our campus and community with 56 participants and 7 group leaders.

One of the larger challenges that the event's team faced was the change in leadership halfway through the year. They continued to provide fun and engaging events while just getting to know their new supervisor. The transitions will continue for the event's team as next year they will be part of the new REC Engagement Team. This will be made up of 3 event supervisors and 2 graphic designers. Together they will be working closely to promote REC Events and programs. The supervisor role for the event's team will transition to the Coordinator of Events and Marketing.

- The event's team persevered through challenges to bring UWL fun, interactive, and unique events; both virtually and in-person.
- We collaborated with CAB and Mt. La Crosse to bring students our annual Night on the Slopes event. CAB was generous in donating \$1,500 so that students could receive a \$10 discount on top of an already discounted UWL student rate. On both nights we met our capacity limit of rentals.
- Creativity blossomed with the addition of a Virtual Escape Room in spring. This event was interactive and saw participation of 30 people.
- Our collaboration with CAB, Green Fund, and Peer Health for our Earth Day Clean Up event in the spring was a success. It was one of the first in-person events we could hold this year and we were able to clean

up our campus and community. We hope to continue these great campus partnerships in the future.

### ATHLETIC TRAINING

Under supervision of the Student Health Center's Medical Supervisor, Dr. Abby Deyo, and under normal circumstances, the Rec Sports athletic trainer coordinates and provides athletic training services for sport clubs, intramural sports, informal recreation, and special events. The athletic trainer also holds an administrative role within the department. Ultimately, all services provided seek to promote a safe return to an active and healthy lifestyle, whether competitive or recreational, following injury while simultaneously fostering a campus environment where injury prevention, safety and emergency-preparedness are at the forefront.

Though the athletic trainer remained available for student appointments this year, due to the absence of traditional informal recreation, intramural and sport club programming for the majority of the year, there was a significant decrease in the number of injuries sustained and, therefore, far fewer athletic training services were provided than in 2019-20. However, the athletic trainer took on a new and unique role brought on by the pandemic, serving as a departmental COVID-19 resource for information regarding public health guidelines, campus protocols, and proper personal protective equipment during student staff training and beyond. This endeavor also included tracking of staff COVID testing compliance during the spring semester, as well as compiling and subsequently presenting COVID-19 information and education materials. These resources emphasized potential short- and long-term effects of the virus on athletes and recommended return-to-play/exercise protocols and considerations following a positive diagnosis, to all participating sport club members upon commencement of sport club play safer activities.

### SPECIAL EVENT PARTICIPATION

#### FALL 2020

Welcome Week Kick Off	55
Rec Fest	32
REOctoberfest Friday	9
REOctoberfest Saturday	1
Sport Club Bingo	12
Sport Club Training	1
Halloween Event – REC Theft	
Sport Club Jeopardy	21
SPRING 2021	
Night on the Slopes Feb. 19 <sup>th</sup>	70
Night on the Slopes Feb. 26 <sup>th</sup>	85
Rec Day	59
Virtual Escape Room	30
Virtual Pet Bracket	122
Battleship Challenge	28
Earth Day Cleanup	56
Stress Buster Week Bingo	8
Stress Buster Week Outdoor Group Fitness Class	9
Stress Buster Week Sunlight Mile	2
Stress Buster Week Chalk the REC	6



## STUDENT DEVELOPMENT



**The Rec has given me so much more than I could have ever imagined.**

Student development continues to be the primary focus of employment with the Recreational Sports Department. It is the goal of the professional staff to provide students with general transferable skills that will help them prepare for the next step in their academic or work careers. We consider the department a “learning laboratory” that intends to help students gain firsthand experience and working knowledge of critical skills that align with our core values of inclusion, integrity, collaboration, customer service, leadership development, wellness, and fun.

in person experiences, our student exit evaluations prove that Rec Sports continues to be a primary vehicle in which students develop skills as well as create lifelong relationships. Based on 15 non-returning students (Spring 2021), the following percentages agreed or strongly agreed that the skills listed below improved as a result of their employment:

Conflict resolution	100%
Leadership	87%
Organization	73%
Self-confidence	80%
Time management	60%
Verbal communication	93%

Though it was an extremely different year with COVID-19 that restricted



Some comments about these skills include:

*I have had countless opportunities to come into my own being, both as a person and a staff member and I am grateful for all the growth that has occurred while working at the Rec. It has cemented lifelong friendships and provided me with the skills, knowledge, and experience to pursue my passions.* Jake Fischer, Outdoor Connection Representative, Climbing Wall Supervisor, Student Coordinator for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

*Working at the wall has given me opportunities to learn and grow both my people skills and technical skills related to climbing and the outdoors. I think my time there will benefit me greatly in my near future jobs, which will likely involve similar instruction and working with people. Also, the opportunities outside of the job like SAC and SINC have been valuable for my self-development and relationship building. The people working at the rec, both student and pro staff, have really made the job awesome and a great experience.* Mathias Klingemann, Climbing Wall Supervisor

*The Rec has given me so much more than I could have ever imaged. I came into this job thinking that it will be like every other job and boy was I wrong. The Rec provided so many growth opportunities and really increased my skill set across the board. But, it also gave opportunities to meet lifelong friends, develop great relationships with pro staff, and gave a million great memories that I was always look back on.* Bryce Baldwin, Intramural Sports Student Coordinator and Supervisor, Intern

The following statements summarize the entire Recreational Sports employment experience:

*My time at Rec Sports has been a series*

*of diverse experiences that I wouldn't have been able to experience anywhere else. I have experienced intense gratification in getting participants excited and inspired to get involved in the outdoors. I have experienced intense frustration and stress/anxiety with conditions revolving around the pandemic. Through it all, though, I have felt constant support by staff members, specifically my coworkers at the O.C., climbing wall, and especially pro staff. I feel as if Rec Sports has allowed me to create a strong network of support from coworkers turned friends.* Jade Wahlgren, Climbing Wall Supervisor, Outdoor Connection Representative

*I don't know how I can summarize my Rec Sports experience in words, but I'll do my best. When I first came to college, I was looking for places to fit in. There was a lot of trial and error with this approach freshman year, and it took me a couple of months that I needed to find places where I could grow. After starting with Rec Sports my sophomore year, I found a place that allowed me to grow on my strengths and interests. I met my best friends at Rec Sports, not only because they were fun individuals, but because they wanted to see the best version of me that I also wanted from myself. I found mentors that pushed me to be a better version of me. And the best part of this experience, even though sometimes it was awkward and took a lot of time and effort, was that I had genuine fun being a Rec Sports staff member.* Mandy Kind, Intramural Sports Student Coordinator and Supervisor

*I had a good balance between being able to work independently as well as being able to collaborate with others. I also had the freedom to make my own decisions and was trusted with responsibility. Additionally, I loved how there were many opportunities to be creative, whether it be through social media, virtual programming, or other projects.* Rachel Rogahn, Graduate Assistant

## STUDENT COMMITTEES

### **Student Advisory Council (SAC)**

As a representative body of the entire Recreational Sports Student Team, the Student Advisory Council (SAC) provides recommendations to the professional team regarding staff related policies, procedures, and concerns. This leadership group works extremely hard to develop and improve policies and procedures concerning staff-related issues and the hiring process. SAC is also the primary group involved in the hiring of new service staff members each spring.

### **Accomplishments**

- Worked with SINC (Student Inclusive Networking Committee) to review the employment process through a social justice lens
- Implemented three nights for employment information sessions, two virtual and one in-person
- Successfully implemented virtual employment process that led to the successful hire of 40 new 2021-2022 service staff members
- Utilized Interview stream for first round and Zoom for second round

### **B.E.S.T. Committee (Building Exceptional Service Together)**

The B.E.S.T. Committee was initiated to promote and maintain a comfortable, welcoming, and customer service atmosphere for staff members and participants. The committee does this through the following channels: (1) customer satisfaction - comment cards, electronic surveys; and (2) staff involvement - socials, RECognition cards and incentive program, Facebook group page, volunteer opportunities, and community service.

This year the B.E.S.T. Committee was not formalized. However, a high number of RECognition forms were submitted by student staff members and displayed on

the bulletin board by Hannah Grabow, Recreation Specialist. In addition, a virtual end of the year RECspys was coordinated by the student interns. Rec Sports is deeply appreciative for the work of Bryce Baldwin, Rachel Rogahn, and Thomas McManaway who culminated a challenging year with an outstanding celebration of memories and accomplishments that premiered on Facebook.

### ***Emergency Response Team (ERT)***

A student team that seeks to ensure the readiness of the department for any potential emergency, ERT evaluates emergency action plans related to medical, weather and potentially threatening/violent situations, and strives for efficiency in upholding accident, incident and injury protocols. Throughout the year, ERT conducts “red shirt reviews” to simulate medical emergencies in an effort to help team members become comfortable when dealing with injuries and emergencies. 2019-2020 accomplishments are listed in the athletic training services section of this report.

### **Accomplishments**

- Conducted 50 red shirt reviews (includes Info Counter reviews)
- Created informative video showing all possible severe weather shelters, emergency exits and areas of rescue assistance in facility
- Increased/consistent virtual meeting attendance during the fall semester
- Implemented several new ideas/ activities into team meetings, including a surprise mock injury senario that team members were asked to respond to in the middle of a meeting, scavenger hunt, injury/ emergency trivia game via Kahoot, and detailed case studies presented by leadership team

### ***SINC (Student Inclusive Networking Committee)***

Initiated as a class project by Stu Swanson in Fall 2016, SINC serves to create

a welcoming, safe, inclusive space for all participants and staff within Recreational Sports. See the inclusivity report for committee information.

### **STUDENT EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY**

- Presented the Sue White Director’s Award at the Virtual RECspy’s to Anna Kemper, Building Manager, who received an overwhelming number of student nominations from each service staff position
- Successfully implemented a blended staff training experience that incorporated virtual and small group in-person sessions
- Celebrated the year with an outstanding virtual RECspys premiere on Facebook that was created by Bryce Baldwin, Rachel Rogahn, and Thomas McManaway (student interns)
- Employed approximately 106 students (lower than average due to pandemic); diversity rate was 11.5% (based on 104 responses)
- Though the total number of student employees was much lower than average due to COVID-19, the Safety Attendant position was created and employed 17 students in addition to service staff members and group fitness instructors (no other activity staff members were hired due to pool closure and very minimal intramural activities through Play Safer Series)
- Hired 40 new 2021-2022 service staff members











# FITNESS PROGRAMS

## GROUP FITNESS

In 2020-2021 the Group Fitness program at UWL continued to provide the campus community with fun, energizing class options under the direct supervision of certified student instructors. COVID 19 brought on many new challenges but through updated cleaning protocols and modified class formats the program was able to operate both in person and virtually.

To ensure the aerobics and conditioning room were safe environments for in person classes the following precautions were taken:

- Class capacities were reduced in both locations to accommodate 10 foot spacing between participants  
Aerobics (24) Cycle (18)
- Members were required to pre-register for their classes
- Participants were only allowed to exercise in their specific exercise zone

- Equipment was individual use only and cleaned by participants before and after
- All equipment used was then left in each participants zone following class to be further disinfected by Rec Sports cleaning attendants

In Fall 2020, virtual live steaming class options we're added to the existing class grid streaming 8 classes via Zoom. However, this new service was halted at the end of fall 2020 when overall participation totaled less than 2% overall and member feedback via surveys indicated over 80% awareness of the virtual option but little interest.

In the Fall of 2020, there were 2,385 individual check-ins with 249 memberships. In Spring 2021, there were 6,009 check-ins with 467 members doubling the number of memberships and triple the number of check-ins from the fall semester. Out of the total 716 members in 2020-2021 689 (97%) of them were female while 27 (3%) were

male. In Spring 2021, total reservations were 6,636 which was 627 (10%) more than check-ins indicating the no show rate.

In 2020-2021 Rec Sports continued its partnership with the campus PRIDE Center for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year to host Queer Night at the REC, a weekly recurring free group fitness class to support students who identify within the Queer umbrella through fitness in a safe space. In addition, Spring 2021 was the beginning of a new Instructor development workshop series which brought student instructors together for peer evaluation of their skills and has been a truly valuable addition to the program.

Despite COVID 19 and the many hurdles the Group Fitness Program needed to overcome to operate, there were some very positive takeaways from the 2020-2021 year with the biggest being the opportunity to support UWL students with the group fitness community offered at the REC.



## FITNESS CENTER

The Fitness Center staff, policies and layout adapted throughout 2020-2021 to remain open while still providing the safest possible environment for the UWL community and remaining as one of campus's most popular student destinations.

The 15,000 square foot facility is comprised of over 130 pieces of cardio and strength equipment, six separate training zones and a personal training service. The Fitness Center aims to serve the UWL campus community by providing a safe, encouraging and inclusive environment in which everyone is able to pursue wellness and self-empowerment through a variety of fitness activities.

In 2020-2021 The Fitness Center capacity was reduced to 45 individuals (30%) at any given time within reservations of 75 minutes. Rec Sports implemented five new COVID policies to ensure the spread of the virus was minimized; of these policies "no partner workouts that share equipment" stood out as the biggest challenge to enforce for Fitness Center Supervisors particularly on the turf and cable machines. Exercise for many is naturally a social endeavor so this change was not easy for members as well as staff to enforce. In addition, the Fitness Center staff was challenged due to a shortage of supervisors in Spring 2021 to just six full time, down from 12 in the Fall.

Due to reservation requirements in the Fitness Center, Fusion member data was gathered for every visit proving a unique opportunity to access participation which otherwise wouldn't have been collected. In the Fall, there were a total of 25,900 check-ins to the Fitness Center with 16,090 (62%) being male and 9,810 (38%) being female. In the Fall there were 3,174 unique participant check-ins with 1,645 (52%) being male and 1,529 (48%) being female. In the Spring there were a total of 34,241 check-ins to the fitness center with 20,764 (60%) being male and 13,477 (40%) being female. In the Spring there were 2,009 unique participant

check-ins with 1,002 (50%) being male and 1,007 (50%) being female.

This year the personal training service continued to operate under COVID safety parameters and was comprised of five certified student trainers. It started off slow due to COVID serving just 2 clients in Fall 2020, but jumping to 10 in Spring 2021. Of the 12 individual clients, a total of 22 packages were sold totaling 160 sessions.

Spring 2021 was the first offering of a new event called "Women's Night in the Fitness Center." This event was open to anyone who identified as a woman and was intended to provide a safe space to exercise, learn, try equipment and build community. Two personal trainers and three supervisors led the event to guide participants through workout stations. Between the two events there were 57 attendees and Post event survey results indicated 72% found the guided services by staff very helpful; and 87% said they would attend another event; and 44% said the event should occur weekly; while 28% said it should occur monthly and 17% said biweekly.

In 2020-2021 the Fitness Center adapted to the demands of COVID while continuing to serve the UWL community at a high level. It undoubtedly plays a crucial role on UWL's campus as does the REC as a whole and will look to capitalize on future opportunities to serve the underrepresented on campus with fitness and community.

### COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS:

*This was my first-time attending Women's Night, and I loved it. I lift frequently at District 901, so I didn't need any station coaching necessarily, but I loved the energy of the staff and how kind everyone was! I didn't realize how much of a difference having a women's night would make. If I had any questions, I would have felt 11/10 comfortable asking for help. Next women's night, I will be bringing friends! Please do this every week!*

*I really enjoyed it. I got the chance to ask questions in an environment that*

*I felt comfortable in. It was nice to be surrounded by women who go to the gym to better themselves. I feel more comfortable going to the gym and using the barbell.*

*I would like to take the time to truly thank the rec for holding this event. I now have newfound confidence to use the Fitness Center. Even though I am a complete beginner, I have more tools and knowledge to better my health in all ways.*

*I think this should be a more regular occurrence! I felt so comfortable and enjoyed my workout much more than normal.*

*It was so great!! The energy in there was awesome and so comfortable. Also, the staff were so helpful and nice. It went by too quickly!*

“

**I would like to take the time to truly thank the rec for holding this event. I now have newfound confidence to use the Fitness Center. Even though I am a complete beginner, I have more tools and knowledge to better my health in all ways.**

# SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media continued to be an essential communication tool for the Rec Sports Department. We create engaging content to help maintain a sense of community and share informative content to persuade students to stay active while at home.

As with so many aspects of our operations, COVID allowed us to evaluate and improve our social media strategy. Before the pandemic, Rec Sports managed over eleven social media pages

on Facebook and Instagram. Each of the department's "major" programs had both an Instagram and Facebook page. This structure required significant coordination and effort for each of the program's coordinators. As the importance of social media grew during the pandemic, it became evident that Rec Sports needed a new strategy. We began closing down all of our program-specific social media pages during the end of the Fall semester and started using only one Facebook and

one Instagram page.

Rachel Rogahn and Hannah Grabow coordinated and implemented the new strategy with fantastic success. Their hard work, organization, and creativity doubled the number of impressions and increased every measurable critical social media metric available.

## THE NEW STRATEGY

January 12, 2021 - May 16 2021



**1,057,058**  
IMPRESIONS



**12,810**  
INTERACTIONS



**4,237**  
FOLLOWERS



**9,121**  
LIKES

*Impressions track the number of times your content (including stories and posts) is shown to users on the platform. In other words, if someone is scrolling their feed and passes by your post, that's an impression.*

## THE OLD STRATEGY

July 1 - December 15

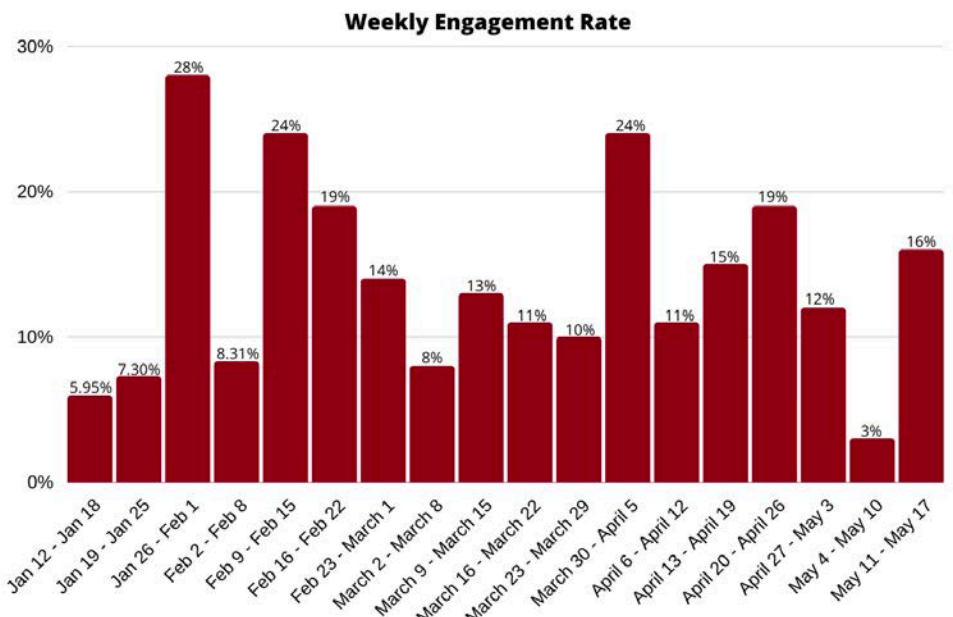
**518,037**  
IMPRESIONS

**1,625**  
FOLLOWERS

Instagram

## TOP 12 POSTS

1. **Bike & Blade Rental (379)**
2. **Green Bikes Promo (371)**
3. **Group Fitness Giveaway (358)**
4. **Campus Squirrel Photos - Squirrel Census (357)**
5. **Sunset Kayak Promo (337)**
6. **Happy Valentines Day (319)**
7. **Happy First Day of Spring (283)**
8. **Trip Photos from the Archives (280)**
9. **Free Week Recap Pictures (277)**
10. **Night on the Slopes Promo (237)**
11. **Rec Report 1/17 (230)**
12. **Squirrel Census (210)**



Spike on Jan 26-Feb 1 due to Group Fitness Giveaway,  
Spike on Feb 16-Feb 22 due to event giveaway

**Engagement Rate** = total number of post likes and comments / total page followers

Important to keep in mind that engagement rate does not account for interactions on story posts, only feed posts.



# INCLUSION

Rec Sports is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for everyone at UWL. The department stands behind its inclusivity and equity statements and strives to uphold them through the five commitments listed below.

## INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

Inclusivity is one of the fundamental values of UWL's Recreational Sports Department. We are committed to equal access to our facility and programs regardless of ability, age, citizenship, economic status, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

This statement has been central in steering the inclusive efforts across nine program areas and over 250 student employees. In 2019-2020 the department furthered many new initiatives to support the inclusive statement but most notably the development and adoption of a Rec Sports equity statement and commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion. With this new framework in place Rec Sports is without a doubt deepening its commitment to inclusion and striving to create better opportunities for everyone within Recreation.

## EQUITY STATEMENT

To serve everyone, UWL Rec Sports recognizes that significant disparities exist for marginalized people in every aspect of society, including our facility and programs. Equity is the ongoing effort to ensure people with marginalized identities have the opportunity to achieve equal access and participation.

To build and empower a thriving community where all feel safe, supported, heard, and seen, equitable programs and services must be on the forefront of our offerings.

## OUR COMMITMENT

Provide programs and events that create a safer space for marginalized peoples

Establish and maintain mutual relationships with partners across campus

Embrace inclusivity by removing barriers to participation that currently exist within our offerings, policies, and procedures

Provide education and foster an environment that supports cultural humility framework for all professional and student staff members

Collaborate with UWL Hate and Bias Response Team to report, address and confront all incidents of hate and bias

## The Student Inclusivity Networking Committee (SINC) is comprised of

student staff who are passionate about making the REC a more welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone, staff included. The committee strives to further the department's commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion through education, campus collaborations and assessment of departmental programs and policies.

## SINC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2020-21, SINC was co-led by pro staff members Nick Berg and Ali Tackett and joined by nine committee members.

- For the 2nd year, SINC hosted the "Taco Bout it" series to provide education and discussion on social justice issues. The series went virtual this year and opened participation to all campus. In the Fall, SINC offered a Women in Recreation talk and in the Spring, a Student Burnout talk.
- Collaborated with the Student Advisory Committee (SAC) throughout the spring employment process to increase awareness of interview bias and hiring values.
- 2020-21 marked the first year of employment for our new EDI student coordinator.
- Partnered with the PRIDE Center for the second year to offer "Queer Night at the REC" which provides a safe place for anyone who identifies outside the binary to participate in free group fitness classes weekly.
- Offered new event in the spring called Women's Night at the Fitness Center hosted by all women staff and trainers to provide a safe space for women. It was offered twice and attracted 57 attendees who provided glowing feedback and encouragement to continue the event.

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- Initiated a new social justice series on diversity in recreation on Instagram to use a Rec Sports platform to help educate others and center the voices of the most marginalized folks in our society, all in hopes of educating our community to create a more inclusive REC.

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- SAC collaborated with Campus Climate to develop more inclusive Rec Sports hiring practices.

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- Pro staff participated in a two-day virtual EDI training with UWL SEEDs advisors AJ Clauss and Matt Evenson.

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- Rec Sports professional staff met bi-weekly during fall and spring semesters to have open discussion on EDI topics for continued education in support of a cultural humility framework with SINC.

## TAKEAWAYS AND LOOKING AHEAD:

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- Rec Sports has a large student following on Instagram and will look to build on the social justice series to continue EDI efforts on social media.

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- SINC and SAC collaboration on employment is crucial to creating an equitable hiring process and diverse staff. More collaboration and education between the two student-based committees are vital moving forward.

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- Rec Sports is looking to expand its outreach to offices that serve marginalized students to better support through partnerships.

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- SINC recruitment in Fall 2021 will be vital as just one member is returning after graduating the majority of student members.

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- Education and training amongst Rec Sports student staff is vital. In 2021-22 new models for continued education will be explored so there is consistent conversation around EDI.



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