

Acadia Players' Association: Community impact beyond athletics

The APA hosted their mental health fair in January.

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The Acadia Players' Association (APA) is Acadia's official council representing student-athletes, but the association's goals go beyond athletics. The association focuses on organizing events and community engagement opportunities for student-athletes. Co-presidents Sara Baxter and Skye Forcier say the APA's main goal is to give back to campus and Acadia's larger community.

"We organize school visits, an annual fundraiser event for our community, and a mental health fair every year," says Sara.

"We were very happy with our mental health fair this year, we had over 300 people attend, and it was our most successful year so far."

Skye and Sara both agree the APA provides opportunities to constantly give back to the community. The student-athlete school visits are an example of how important it is to maintain a strong presence outside of campus. Student-athletes visit schools in the area and help out with classes, gym activities and various school events.

"Young kids in elementary school look up to our varsity athletes," says Sara. "It's a huge impact on the kids to get to interact with athletes they view as role models."

Skye adds this ongoing community engagement is a rewarding experience for student-athletes as well as an opportunity to network and develop important life skills.

"There's a lot you can learn from sports but being a varsity athlete means a lot more than that," she says. "It's about volunteering, leadership, and the connections we build with other people in our community."

Another priority for the APA is to bring student-athletes on campus together. Sara and Skye say the APA plays an important role in connecting and encouraging support among varsity teams.

"The APA is a great platform to connect athletes because otherwise I think you can get a little bit secluded in your team," says Skye. "This is a really nice way to meet other varsity teams. We all volunteer and plan events together. I know this is something unique that doesn't necessarily happen in other schools."

These connections are about supporting fellow athletes in action and cheering other teams on.

"You don't have to understand exactly what another sport is about," says Skye. "I remember other varsity teams coming to support us at our rugby tournament this past November, and it was great to hear people who don't know about rugby say that it is such a cool sport after watching us."

This month, the APA is getting ready to host their annual fundraiser, “Athlete Auction,” where athletes volunteer to sing or dance on stage and attendees will bid to go out for a group dinner in the weeks following the event. Funds go towards different organizations every year. The event this year will be in support of mental health.

Skye and Sara emphasize the fundraiser is one of the APA’s major events because it encompasses the key values the association and Acadia’s athletics department represent. Overall, it’s a big opportunity to give back to a supportive community.

“I think ultimately everybody at Acadia and in our athletics department, want us to be not only good athletes and students, but also good people and giving members of our community,” says Sara.

The Athlete Auction will be held in the McKeen room in the SUB on March 21 and tickets go on sale on March 11 at the Union Market.

[Learn more about the APA here.](#)

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Contact

University Communications
Emmerson Hall, Suite 108
31 University Ave
Wolfville, Nova Scotia, B4P 2R6
newsroom@acadiau.ca
[902-585-1705](tel:902-585-1705)