

# SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC CLUB

## ATHLETICS *Newsletter*

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## *From the SUAC President*

Though the COVID-19 pandemic remains prevalent, we still have much to celebrate as it relates to Shepherd University Athletics. Your continued support of SUAC and all of our athletic programs during a time that many organizations have experienced decline and struggle has been nothing less than remarkable. On behalf of SUAC and Shepherd University Athletics, we thank you for your generosity as it helps us continue our winning tradition and provide the best experience possible for our student-athletes and fans.

As we draw nigh to the end of February, I'd be remiss not to share a personal reflection during this time of celebration—Black History Month. Though I naturally feel a deep sense of pride given the richness of our history, I too feel a deep sense of pain. The thought of the many years of slavery and bondage that my ancestors endured is polarizing. Without a doubt, progress has been made, yet without a doubt, the race has not yet been won. Racism and social injustice for people of color is still prevalent in America. In order to rid ourselves of this plague we must be willing to speak up, speak out, and take swift action at all cost to stamp out these inequities. The great John Lewis, lifelong civil rights activist, said it best "Do not get lost in a



**Scott Bradford-Doleman '95 and '99**  
SUAC President

sea of despair. Be hopeful, be optimistic. Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime. Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble."

My call to action is to stand up and be accountable. Collectively, we can be the catalyst of change and progress.

Onward and Upward...

Scott



**Shepherd University Athletic Club**  
[www.suathleticclub.org](http://www.suathleticclub.org)

# Coach's Corner

Featuring Coach Justin Namolik, Shepherd University Men's Basketball Coach

**Coach, we appreciate the time you can spend with us and providing some insight into your program, the current state of basketball, and what you see as you look toward trying to play some games over the next few months.**

**How has your program adapted to the many guidelines put in place by the NCAA and the university regarding practice and game play?**

The first semester has been a little bit different than the second semester. This spring semester Shepherd was able to provide us with testing three times a week. So, we've been able to do that which has helped tremendously in terms of contact tracing and just knowing that we don't have any positive tests on the team. At the beginning of both semesters there was a re-socialization period. At the start of the second semester, it was tough because we hadn't practiced since November 5. A lot of our guys haven't been able to get access to a weight room or a gym, so we were really out of shape, but that re-socialization period helped because we were limited in the amount of time we could work with our guys, in terms of numbers. We were able to do a lot of skill work and some agility drills to get our conditioning back into shape.

**Knowing there is no championship season for basketball for this academic year, what has been your focus with the student athletes and what is the plan, if any, to play some games this spring?**

The whole situation has taught me two things, appreciation and perspective and that's something I've tried to share with our guys. Although we haven't had any games, I think it's important to realize that there are people

who have it a lot harder than us not having to play a college basketball game. Then to the appreciation part, just appreciating our time on the court. You can really notice that with our guys in terms of when we had the opportunity to be on the court, they are happy to be there. I know that we all look forward to games, but to me personally practice is my favorite time as a coach. It's where the most growth happens. You can tell our guys just really appreciate being able to practice because there are some schools that are still remote, some schools haven't started practicing yet. You also look at our department just knowing that spring sports didn't have a season last year. I think it's important that we put all of our resources in making sure they would have a season. It's been hard to deal with, but I think it would really be a big blow to those spring sport athletes if they didn't have a season two years in a row. So, I've been happy to support the University and Athletic Department to make sure that happens for them.

**When COVID-19 halted seasons in late February/early March, your basketball season had just ended its first season in the PSAC. What was your takeaway from year one on the conference and style of play in comparison to the Mountain East Conference?**

Yeah, I mean it's definitely different. Historically the Mountain East and the West Virginia Conference have always been high scoring leagues and there's a lot of good offensive teams. I would say in the last 5-7 years the teams in the east division of the PSAC have become more offensive minded, so I think in that regard we are prepared for that. The one thing about the PSAC, I have to say, is just from top to



bottom there's a lot of quality teams. I think last year at times when we had the lead, it never felt safe. I think part of that had to be just us having a young group and their first time going around with it and I also think there is a lot of fight in those PSAC teams. Then, when you look at the crossover games against the west, there's a lot of fully funded programs. Based on the schedule and who you go up against they're going to be more transfer heavy, probably a little more defensive minded than the east and a little more physical play. There are no easy outs in the PSAC conference. It was a good first year for us, we definitely learned a lot, and we'll be able to use this time to make the adjustments we need to make.

**Thomas Lang has moved on from a very successful career at Shepherd. What player(s) do you feel can have a significant impact for your team moving forward?**

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## SUAC Board Member Spotlight *Featuring Cheryl Roberts '80*

The Shepherd University Athletic Club is proud to have Cheryl Roberts '80 as vice president of our board. Born and raised in Shepherdstown, Cheryl became a Ram and was a three-sport athlete when graduating with honors in 1980. That same year, Cheryl was named as one of America's Outstanding Young Women.

In 1981, she was hired as an assistant men's basketball coach at the University of the District of Columbia. This made her the first woman to be involved in coaching a men's collegiate basketball

team in the history of the NCAA.

In 2015, she was inducted into Shepherd University's Athletic Hall of Fame and continues to be very active with the university and the community.

While our board recognizes her accomplishments and efforts to our organization, it is even more fitting for us to salute her during Black History month and applaud her leadership to young people of all genders, race and ethnicity. ■

# Catching Up with the Vice President for Athletics

**Thanks for your time, Chauncey! I know our fans, alumni, and former athletes look forward to this segment.**

**First off, once this newsletter is released, we will be at the one-year mark since COVID-19 shut down sports. Give us a brief state of athletics at this moment in time and the impact the past year has had on athletics.**

I know that our coaches and student-athletes are very excited once again to get back on the field and court to compete this spring. For the most part, our student-athletes have worked diligently over the last year to deal with the challenges presented by COVID-19. While it hasn't been easy, I am so grateful for their efforts in dealing with the restrictions, academic restructuring, and mental stress brought on by the pandemic. I am sure that everyone across the nation is extremely tired of dealing with the pandemic and that is no different within our department. But our student-athletes, coaches, and administrators love the opportunity that we have to represent our great institution and look forward to doing so this semester and beyond.

At times, our staff and student-athletes have been forced to isolate or quarantine over the last year which has been very difficult. The changes in how academics has been structured along with the loss of competitions has certainly been demanding to everyone associated with our department. But my staff and our student-athletes have really hung in there to the best of their ability. I believe our ability to finally return to some normalcy with regard to competitions has our coaches and student-athletes hopeful for the future. We certainly realize there is plenty of work to do to make this a reality.

**As spring sports begin to gear up for potential seasons, how excited are you and how optimistic are you that the seasons will be played out toward conference, regional, and national championships?**

It's still hard to believe that we haven't had any competitions for a full calendar year. I believe excitement is an understatement to be honest. I am sure our coaches, students-athletes, and all members of the university community are excited to see sports back on campus this spring. There are obviously still challenges to face with regard to testing and keeping our kids and staff safe from COVID-19. We are working really hard as a department, and if all institutions that are competing are able to navigate this

situation, tournaments should go off without a hitch. Obviously if anyone loses focus, it will put post-season competitions in jeopardy. I am cautiously optimistic that these events will occur as planned.

**As far as the spring sports and home games, how will the university address the ability for fans to be at games? Will there be a player family only attendance or will it be open to the public? If opening to the public, what does that look like at the different sport venues?**

At this moment, I am personally recommending that the university allow parents of student-athletes access to events. I believe it's not only important to our student-athletes, but also to their parents as well. I know that our parents have played a big part in assisting their student-athletes and this would be a small way to thank them for their support during these challenging times. The typical way an institution sets a policy is to base potential attendance off of a percentage of capacity of each facility. For instance, 10-20% of total capacity. I think it might be a bit premature to consider opening our venues to the public at this time.

**Over the last few newsletters, we have spent a lot of time discussing COVID-19, its effect on the university as whole as well as athletics. With vaccines now beginning to get out to the people, what do you see as you look out past the spring sports and into fall sports?**

I am truly hopeful that the fall brings back the normalcy of all fall competitions. The continued success of the vaccine roll-out really makes me optimistic that this will become a reality. What will be interesting is if face coverings will be required at that time. In my opinion, we will be back in action while requiring face coverings. Only time will tell.

**Shepherd has added some new sports over this past year, can you provide us with some specific information on the sports and why adding additional sports is important to the university?**

We were very excited to add men's and women's cross country and women's golf to the university's sports sponsorship this year. As a former student-athlete, I personal appreciate that this is a great chance to provide even more opportunities for young people to participate in the sport that they love on the collegiate level. I believe that athletics can have a small but impactful effect on the challenges the university



**Chauncey Winbush '95 and '00**

faces with attendance. I would love to consider three or four more sports in the future which again bring a consistent flow of students to our institution while obviously adding to the bottom line of the institution's budget.

**Lastly, where can our great contributors go to help fund athletics or specific sports and what is the next event planned to help raise dollars for athletics?**

We created the Shepherd University Athletic Club ([www.suathleticclub.org](http://www.suathleticclub.org)) three years ago to provide a consistent avenue for those interested in supporting Shepherd Athletics. People have the ability to give generally, to a specific sport, to capital campaigns, or to find corporate and marketing opportunities in support of our department. This website is a one-stop shop, if you will, for all giving opportunities to include signing up for fundraising events like golf tournaments or our "Ram Fest" event.

The next fundraising opportunity that athletics will be a part of is the university's Day of Giving on March 25. This is a great campus-wide effort in support of several different departments on campus. Of course, athletics will hope to gain support from our donors in which funds will go into the SUAC general fund which supports scholarships, general athletic expenses, and capital projects. Our donors have been so generous in their support of our programs for many years, but we can always get better.

**The SUAC recognizes and appreciates your efforts in leading the athletics programs through this past year of uncertainty and change. ■**

# In the News

## CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The Shepherd University Athletic Club is built on the platform of racial, gender, and ethnic equality. We are proud to salute members of our board, university administration, students and alumni that have been leaders in their field of work and communities. This past month, we look back and reflect on the people that led to better opportunities for this generation of color and look forward to those leaders of today that will do the same for the generations to come.

The SUAC celebrates Black History month and appreciates the opportunities provided by so many to the university, this board, students and student athletes, and our community. ■



## SPRING SPORTS RETURN!

As the battle to rid the world of COVID-19 continues and vaccines show signs of success, spring sports at universities look to pick back up where they unimaginably ended in 2020.

Shepherd University begins its spring athletic campaign in March as the quest for PSAC, regional, and national championships begin.

The university's athletic programs have been on hold since last March but have followed all NCAA and PSAC protocols throughout and continue to commit both financial and personnel resources to ensure the safety and health of all student athletes, coaches, and administrators as spring sports move forward.

We ask that you continue your support of these athletic teams in any way you can but also keeping in mind that everyone's safety is the priority. If the athletic venue hosting the games

allows attendance, please abide by any and all safety guidelines established.

We look forward to having safe and successful seasons across all spring sports! ■



## DAY OF GIVING

Thursday, March 25, launches Shepherd University's second annual Day of Giving! For 24-hours, we are asking members of our community to make a gift in support of the programs, scholarships, and experiences that make Shepherd special. Last year the university as a whole was able to raise more than \$60,000 on the day, and our sights are set even higher this

year! Make your gift, share it on social media, and challenge your friends to donate. Please join us as students, alumni, parents, and friends come together to show their Ram pride.

*For more information, please visit:  
[www.shepherduniversityfoundation.org/  
dayofgiving](http://www.shepherduniversityfoundation.org/dayofgiving) ■*

# Coach's Corner

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Last year with our group, we had Thomas and we had a lot of guys who hadn't proved themselves. I think last year Kyle Daggett, Jon Preston, and Jarrell Jones all did a good job in stepping up, but also our freshmen Daniel McClain-Corley and Phillip Jordan all had really solid freshman years. So now all of those guys have the opportunity to step up now. I really like the core group of guys that we have coming back with our seniors in Jarrell Jones, Cam Stephens, and Kyle Daggett. That's a really great senior class, but then we have a really good young class behind them. Our sophomore class is very good with Phillip Jordan and Daniel McClain-Corley, we were able to add Division I transfer Jordan Gibson who gives us a lot of athleticism. He's a really good offensive player and he's going to help us defensively. We also have a really good freshman class shaping up with Elijah Terry who joined us here in the second semester, and we signed Aidan Hugley out of Pennsylvania—he's a 6'7" big kid—and have Jarod Robinson back who came to Shepherd this year. So, we're looking to add one more piece to that freshman class and I know that with this core group of players, we'll be very competitive in the PSAC for the next 3-4 years.

***Can you give us some insight into your recruiting philosophies? Do you have a style of play that drives you to kids or is it adaptive year to year based on how the kids in the past season performed? What are the basic must haves of the student-athletes you recruit?***

One of our strengths at Shepherd is our location. So, being able to recruit Washington D.C., Baltimore, Maryland, Northern Virginia, and now, joining the PSAC, being able to recruit Pennsylvania a little bit more, we have a really good talent pool to pull from. With our style of play we try to play a little bit more up-tempo; we have depth and we like to press. That hasn't



been the case the last couple of years which is fine. We just want to be a really solid basketball team that offensively takes good shots, takes care of the ball, and defensively practices more of a bend but don't break type of defense. We want to keep the ball out of the paint, we want to force contested jumpers from the perimeter and that has been the backbone of our defense for the last 5-6 years. In terms of recruiting, obviously we look at offensive skill set, but the more I do this I definitely look at the intangibles which I think are so important. When you watch them play, they should demonstrate some leadership skills. Thomas Lang his senior year in high school—just watching him you knew he was going to be a leader. I'm looking to see what type of teammate they are and how they respond to their teammates. Are they coachable? How they respond to their coaches is so important. Leadership and teamwork are so key because generally those are the things that make players great. If they are going to be a leader who works hard, holds their teammates accountable, and competes, they're going to be good at our level.

***In speaking to recruiting, scholarships are necessary to every sport to bring a student***

***athlete to Shepherd University. How can our alumni, former student athletes, and friends of Shepherd contribute dollars to your program?***

The biggest way to give is through the Hardwood Club. It's been our major fundraising arm for the last couple of years. We have a goal; we're trying to get about 50 members. Right now, we have about 30 and we're trying to get to 50 and raise more than \$10,000 a year and we've been really close to that the last couple of years. The majority of those funds go to scholarship assistance. We will use this for some program enhancements, but we use that money to put together scholarship packages for recruits. Finally, they can play in our golf tournament that we have in the fall, which has been a big fundraiser for us.

***The SUAC and Shepherd Athletics thanks you for the job you have done over the years and looks forward to helping further the success of your program.***

***Thanks Coach! Wishing you much success moving forward!*** ■

## SUAC Information

The SUAC board wishes all of our members and fans continued health and peace through this time. We also want to thank you for your generosity to all of our sports and their facilities. It goes without saying that when we all support a vision in pursuit of the university's athletic goals, it will be successful! ■



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