

End of the Year Newsletter 2015-2016

As the 2015-2016 school year wraps up, SAAC is excited to report a very busy and successful spring and to announce our new SAAC leaders who will be taking over next fall. First, we can celebrate the various championships the Williams College Ephs have won. Women's Softball, Women's Tennis, Men's Track and Field, and Women's Track and Field, Men's Crew, and Women's Crew have all come away from their NESCAC Championships with a first place title. Keep an eye out for our teams as they head to Regional and NCAA tournaments in the coming weeks.



In concordance with Division III Week, SAAC ramped up our Campaign Against Sexual Assault. The campaign began last year when Williams SAAC worked with Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness group to support each varsity team in making a personal pledge to combat sexual assault on campus. This year SAAC is continuing the campaign by making parties safer for students in attendance. SAAC designed and funded apparel and a large banner that was displayed at several Williams parties, all while continuing to spread the word through the Williams student body. The campaign invites everyone to step up and realize that the solution to sexual assault begins with each of us. It is our duty to recognize, identify, and intervene in potentially harmful situations, and create an environment where sexual assault is unacceptable and survivors are supported.

On April 28th, SAAC hosted our first ever Student-Athlete Storytelling event. Keynote speakers Faye Sultan '16 (Women's Swimming), Maya Hart '16 (Women's Tennis), Tyler Young '17 (Men's Ice Hockey), Yvonne Bungei '17 (Women's Cross Country & Track) and Tyler Duff '17 (Baseball) spoke eloquently about their times as athletes and Ephs. Their stories ranged from childhood sports experiences both in America and abroad, to adjusting to Williams athletics, to winning NCAA titles.

At the beginning of the year we set out to bring back our 32 For 32 campaign to get all of our varsity sports teams involved in the community. This year 30/32 teams engaged with our community in some way, and most teams held multiple events throughout the year. Some examples include sponsoring Team Impact kids, organizing fundraisers for various causes, volunteering at local organizations, and tutoring or mentoring local kids, to name some of the most common. We are proud of our teams for dedicating such time and effort to the community on top of already rigorous academic and athletic schedules. We hope that in the coming years student-athlete engagement with the community will continue to grow and benefit those in the Berkshires and beyond.

We've also been working to get athletes and the Athletic Department more environmentally conscious this year. We collaborated with the Zilkha Center for Environmental Initiatives and Facilities to put recycle bins in locker rooms throughout our athletic facilities where there previously had not been any recycling receptacles. The first phase of this process took place earlier this spring, and next fall the implementation of recycle bins will be complete throughout athletic facilities. Additionally, we're starting to plan a recycling and waste reduction competition against Amherst for a couple weeks next fall during Homecoming time, which will be part of the nationwide Recyclemania challenge.

Current presidents Hadley DesMeules '16, Maddy Holker '16, and Eric Davis '17 are pleased to announce the SAAC board for the 2016-2017 school year. We will again have three presidents: Eric Davis, Colin Hogan '17 (Swimming), and Kevin Walsh '17 (Football), leading a nine member executive board. Returning members of the executive board Caroline Hogan '17 (Squash and Lacrosse) and Sarah Becker '17 (Nordic) will be joined by Eliza Matt '18 (Cross Country and Track), Chris Galvin '18 (Basketball), David Italiano '18 (Hockey), Katie Loftus '19 (Track and Field), Curtis Maher '19 (Swimming), and Maddie Downs '18 (Swimming). We are excited to pass SAAC leadership onto such a great group, and are excited to see current SAAC members getting more involved as well as some newcomers who are eager to make an impact within the student-athlete and greater Williams communities. We'd also like to thank this year's executive board members Merritt Harlan '16, Caroline Hogan, Kevin Walsh, Sarah Becker, and our faculty advisors Jen Chucks and Carolyn Miles for all the work they've done this year as well as the SAAC representatives from each team. This year has been the best of recent years in terms of attendance to meetings and the range of projects and events carried out throughout the year.

It's been a pleasure to work alongside our fellow student-athletes as SAAC Presidents this year and we're exciting to see the ways SAAC will grow and continue to affect positive change on campus in the future.

Hadley DesMeules, Maddy Holker, and Eric Davis

