



2023 IMPACT REPORT



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA ATHLETICS

THANK YOU TO
OUR DONORS



Friends of Gopher Athletics,

I want to thank you for your continued support of our student-athletes. As you know, your generosity directly benefits those who proudly represent the Gophers in competition, in the classroom and in the community.

Your loyalty and kindness plays a critical role as we continue to pursue our goal of building life champions at Minnesota. Your contributions truly make a difference as our young people pursue excellence.

The work and dedication that our student-athletes have for academics never fails to amaze me. Last year, our student-athletes posted a cumulative GPA of 3.41 and Minnesota's most recent Graduation Success Rate (GSR) was 94 percent. Minnesota has recorded its five highest GSR statistics in school history during the last five years, as the Gophers posted a school-record 96% in 2021, were 94 percent in both 2020 and 2019 and were at 93 percent in 2018. In addition, 14 of our programs earned a perfect Academic Progress Rate (APR) and seven programs have a perfect 1,000 multi-year rate.

We won two conference championships and were able to cheer on both our women's and men's hockey teams in the Frozen Fours. We saw seven Gophers win individual Big Ten titles and celebrated one NCAA national champion in Max McHugh, as he won the 100 Breaststroke to claim his fourth NCAA title. Our football team won nine games and won its sixth straight bowl game. Minnesota is just one of nine schools – joining Alabama, Clemson, Georgia, Michigan, Notre Dame, Ohio State, Oregon and Utah – to win nine or more football games in the last three full seasons.

As a department, we rank 31st out of 260 universities in the Learfield Directors' Cup, which measures department-wide athletic success. That places Minnesota in the top 11 percent in college athletics. That is not possible without your support.

Thank you for your investment in our student-athletes, as they are the future of this great state. We will continue to strive for greatness, and I am confident we will get there with your support and loyalty.

Go Gophers!

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Mark Coyle".

Mark Coyle
Director of Athletics

MINNESOTA,
HATS OFF TO THEE!
TO THY COLORS,
TRUE WE SHALL EVER BE.
FIRM AND STRONG,
UNITED ARE WE.
RAH! RAH! RAH! FOR SKI-U-MAH.
RAH! RAH! RAH! RAH!
RAH! FOR THE U OF M.



BUILDING ON TRADITION

3M Arena at Mariucci and Ridder Arena represent two of the most important athletic facilities in the State of Minnesota. We are the State of Hockey and we have the greatest fans in all of college hockey. We are embarking on a renovation project which will enhance two very important areas.

First, with 3M Arena at Mariucci, we will provide our men's hockey fans with an upgraded game day experience with new modern concessions, loge and premium seating and social gathering spaces.

Second, we will provide our women's hockey student-athletes with an upgraded team room and athletic sports medicine room along with enhancements to the Ridder Arena club room, lighting and press area.

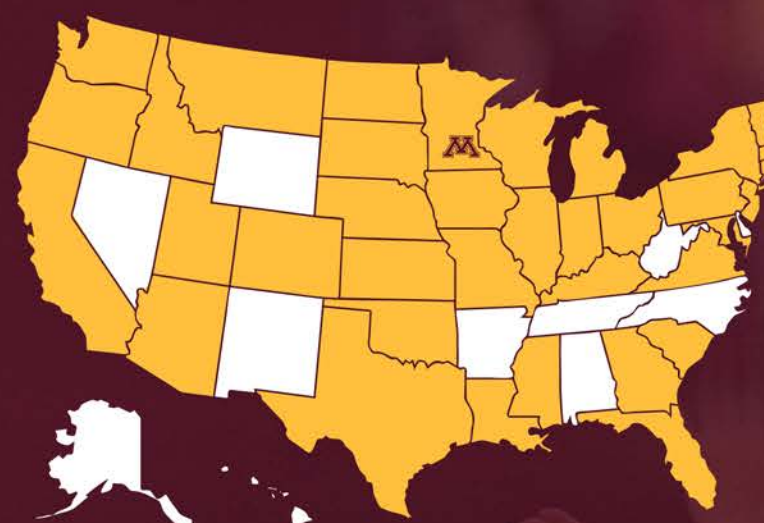
Now is the perfect time to renovate 3M Arena at Mariucci for our fans and Ridder Arena for our student-athletes. We must make these upgrades to take care of our fans and provide them with a game day experience – from seating, concessions and the ability to watch the game.



25



COUNTRIES REPRESENTED



38



STATES REPRESENTED

107



MINNESOTA HIGH SCHOOLS REPRESENTED



100



MAJORS REPRESENTED



313.6



SCHOLARSHIPS PROVIDED TO STUDENT-ATHLETES

13 /18 TOTAL



NUMBER OF COLLEGES REPRESENTED

NCAA INDIVIDUAL

MAX McHUGH

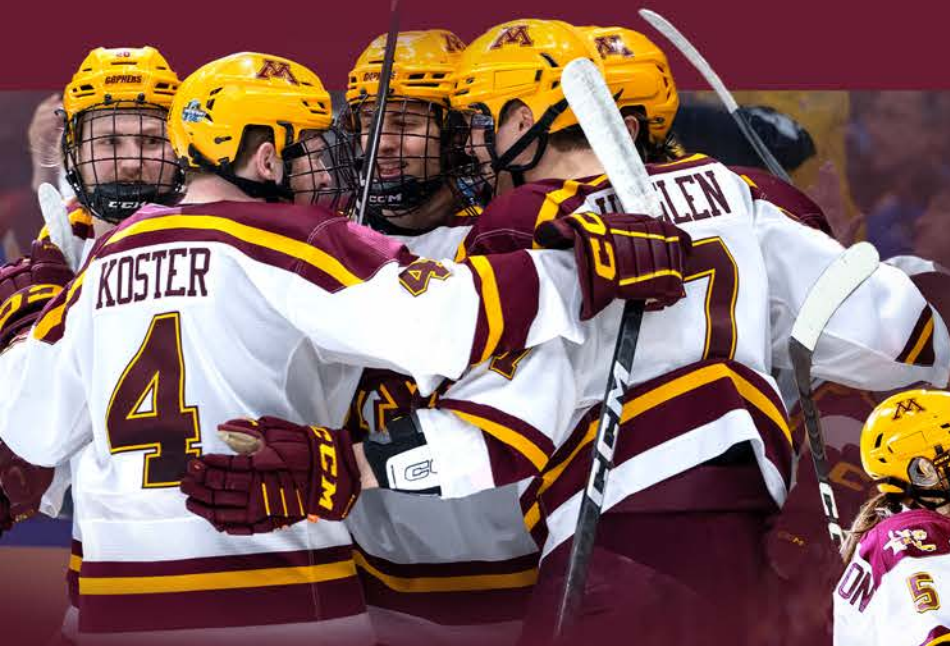
100 Breaststroke | Fourth Career NCAA Title



BIG TEN/WCHA TEAM

◀ MEN'S HOCKEY

2nd Straight | 6th in 10 Years of Big Ten Hockey



▶ WOMEN'S HOCKEY

WCHA Final Faceoff Champion | 8th Tournament Title

BIG TEN INDIVIDUAL

MAX McHUGH

100 & 200 Breaststroke
School Record 7 Career Big Ten Swim Titles

SHELBY FRANK

Weight Throw
3rd Gopher in Last Five Years to Win
Indoor Weight Throw Title

AMIRA YOUNG

60m & 200m
Four Career Big Ten Indoor Titles

MYA HOOTEN

Vault & Floor
2nd & 3rd B1G Event Titles

CARLON HOSTEN
KION BENJAMIN
FINN SHIRMER
DEVIN AUGUSTINE

4x100m Relay
First Title in Event Since 2002

MATTHEW WILKINSON

3000m Steeplechase & 5000m
First in Program History to Win Both Events

KION BENJAMIN

100m
Two-Time Champion in Event

KOSTAS ZALTOS

Hammer Throw
Third Straight Big Ten Title in Event



3.40



CUMULATIVE GPA
OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

THROUGH SPRING 2023

94%



GRADUATION RATE
PROGRAM RECORD



115

BIG TEN
DISTINGUISHED
SCHOLARS

5



PROGRAMS WITH
PERFECT APR
MULTI-YEAR SCORES

8



PROGRAMS WITH
PERFECT SINGLE-YEAR
APR SCORES

Gymnastics

MYA HOOTEN

Mya Hooten is a Minnesotan through and through. After growing up in Woodbury, and graduating from Chanhassen High School, Hooten has become one of the most prolific gymnasts in Gopher history while representing her home state.

“Competing in my home state is a dream come true. The support that I’ve gotten from my family and fans, showing up to every home meet is truly a blessing and I couldn’t be more thankful,” Hooten said. “I love seeing familiar faces during the meets, and getting to know the little girls who want to one day compete for the Gophers in their home state just like I did. It is truly the best feeling to compete for a university that I once rooted for growing up. There is no place I’d rather be than home, and I am so grateful to be a Gopher.”

In her freshman season in 2021, she became the first Gopher to ever record a perfect 10 on floor. It ended up being the first of many, as she’s now achieved perfection on floor six times at the end of her junior season. The judges awarded her a perfect score twice in 2023, with those two scores bolstering her season average of 9.940. In addition to her tremendous success on floor, she tied a career high when she recorded a 9.975 on vault this season. She took home a share of the Big Ten title on both floor and vault, adding two more first-place medals to her previous total of one.

The two-time WCGA First Team All-American excels not only in the gym, but in the classroom. Hooten has been named Academic All-Big Ten the last two years, and recently earned CSC Academic All-District honors.

Softball

JESS OAKLAND

Hailing from San Jose, Calif., freshman shortstop Jess Oakland made an immediate impact on the Golden Gopher softball program the moment she stepped foot on campus. The 2022 Golden State Ms. Softball State Player of the Year started all 57 games for the Maroon and Gold in 2023, compiling 45 RBI while leading the team with 14 home runs.

“My first year at Minnesota has been such a blessing,” said Oakland. “I have learned and grown so much from my teammates, coaches, and friends in the last year. They taught me what it means to be a proud and loyal Golden Gopher and more importantly how to compete with passion and respect for the game.”

Now, looking to her sophomore year, she has a lot to build off of. In her first season donning Maroon and Gold, Oakland was named Big Ten Freshman of the Week twice, recognized to both the All-Big Ten Freshman and All-Big Ten First Teams. Her season was capped off by being honored to the NFCA Great Lakes All-Region Second Team with appearances in both the Big Ten Tournament and NCAA Seattle Regional.

“I’m so grateful for the opportunity to play for an athletic program and truly cares about its athletes and in an environment where every single person around wants me to succeed. I can’t wait to see what’s in the store in the years to come!”

Football

BREVERN SPANN-FORD

He’s the most versatile tight end in college football.

At 6-7 and 270 pounds, Brevyn Spann-Ford is comfortable hurdling would-be tacklers or blocking opposing defensive linemen. His hands are soft enough to catch the hardest pass and strong enough to wield a historic six-foot ax.

The St. Cloud, Minn., native came to the Gophers after a standout prep career at St. Cloud Technical Senior High School. There he excelled in basketball and football and was named the No. 1 football recruit in the state. Spann-Ford committed to the Gophers and to Head Coach P.J. Fleck, and he is well on his way to joining Maxx Williams, Greg Spaeth Ben Utecht and Jay Carroll as some of the best tight ends to ever wear the Maroon and Gold.

“There is no greater feeling than running out of the tunnel with my teammates at Huntington Bank Stadium on a fall Saturday,” said Spann-Ford, who was named a 2023 Preseason All-American by the Walter Camp Football Foundation. “I love this state and University, and I cannot thank all of our fans and donors enough for their support. I appreciate every moment and opportunity that I have had to represent Minnesota.”

Spann-Ford led the Gophers in receptions last season with 42 and he was second on the team in receiving yards with 497. He caught two touchdowns and was named All-Big Ten Honorable Mention. The four-time Academic All-Big Ten standout is poised to make his final season at Minnesota his best one yet.

Volleyball

TAYLOR LANDFAIR

A redshirt junior outside from Plainfield, Illinois, reigning Big Ten Player of the Year and AVCA First Team All-American Taylor Landfair returns for year four in the Maroon and Gold in 2023. The former No. 1 overall recruit in the class of 2020, Landfair has been through plenty of ups and downs in her Gophers career. After arriving on campus in the spring of 2020, she was sent home along with all Minnesota student-athletes during the pandemic.

Her freshman season was moved to the spring of 2021, where she starred despite playing games in front of empty arenas and with her teammates constantly being in and out of the lineup due to sickness and injury. She made the 2020-21 All-Big Ten First Team, Big Ten All-Freshman Team and was an All-America Honorable Mention.

With big hopes heading into her sophomore year, her plans were derailed after suffering an abdominal injury that forced her into a medical redshirt in 2021. Many in her shoes would have pouted and felt bad for themselves. Instead, Landfair took it upon herself to help the team in any way she could.

“When I was not able to play, I took that as a major learning experience because I had to find a way I can still be involved. I wanted this to be in a genuine way that felt authentic to me. I took advantage of the sideline throughout the season and made the best out of it,” said Landfair. “I had the time of my life cheering for my teammates, because watching them succeed made me feel good. I loved dancing around, making up cheers, and simply screaming my head off because it was fun and helped those on the court know we were fully invested in their success and there to help in any way possible.

After getting healthy and ready for the fall of 2022, Landfair had by far the best season of her career, winning Big Ten Player of the Year, AVCA North Region Player of the Year and being the only Big Ten athlete to earn AVCA First Team All-America accolades.

Even though legendary Head Coach Hugh McCutcheon announced the 2022 season would be his last as the coach, Landfair still wanted to stay at Minnesota and usher in the new era of Gopher volleyball.

“I’m so excited for this new chapter of my life with Minnesota volleyball,” Landfair said. “Change to me is a good thing and I’m stoked to see what it brings in the future for the Gophers. The best is yet to come and I’m excited for new beginnings and a bright future for this program!”

Men’s Hockey

JUSTEN CLOSE

Sometimes all you need is a chance.

For Minnesota men’s hockey senior Justen Close, that opportunity came in January of 2022 when he suddenly found himself as the Golden Gophers starting goaltender. He’s done nothing but thrive since that moment and become one of the nation’s elite netminders, winning 40 games and backstopping the Maroon and Gold to consecutive appearances at the NCAA Frozen Four and a pair of Big Ten Conference regular season championships.

He finished his senior season as the Big Ten leader in goals against average (2.02), wins (26) and shutouts (6) and was second in save percentage (.927), all of which ranked in the top four nationally, earning a spot on the All-Big Ten Second Team.

“Justen is the backbone of our team,” said Head Coach Bob Motzko. “In a lot of ways, he is the heart and soul of our team. It’s one of the more remarkable stories that I’ve had in coaching.”

A native of Kindersley, Saskatchewan, Close joined the team as a walk-on in 2019 and continued to hone his craft, despite not being on the ice for major minutes early in his career. After the departure of two Minnesota goalies, he stepped into the spotlight and posted historic seasons, ranking third and sixth in the 102-year history of the program in single-season goals against average at 1.95 (2021-22) and 2.02 (2022-23), respectively.

“I was surrounded by great people every day, and I had the opportunity to come to work and get better,” said Close. “I was making sure I was trying to improve and get better if I was given my chance. And luckily, I was. There’s no better place you can play college hockey; you’re not going to find anything else like it.”

Close also excels in the classroom where he earned College Sports Communications Academic All-District Honors and landed on the Academic All-Big Ten Team in 2022-23. He announced he will be returning to the Gophers for one more season and has sights set on bringing a national championship back to campus.

GOLDEN GOPHER FUND WHERE OUR DONORS GIVE

SCHOLARSHIP SEATING

Providing scholarships to our student-athletes requires tremendous investment. When you purchase tickets in our scholarship seating areas it provides critical funding to create a complete collegiate experience for our Gopher student-athletes. Scholarship seating includes the prime seating locations for football, men's hockey, men's basketball, women's basketball and volleyball. By purchasing these tickets you also provide a contribution, where the funds go directly to support student-athletes. Your investments help us to tackle our ever growing student-athlete support costs which have grown dramatically in recent years with new NCAA rules allowing us to provide more than ever to our student-athletes.

The experience we provide at Minnesota is not possible without you. Scholarship seating contributions give student-athletes an opportunity to excel academically, athletically and socially. Together, Gopher fans who invest in scholarship seating are a powerful, supportive community that provide every Gopher student-athlete the chance to chase lifelong dreams.

ANNUAL FUND

The annual fund encompasses all of our fundraising efforts. Annual giving donations may be directed to any fund in athletics. Donations to the annual fund can support scholarships, sport specific funds, scholarship endowments, in-kind and trade donations and special projects. Growing the annual fund is a top priority of the department and serves as a vital backbone to a championship program.

MONTHLY GIVING

Monthly gifts are donations that automatically recur each month at a set amount. Monthly giving is an easy way donors can provide valuable support to what's important to them, on a schedule that is manageable for your budgets and busy lifestyles. Once a monthly gift is set up, it will automatically repeat each month, providing a convenient way to spread the contribution over time. Your monthly donation makes an impact by making manageable payments in an amount that's right for you. Monthly giving provides a convenient, relevant method of giving for donors. It also helps build a predictable source of funding for the University while reducing administrative costs.

SPORT ENHANCEMENT FUNDS

Supporting a specific team is possible as every team in Gopher Athletics has an enhancement fund. Investment in a team's enhancement fund allows coaches to go beyond their team's most basic needs and put funds toward helping their student-athletes and programs grow and sustain championship-caliber performances. Winning (and continuing to win) in the Big Ten and the NCAA is only possible due to investors supporting our teams with these team-specific gifts.

ENDOWMENT FUNDS

Endowments are a lasting legacy of support for Gopher student-athletes. The initial investment is preserved as principal and the interest produced by this investment is used to support Gopher student-athlete scholarship costs, notably tuition assistance, textbooks, and room and board. Endowed scholarships are long-term investments in the University of Minnesota and our student-athletes. They provide essential financial support for students year after year, generation after generation. Because an endowed scholarship lives in perpetuity, it provides a meaningful way for supporters to leave a lasting legacy — in their name or the name of a loved one — in support of Gopher Athletics. An endowment fund can be opened with an initial investment of \$50,000. A fully endowed scholarship at \$750,000 covers the annual educational costs for one student-athlete.

When a supporter establishes an endowed scholarship, the contributed funds are held and managed by the University of Minnesota Foundation (UMF) and invested by UMF Investment Advisors (UMFIA), a nonprofit subsidiary of the foundation. The investment and spending policies for the endowment are set to achieve maximum impact for the long-term and ensure that gifts are used according to supporters' wishes. Our long-term goal is to fully endow all of our scholarships, creating a sustainable system where your investments in scholarships can provide an outstanding collegiate experience for generations of Gophers. Currently, endowments cover approximately eight percent of our annual scholarship investment.

PREMIUM SEATING

There are a variety of premium seating options for donors and season ticket holders at Huntington Bank Stadium, 3M Arena at Mariucci, Williams Arena, Maturi Pavilion and Ridder Arena. With the purchase of season tickets in these areas, donors support scholarship seating which covers educational costs for student-athletes in every sport program.

Huntington Bank Stadium features suites, loge boxes, indoor club and outdoor club seating. Amenities and benefits vary with each location. Premium seating at Williams Arena for both men's and women's basketball includes courtside seats, balcony club seats, suites and access to the Williams Club Room. Club seats are also available for men's hockey at 3M Arena at Mariucci, for women's hockey at Ridder Arena, and also volleyball in the Robert K. Eddy Athletic Performance Center.

Full details on premium seating options are available at GoldenGopherFund.com or by calling the GGF at (612) 626-4653

GOLDEN GOPHER FUND WHERE OUR DONORS GIVE

CAPITAL GIVING

Gifts to capital projects are critical to the continued success of the program by allowing student-athletes to train and compete at a championship level. New or renovated practice facilities have been completed to support football, men's and women's basketball, wrestling, men's and women's golf, volleyball and hockey. While much progress has been made, there will continue to be a need to provide the facilities needed to support the recruitment and development of our student-athletes. Capital projects also address competition venues and the amenities for Gopher fans attending games.

A capital gift can be paid in one lump sum or can be pledged out over a set number of years. These gifts are 100 percent deductible and significantly boost Gopher Score priority while also supporting the top priorities of the department in our pursuit of greatness.

ELITE FUND

The Elite Fund has helped the Gopher Football program reach new heights. Whether it's guest speakers and team outings or suits for every football player and recruiting trips, each of these items has helped us create our Elite culture. The Elite Fund is our annual resource to directly invest in our football student-athletes. The culture and hard work are paying dividends but we could not do this without you. Your investment is one of the main reasons we will achieve new heights to showcase the University of Minnesota and Gopher Football.

FRIENDS OF THE BARN

Friends of the Barn is the annual resource to directly invest into our men's basketball student-athletes. From guest speakers and team outings to new equipment and recruiting trips, each of these items help build the Gopher men's basketball program. Donor gifts fund initiatives aimed at developing all of our student-athletes. These resources go a long way and build a recruiting edge that allows coaching staff to meet with local recruits here in Minnesota and also to meet and evaluate recruits regionally and nationally.

LEGACY FUND

The Legacy Fund is the annual resource to directly invest into our women's basketball student-athletes. Your investment is the reason we will achieve new heights to showcase the University of Minnesota and the women's basketball team. Whether it is resources for enhancing our relationships with top recruits or team outings and new equipment these items help build the Gopher Women's Basketball program.

PRIDE ON ICE

The Pride on Ice Fund has been established to seek generous donors who are passionate about Gopher men's hockey and wish to make a significant gift in support of the program. The term Pride on Ice began decades ago and has been resurrected by our current Coach Bob Motzko. It speaks to team, work ethic, sacrifice, persistence, pride and the will of a champion. Funds are used to equip the team with championship-level resources to ensure that the program's tradition of excellence continues for the next 100 years.

THE RIDDER CIRCLE

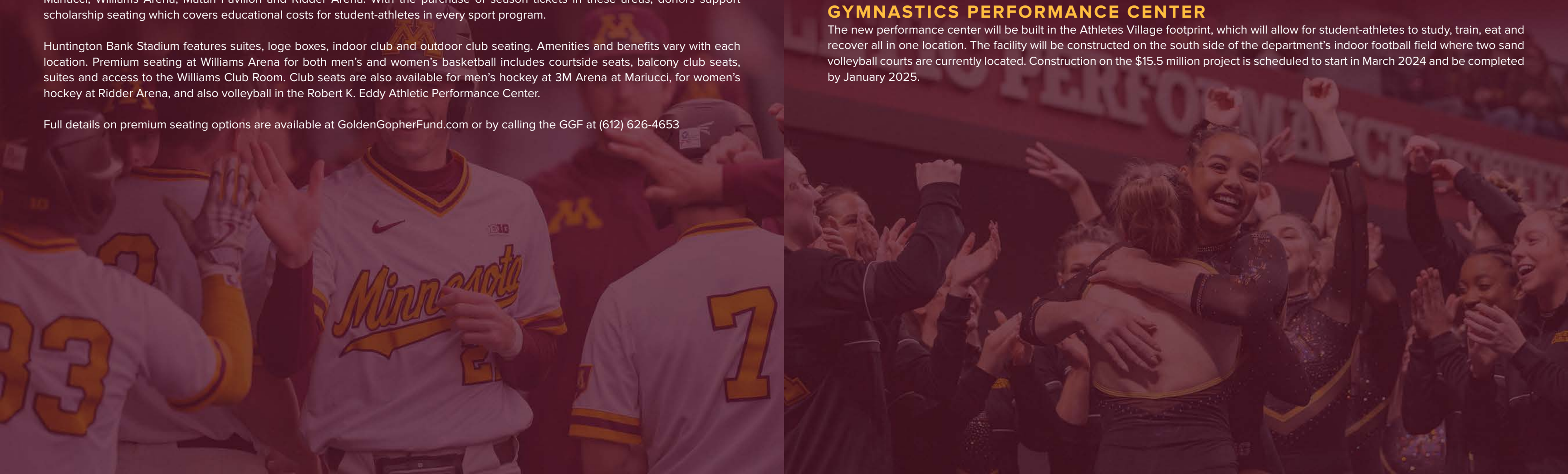
The Ridder Circle is a group of generous individuals who are passionate about and committed to supporting Gopher women's hockey. Donors become part of the inner circle of the program and have access to unique and exclusive engagement opportunities with the coaches and student-athletes. Funds raised are used to equip the team with championship-level resources, ensuring that the program's tradition of excellence continues for years to come.

GOPHER WOMEN'S ATHLETICS

In 1971, University of Minnesota Board of Regents officially recognized Gopher Women's Athletics with a program budget of \$5,000. The department has matured over the years as one that required women athletes to provide their own equipment and meals to one of the best programs in the nation. Fifty years later, Gopher Athletics includes 12 women's teams that hold 7 national titles, 64 conference championships and 16 individual national championships. As we celebrate this significant milestone we ask that you consider supporting the next fifty years of Gopher Women's Athletics excellence.

GYMNASTICS PERFORMANCE CENTER

The new performance center will be built in the Athletes Village footprint, which will allow for student-athletes to study, train, eat and recover all in one location. The facility will be constructed on the south side of the department's indoor football field where two sand volleyball courts are currently located. Construction on the \$15.5 million project is scheduled to start in March 2024 and be completed by January 2025.



GOPHER SCORE PRIORITY SYSTEM

The **Gopher Score** priority ranking system is used to assign a rank to each eligible donor for the process including:

- Season Ticket Upgrades
- Postseason ticket on-sales (Including Bowl Games, Football Conference Championship Game, College Football Playoffs and NCAA Tournaments)
- Priority for single game ticket on-sales
- Gopher Loyalty Program selections

The Gopher Score formula balances the importance of philanthropic giving and season ticket loyalty to Gopher Athletics. Gopher Athletics donors who make an annual gift of \$100 or more and/or current season ticket holders for any sport are given a rank and score. The point criteria for Gopher Score is listed below:

- Current Year Giving to Athletics – 10 points per \$100
- Previous Giving to Athletics – 3 points per \$100
- Consecutive Years of Season Ticket Purchase – 10 points per year (per sport)
- Planned Giving to Athletics – 1 point per \$1,000
- Gopher Athletics Letterwinner – 50 point one-time allocation
- \$5,000 or higher of giving to the University of Minnesota (any giving outside of Athletics i.e. Masonic/ Carlson/ Arboretum) – 150 point one-time allocation
- University of Minnesota Alumni – 25 point one-time allocation
- Student Season Ticket Holder (allocated upon Graduation beginning with 2019-20 Academic Year) – 5 points per sport/per year

GOPHER LOYALTY PROGRAM

The **Gopher Loyalty Program** provides a customized experience in which every stakeholder selects benefits most important to them. We have given fans more choices and more interaction with coaches and student-athletes. The higher the Gopher Score the earlier and more benefits a fan receives. Our base package includes:

- 15% discount at the Golden Gopher Fan Shop
- Gopher Sports Pass for two (2) complimentary tickets to any regular season home games for Gopher baseball, cross country, women's hockey, women's gymnastics, soccer and wrestling (excluding postseason)
- Discount on concessions - \$5 off a purchase of \$25 at our venues
- Numerous hotel discounts
- Exclusive offers from Gopher Athletics Corporate Partners

Based on your Gopher Score you can choose from a variety of events including meeting with coaches or behind the scenes tours of our stadiums and arenas. There are family-friendly events such as Movie Night at Huntington Bank Stadium, Skate with the Gopher hockey teams and Goldy's Kids Club Memberships.

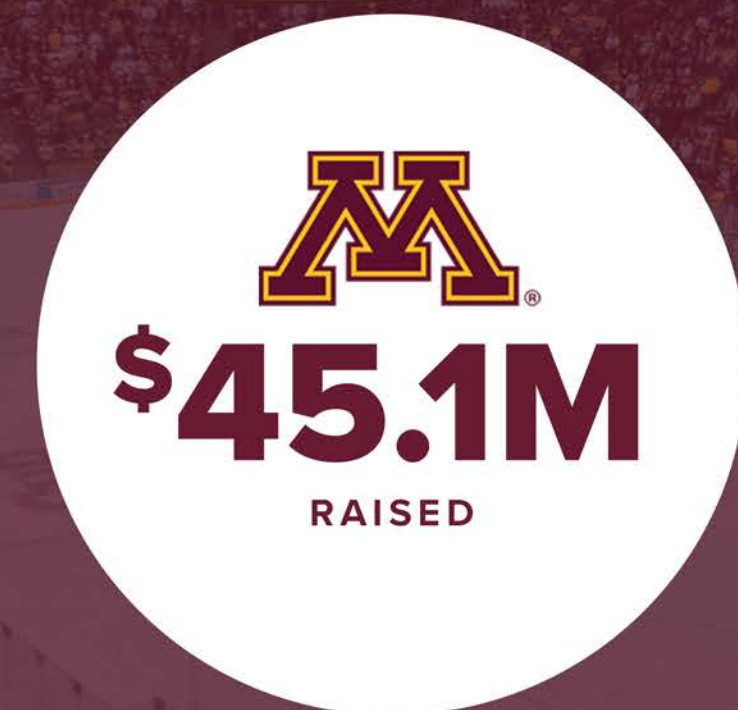
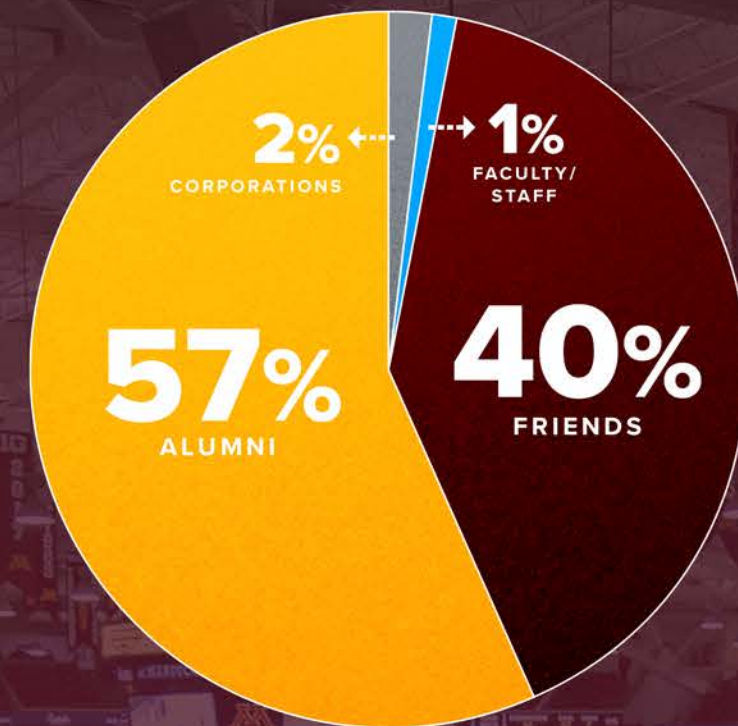
You can also upgrade your tickets at various events, hear from Athletics Director Mark Coyle at exclusive events, high five the Gopher football team as they head out onto the field or practice your golf swing with our golf coaches. These are just a few examples of events donors and season ticket holders can experience through the Gopher Loyalty Program.

For more information go to GoldenGopherFund.com and click "[Loyalty Program](#)."



**PRE-GAME TUNNEL ACCESS IS ONE OF THE MANY
GOPHER LOYALTY PROGRAM BENEFIT OPTIONS**

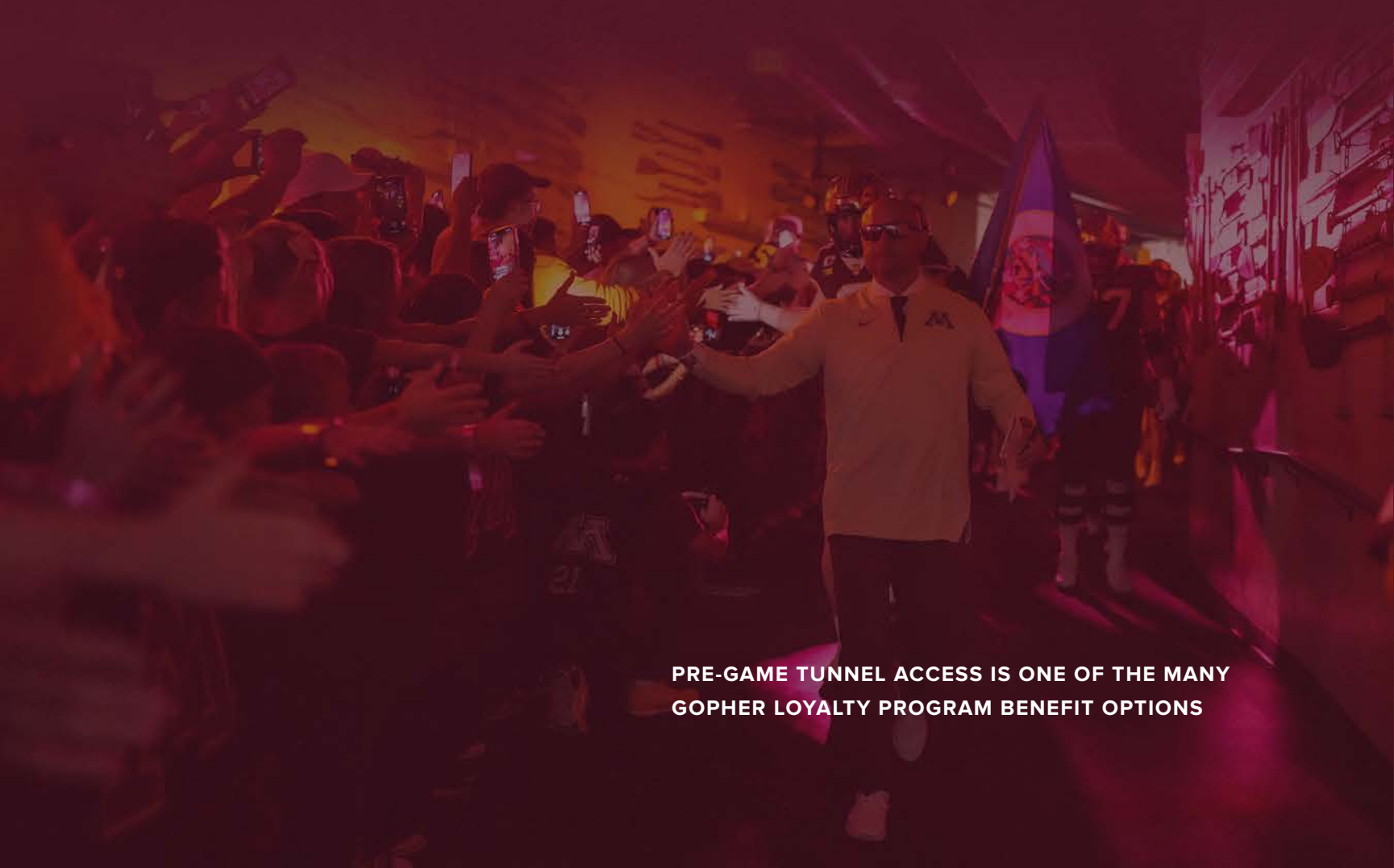
WHO GIVES TO ATHLETICS?



**OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT
GOPHER ATHLETICS:
NAME, IMAGE, LIKENESS (NIL)**

In August 2022, Dinkytown Athletes launched to support University of Minnesota student-athletes and in less than a year the generous support of fans and donors have allowed them to provide student-athletes across a variety of sports with NIL opportunities.

For more information, go to www.DinkytownAthletes.com





DUSTY CLEMENTS
Deputy Athletics Director



RANDY HANDEL
Senior Associate Athletics Director /
Development



JOE QUINN
Assistant Athletic Director /
Development



GRETCHEN AMBROSIER
Senior Director of Development



UNITED ARE WE.



LUKE KASSMEYER
Director of Development



KARLI KRIEWALL
Director of Development



ELLIOT POWELL
Director of Development



KATIE REED
Director of Development

OUR VISION

Champions for Life

OUR MISSION

WIN by intentionally focusing on unique athletic, academic and life-changing experiences propelling the Maroon and Gold to greater heights and career success.



MICHAEL KELLY
Director of Development and
External Engagement



ELIZABETH WALTERS
Director of Development Operations



MARLEE ELDER
Director of Special Events



SAMMIE RUBACK
Assistant Director of Annual Giving

OUR ACTIONS

- Be accurate.
- Be competitive.
- Be honest.
- Be inclusive.
- Be kind.



G O L D E N
G O P H E R
F U N D