

# NEBRASKA

---

---

---

# LIFE SKILLS & ENRICHMENT

2022 - 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**DREAM MORE - DO MORE - BECOME MORE**

---

---

---

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To provide proactive education, fostering the acclimation to the University of Nebraska, promote total person development best preparing student-athletes for life after sport, and serve as a powerful recruiting resource for each team.

## **2022 - 2023 LIFE SKILLS OVERVIEW**

Nebraska Life Skills continued its rich tradition of being one of the premier programs in the nation for student-athlete personal and professional development. The 2022-2023 academic year saw the continuation of the Life Skills 4-year tiered programming at Nebraska which featured a return to exclusively in-person programming for the first time following the Covid-19 pandemic after two years of virtual and hybrid programming. The 4-year tiered programming aims to meet student-athletes where they are in their development based on their academic year and provide them with required opportunities to sharpen and grow as professionals and individuals. In addition to the 4-year tiered programming, student-athletes met with assigned Life Skills staff members individually for personal and professional development meetings dedicated to developing a plan for life after athletics. Individual meeting topics included crafting a resume, the job and internship search process, goal setting, interview techniques, graduate school preparation, and professionalism. Finally, the Life Skills team continued to provide leadership development opportunities through four internal student-athlete centered leadership groups and community outreach opportunities with local schools and organizations.

The Life Skills staff in 2022-2023 consisted of four full-time staff members with over 60 years combined experience in student-athlete development. The staff of four included Executive Associate AD of Life Skills, Keith Zimmer; Director of Education & Engagement Programs, Stacey Burling; PEO Director, Tom Lemke; and Assistant Director of Life Skills, Kate Frazier. The Life Skills staff also utilized part-time assistance on numerous programs and events from the Coordinator for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Philip Carpio.

## **BIG TEN ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Nebraska Baseball Alum Shawn Buchanan continued to serve on the Big Ten Advisory Commission and collaborates with Life Skills to assess the student-athlete experience for all Husker student-athletes. Each Husker student-athlete had the opportunity to complete a comprehensive student-athlete welfare survey with specific questions in place to assess the minority student-athlete experience and provide specific feedback to the Big Ten regarding how to best manage and enhance the Division I college student-athlete experience. Additionally, Shawn presents annually to the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) and the entire student-athlete population at the beginning of the year all student-athlete meeting.

# LIFE SKILLS STAFF

DEVELOPMENT - SERVICE - LEADERSHIP



**KEITH ZIMMER**

*Executive Associate AD  
Life Skills*

kzimmer@huskers.com  
(402) 472-4616

*SPORT RESPONSIBILITIES:*  
Football, Rifle, Softball, Men's  
Tennis, Women's Tennis,  
Swimming and Diving,  
Volleyball



**STACEY BURLING**

*Director of Education  
& Engagement Programs*

sburling@huskers.com  
(402) 472-4626

*SPORT RESPONSIBILITIES:*  
Men's Basketball, Bowling,  
Soccer, Football, Men's Golf,  
Women's Golf



**KATE FRAZIER**

*Assistant Director of Life Skills*

kfrazier@huskers.com  
(402) 472-7900

*SPORT RESPONSIBILITIES:*  
Women's Basketball, Men's Cross  
Country, Women's Cross Country,  
Football, Men's Track and Field,  
Women's Track and Field



**TOM LEMKE**

*Assistant Director of Life Skills  
& PEO Director*

tlemke@huskers.com  
(402) 472-2167

*SPORT RESPONSIBILITIES:*  
Baseball, Football, Men's  
Gymnastics, Women's  
Gymnastics, Wrestling



**PHILIP CARPIO**

*Coordinator of Diversity, Equity  
& Inclusion/Life Skills*

pcarpio@huskers.com  
(402) 472-4638

# 4-YEAR TIERED PROGRAMMING

**DEVELOPMENT - SERVICE - LEADERSHIP**

## HUSKER ADVANTAGE

A total of 61 first-year Huskers during summer bridge attended the Husker Advantage program that provides student-athletes an introduction to tools and resources meant to maximize their overall student-athlete experience with regards to NIL, entrepreneurship, and career development. Subsequent Husker Advantage sessions were offered at the beginning of each semester, which were attended by 111 student-athletes. Along with education about the NIL policy for Nebraska Athletics, additional topics covered in the Husker Advantage sessions included a personal strengths assessment, building a personal brand, communication, networking, career exploration, and financial literacy.



## HUSKER HEROES

For the 12th year, Life Skills along with the Organizations Networking for Everyone with Special Needs hosted the Husker Heroes outreach in Memorial Stadium on September 11th. Required for all 1st year student-athletes as part of the 4-year tiered development programming, Husker Heroes is a specially designed event for individuals with disabilities and their families to interact and play games with Husker student-athletes. The 2022 event hosted over 800 participants from all over the state of Nebraska and annually serves as an introduction to the culture of service at Nebraska for student-athletes who participate. A total of 101 Husker student-athletes were in attendance to host sport related stations, interact with attendees, sign autographs, and pose for pictures.



The Moving Off Campus Financial Seminar on February 13th attended by 109 first-year student-athletes covered valuable financial information to consider when preparing to move off campus. Members of the Nebraska Council on Economic Education, Jennifer Davidson and Lindsay Tillinghast, led the workshop covering topics like budgeting for rent, bills, insurance, and setting money aside for fun activities as well. Attendees had the opportunity to put what they learned into practice by participating in a budgeting activity based on unique scenarios presented by the guest speakers.

## MOVING OFF CAMPUS SEMINAR

## FINANCIAL SEMINAR SERIES

Through a partnership with the Nebraska Council on Economic Education, the Life Skills team offered five optional workshops throughout the academic year each focused on different essential topics to help student-athletes grow their knowledge of personal finance. Topics covered included building a credit history, credit cards and loans, insurance, taxes, and investing. The five workshops were attended by a total of 119 student-athletes from various Husker teams.

# NETWORKING NIGHT

Held on September 26th, 126 second-year student-athletes participated in Husker Networking Night which began with a keynote address from 1994 national champion, Terry Connealy. Following Connealy's message, attendees participated in a speed networking segment where small groups of student-athletes were matched with a professional in a career industry of interest. During this time, student-athletes had the opportunity to practice their elevator pitch, ask questions, and learn about networking strategies from the 37 professional guests in attendance, which included 18 Husker letterwinners.

# LEADERSHIP & INVOLVEMENT FAIR

Second-year student-athletes gathered in Memorial Stadium on February 27th for the Leadership and Involvement Fair to connect with local organizations for volunteer opportunities and leadership development opportunities. The 111 student-athletes in attendance heard from a panel of current student-athletes and graduates including wrestling alum Ian Ousley, swimming & diving student-athlete Makesyn Ronquillio, and track & field student-athlete Passmore Mudundulu, who spoke about the ways they have benefited from being involved on campus and in the community. Attendees then had the opportunity to meet and learn from 21 campus, community, and athletic department organizations eager to work with Huskers.



# CAREER FAIR

Husker student-athletes assembled in the West Stadium Club on February 20th for the 31st Annual Husker Student-Athlete Career Fair. In total, 192 student-athletes attended the event which featured 36 companies with representatives from the Lincoln and Omaha area. Many of the companies in attendance also have a presence at the national level for student-athletes who wish to seek employment outside of Nebraska following graduation. The Husker Student-Athlete Career Fair, which is the longest running four-year tiered program hosted by the Life Skills department, annually aims to connect 3rd-6th year student-athletes with employers in their area of interest for internship and full-time job opportunities.

The Financial Forum held on October 11th was attended by 105 third-year Huskers who heard from keynote speaker, Jason Peplinski. Peplinski, a financial advisor from local firm FP Wealth Management, guided attendees through a presentation aimed to educate on important financial topics worth considering as student-athletes begin to think about their transition away from athletics. Topics covered throughout the evening included the time value of money, debt management, retirement planning, housing cost considerations, and estate planning.

# FINANCIAL FORUM

On March 8th, 12 student-athletes considering a career in healthcare attended the Healthcare Career Prep Event in Memorial Stadium. Attendees heard a panel consisting of five professionals and one current student-athlete, each with a different expertise in healthcare. Topics discussed during the event included the overall application and admissions process, advice on letters of recommendation, the importance of job shadowing, and volunteer opportunities on applications, preparing for interviews, opportunities for scholarships and healthcare careers with branches of the military, and the future of healthcare professions. Panel members consisted of Karna Dam from RTG Medical, Tami Dolphens from Creighton Medical School, Tom Applegat from the Nebraska Heart Hospital, Elisa Heide from the UNL Explore Center, Sgt Jorge Nevarez from the United States Air Force, and swimming & diving student-athlete Kaitlyn Barth.

# HEALTHCARE CAREER PREP EVENT



# ETIQUETTE DINNER

On Sunday, October 23rd Husker Life Skills hosted their annual student-athlete Etiquette Dinner attended by 94 fourth, fifth and sixth-year student-athletes at Memorial Stadium and was facilitated by Assistant Dean of Academic and Career Development, Rachel Larson, and the Assistant Director of Talent Acquisition for the University of Nebraska Foundation Lauren Stehlik. The Etiquette Dinner provided student-athletes with a catered meal that allowed them to apply the knowledge they learned throughout the evening. Student-athletes were instructed throughout the meal on various topics such as the proper way to use their napkin, utensils, and conversational etiquette.



The final event of the 4-year tired programming at Nebraska is the Life After Sport Seminar which is hosted twice each year. A total of 14 student-athletes attended the Fall seminar and 39 attended the Spring seminar. Attendees at the fall seminar heard from Husker softball alum and keynote speaker Mattie Fowler-Burkhardt about her transition away from athletics. The fall session also featured a panel of guest speakers covering diverse topics each with significant connections to the transition away from athletics. Additional speakers and topics included Lisa Kopecky who addressed nutrition and physical well-being, Nedu Izuegbunam who focused on mental health, Sara Reyes from Northwestern Mutual who provided tips on managing finances, PEO Director Tom Lemke, and Executive Associate AD, Keith Zimmer, who led the group in a conversation about career development and transferable skills. The spring session was led by Jonathan Orr from Athlete Transition Services who partnered with the United States Marine Corps to deliver the Next Season presentation, focusing on critical topics that are essential to an individual's transition away from athletics.

# LIFE AFTER SPORT SEMINAR

## INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT

The Life Skills staff facilitated over 450 individual student-athlete meetings during the 2022-2023 academic year. Goals of the meetings were to continue developing positive rapport, learning about the student-athlete's background and providing specialized assistance related to career development, personal growth, involvement and professional school aspirations. Additionally, Life Skills staff completed nearly 400 presentations for prospective student-athletes during the recruitment process.

## POST-ELIGIBILITY OPPORTUNITIES

DEVELOPMENT - SERVICE - LEADERSHIP

Eligible student-athlete alumni continued to take advantage of the Husker Post-Eligibility Opportunities (PEO) Program during 2022-2023. Overall, 77 Husker alumni took advantage of the PEO program for internship (33), graduate school (38), study abroad (4), and entrepreneur (2) experiences during the 2022-2023 academic year and a total of \$529,269 was awarded, bringing the 7-year total to \$2,803,427 in aid awarded through the PEO program.

A total of 140 current student-athletes in their 3rd-6th year also attended a PEO Workshop to learn about the details of the first-of-its kind PEO program. Workshop attendees learned the requirements for the PEO program, different options to use the scholarship, and had a chance to ask questions about PEO with PEO Director, Tom Lemke.

**\$529,269**

2022 - 2023 TOTAL

**\$2,803,427**

7-Year TOTAL



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

DEVELOPMENT - **SERVICE** - LEADERSHIP

**2,500 EVENTS**  
**25,000 SERVED**

Husker student-athletes completed over 2,500 different community outreach events during the academic year including but not limited to retirement home visits, elementary school fun nights, book readings, Boo at the Zoo, food drives, clothing drives, donor events, Dance Marathon, People's City Mission & PCM Help Center, daycare visits, Center for People in Need, Shop With a Jock, and hospital visits. Overall, over 25,000 community members were positively impacted by Nebraska student-athletes through outreach events.



## LIL RED LETTERS

25 student-athletes took part in the Lil Red Letters pen pal program. Through a partnership with Hearts for Healing, each Husker was matched with a child from a military family and exchanged monthly letters throughout the academic year.



## LIFE SKILLS SPORTSMANSHIP PEP RALLY

Over 2,000 elementary and middle school students from across the state of Nebraska attended the Life Skills Pep Rally on November 7th prior to the women's basketball game against Omaha. The emcee for the pep rally was Huskers Radio Network's Jessica Coody who helped provide a fun atmosphere for all in attendance. Students heard from a number of speakers on the importance of sportsmanship, setting goals, teamwork, and anti-bullying. Featured speakers included head women's basketball coach, Amy Williams, Maddie Krull and Jaz Shelley from women's basketball, Travis Vokolek from football, Passmore Mudundulu and Mikey Hoffer from track & field, Lexi Rodriguez and Ally Batenhorst from volleyball, and McKinley Malecha and Ava Bredwell from softball. The morning was capped off by a performance from the Champions Forever Spintacular Basketball Show, who later performed at halftime of the game.



## AMERICAN EDUCATION

Over 100 student-athletes contributed as guest speakers at 28 different schools speaking on the importance of hard work in the classroom during week long celebrations to over 3,000 students.



## SCHOOL IS COOL

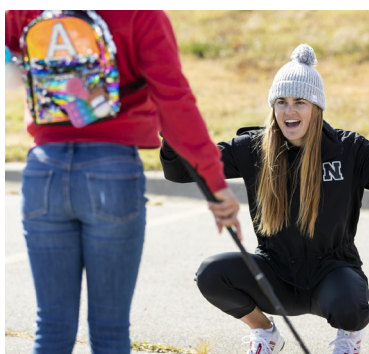
## LINK-N-LEADERS

Over 200 third through sixth grade LPS students were recognized by their teachers for their leadership qualities and received an invite to attend the Link-N-Leaders event on April 16th. Link-N-Leaders features activities focused around the 5 core values of the Nebraska Athletic Department (Integrity, Trust, Respect, Teamwork, and Loyalty) and a chance to interact with Husker student-athletes.



## MORE IS POSSIBLE RALLY

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Title IX, Nebraska Athletics held the More Is Possible Rally on October 8th hosted by all Husker women's teams to celebrate girls and women in sports and the successes of our teams. Each Husker women's team hosted a booth featuring an activity related to their sport that community members could participate in before the Softball team's fall scrimmage that afternoon.



## 'SKERS WHO SERVE

'Skers Who Serve featured 32 team liaisons in its inaugural year who were tasked with bridging the gap between the Life Skills staff and the student-athlete population regarding community service opportunities offered throughout the year. Each liaison was responsible for communicating service opportunities with their teammates and recruiting individuals to participate in community outreach events.

# NEBRASKA FOOTBALL ROAD RACE

The 10th annual Nebraska Football Road Race was held on July 17th and saw approximately 760 runners participate. Featuring a mile-long Fun Run and a 5K race, the Nebraska Football Road Race is an annual effort to raise awareness and funding for pediatric brain cancer research. The 2022 Road Race raised over \$25,000 bringing the 10-year total to over \$300,000 raised for research efforts.



# NEBRASKA FOOTBALL DAY OF SERVICE

On January 19th, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, all members of the Husker football team participated in a day of service at local organizations around the city of Lincoln. Team members were split into five separate groups who assisted with projects at the Lincoln Food Bank, People's City Mission, PCM Help Center, Center for People in Need, and the Bob Devaney Sports Complex.



# NOFILTER SERVICE ABROAD

DEVELOPMENT - **SERVICE** - LEADERSHIP

20 student-athletes from 13 different Husker teams were selected to represent Nebraska Athletics on the NoFilter Service Abroad trip to Panama in May through a partnership with the Give and Surf non-profit organization. Participants built a playground, completed facilities upgrades, and were active in after school programs at a local school while culturally immersing themselves in the Panamanian culture.



# RECOGNITION

DEVELOPMENT - **SERVICE** - LEADERSHIP



The 33rd annual A Night at the Lied celebration was held on April 23rd at the Lied Center for Performing Arts on the campus of UNL to recognize outstanding performances in competition, the classroom and community outreach over the previous calendar year. Life Skills annually recognizes student-athletes for their commitment to community outreach by awarding student-athletes with the Heart & Soul Award, the Sam Foltz 27 HERO Leadership Award, and recognition of the Tom Osborne and Brook Berringer Citizenship Teams.

## HEART AND SOUL AWARD

4 student-athletes were presented with the Heart & Soul Award, the most prestigious individual honor given out by Life Skills to Seniors who have consistently gone above and beyond to make an impact on campus and in the community since their first day as a Husker.

### 2023 RECIPIENTS

Nicklin Hames, Volleyball      Mikey Hoffer, T&F  
 Passmore Mudundulu, T&F      Megan Whittaker, Golf

## CITIZENSHIP TEAMS

# 344

**TOM OSBORNE  
CITIZENSHIP TEAM**

All student-athletes who completed at least 6 volunteer service projects throughout the year which impacted over 25,000 Nebraskans.

# 65

**BROOK BERRINGER  
CITIZENSHIP TEAM**

Football student-athletes who completed at least 6 volunteer service projects throughout the year.

## SAM FOLTZ 27 HERO LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Sam Foltz 27 HERO Leadership Award, named in honor of late Husker punter Sam Foltz, awards student-athlete leaders from each sport. The criteria for the HERO Award include exceptional leadership, consistent and dedicated community service, and positive influence on the team. Nominees are identified by the Life Skills staff with approval from the Academic staff and head coaches.

Isabel Adrover Gallego, Women's Tennis  
 Bekka Allick, Volleyball  
 Kaitlyn Barth, Swimming & Diving  
 Michael Booker, Football  
 Efr Cervantes, Baseball  
 Crystal Elliott, Bowling  
 Madelynn Erickson, Rifle  
 Mya Felder, Softball  
 Mikai Gbayer, Football

Genesis Gibson, Women's Gymnastics  
 John Goodwin, Football  
 Sam Griesel, Men's Basketball  
 Kolby Heinerikson, Men's Track & Field  
 Roni Hietaranta, Men's Tennis  
 Chris Hiser, Men's Gymnastics  
 Clayton Keys, Men's Track & Field  
 Maddie Krull, Women's Basketball  
 Berkeley Livingston, Swimming & Diving

Brynna McQuillen, Women's Cross Country  
 Abbey Newlun, Softball  
 Marissa Popoola, Soccer  
 Reagan Raabe, Soccer  
 Jenna Rogers, Women's Track & Field  
 Kathryn Thaler, Women's Gymnastics  
 Michaela Vavrova, Women's Golf  
 Derrick Walker, Men's Basketball  
 Nieve Walsh, Women's Track & Field

# LEADERSHIP GROUPS

DEVELOPMENT - SERVICE - LEADERSHIP



## INNER CIRCLE

The Inner Circle emerging leader group featured 51 members that explored various leadership traits and professional development topics in eight monthly meetings featuring prominent guest speakers. The meetings culminated with the Inner Circle Career Combine where members networked and conducted mock interviews with 21 area professionals. Members of Inner Circle were nominated by coaches, academic counselors, and Life Skills staff members to apply for membership.

SOCIAL JUSTICE OFFICER	VICE PRESIDENT	PRESIDENT	BIG TEN REPRESENTATIVE	SECRETARY
				
SADIO FENNER <small>CROSS COUNTRY</small>	MADESYN RONQUILLIO <small>SWIM &amp; DIVE</small>	SAM PHILLIPS <small>GYMNASTICS</small>	MICAYLON MOORE <small>TRACK &amp; FIELD</small>	MADDY LUEGER <small>TRACK &amp; FIELD</small>



The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) is the voice of the student-athletes and featured 46 representatives and five officers in 2022-2023, with all sports being represented. SAAC completed eight meetings during the academic year and hosted its second straight Student-Athlete Formal event among other initiatives. The SAAC executive team featured Sam Phillips (President, Gymnastics), Madesyn Ronquillio (Vice President, Swimming & Diving), Micaylon Moore (Big Ten Representative, Track & Field), Maddy Lueger (Secretary, Track & Field), and Sadio Fenner (Social Justice Officer, Cross Country).

- MAJOR INITIATIVES**
- STUDENT-ATHLETE FORMAL
  - SAAC CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT
  - DONOR APPRECIATION LUNCHEON
  - STAFF APPRECIATION LUNCHEON
  - DONOR THANK YOU LETTERS
  - LINK-N-LEADERS
  - SPRING BREAK BOOK DRIVE
  - PEOPLE'S CITY MISSION CLOTHING DRIVE
  - HUSKER PANTRY FOOD DRIVE
  - TREV TALKS



N-Volved was comprised of 43 student-athletes from all sports in its fifth year of existence. The group is a discussion-based, social climate leadership group which provides student-athletes a safe space to discuss and explore current events and have difficult conversations. The group met once a month throughout the academic year for a total of eight meetings led exclusively by members within the group.



**DREAM MORE - DO MORE - BECOME MORE**