

The emergence and growth of adaptive intercollegiate athletics is the reason I am in my current position. This is not to say that I am in the position because it became available; wheelchair basketball was a big part of my pursuit of a degree. I specifically chose to attend UW-Whitewater because of the option for me to compete on the Wheelchair Basketball team. The Wheelchair Athletics program played a larger role than just giving me a place to play wheelchair basketball and earn a degree. As a young athlete with a disability, I did not know about the existence of adaptive athletics until I was invited to attend an adaptive sports camp at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. I consider this one of the most important events in my life because of the opportunities it ultimately provided me. As the Director of Wheelchair Athletics, I take great pride in continuing to provide life changing and eye opening experiences to other young athletes that are in a similar situation.

Our program continues to teach student-athletes the skills that are required beyond their time on our campus. The lessons that are learned from their involvement with a team go well beyond the standard lessons taught through sports. The athletes in our program learn communication skills, task management skills and develop an understanding of working with a team which all translates to assets in the job market. There are a large percentage of student-athletes that successfully complete a degree because of their involvement in wheelchair basketball. Wheelchair basketball provides discipline, a support group and the motivation to stay focused on completing the academic challenges of attending an institution of higher education. It would be great to provide every individual that is seeking a degree, while being part of a wheelchair basketball team, the opportunity to choose a university that best suits their needs. Every university that commits to help with this process is a huge step towards that goal. I would be happy to help in any way that I can to grow the program at your university. This is an important step in helping student-athletes move past their disability and focus on their ability. Sincerely,

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