Western’s two athletic alumni chapters, The W Club and the Women’s Athletic Alumnae (WAA), formally voted at a meeting on May 2, 2015 to unify as one organization of Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni. A year later, on May 7, 2016, we finalized 2.5 years of transition efforts at an Annual General Meeting, and are excited about the future of Athletic Alumni activity for our Mustangs.

For years the Mustangs have had two official alumni groups, the W Club representing male athletic alumni and the WAA representing the women. The W Club was actually the first recognized chapter of the University’s Alumni Association, founded in 1957, while the WAA formed in 1987. While the two organizations have traditionally operated as separate entities, although have worked together on various initiatives, the board members of both groups determined that they could do more as one organization and have been working diligently for more than two years to make the transition and bring us to today.

Through this transition effort, we have operated as Co-Presidents with a collective spirit. We can say emphatically, we are delighted to be involved with the movement toward the significant and historic union of the WAA and the W Club. Separately our organizations have worked effectively over many years in support of Western Athletics and Athletic Alumni events. The union and strategic planning within our new organization will allow us to combine our resources and our passion as Mustangs, to continue our work and to expand our initiatives.

We look forward to the exciting and challenging times ahead, working together with the Alumni Association, Alumni Relations and Athletics to continue our traditions, set new courses and extend our important engagement with our athletic alumni.

We would like to thank our committed volunteer directors, committee members, and those that have engaged with us over the past two years. The board continues to work on many ideas discussed at a busy strategic planning session held with a diverse range of athletic alumni. From this session and our time in transition, a number of strategic priorities have been created, calling for greater engagement of the passion and talents of the athletic alumni community and the formation of working committees, primarily around the themes of: Leadership and Governance, Traditions such as the Hall of Fame and Metras Museum, Events & Programming, and our Sport-Specific Liaisons and athletic alumni communities.

We look forward to connecting with you – please be in touch and remain purple and proud!

Guy Zink,
Co-President 2014-16, President 2016-2018
BA ’74, BEd ’75 & Mustangs Wrestling Alumnus

Mary Riezebos
Co-President 2014-16, Past President 2016-17
BA ’74, BA ’75, MA ’80 & Mustangs Basketball & Track and Field Alumna, former Soccer Coach

Thérèse Quigley
BA ’74 (Phys Ed), BEd ’75 Director, Sports & Recreation Services; Mustangs Volleyball Player 1971-75

“Bringing together both the W Club and the WAA provides huge benefits not only to our alumni, but also to our current student-athletes. Combining the resources, expertise, and passion of these two groups will allow us to expand our engagement efforts with alumni around the world, and also enhance the student-athlete experience.”
Engaging Athletic Alumni

When you graduated from Western, you automatically became a member of the Western Alumni Association – joining 278,572 of your fellow purple and proud Western alumni living in more than 150 countries around the world.

As a former Western Mustang, you are part of an elite community of 13,144 living athletic alumni, spanning the globe in 54 identified countries. You, along with former Mustangs coaches and managers, are a member of the Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni chapter.

The work of the Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni is governed by a Constitution, the creation and amendments of which was the first big task of the Governance and Nominating Committee. Over the past two years, the committee recommended renewed policies, bylaws, and ultimately the establishment and maintenance of a guiding constitutional document. In addition, a full slate of Directors, Advisors, Committee Chairs, and Honourary Officers was brought forward to the latest Annual General Meeting.

In January 2015, close to 40 athletic alumni returned to campus for a full day strategic planning retreat hosted by Western Athletics, Western Alumni, and the transitioning W Club and WAA. It was facilitated by Professor Nicole Haggerty at the Ivey Business School, who is also an officer of the Ivey Alumni Network. The day led to the emergence of some key themes and strategic priorities for the Athletic Alumni to focus on.

Each of these initiatives assures solid board structure and practice in place for the years ahead. Thanks are extended to the dedication of our board members over the past two years in the transition efforts, including our outgoing directors Judy Alasczkiewicz, Jamie Bone, Helena Smeenk Pritchard, David Edwards, Ted Hessel, Helen Luckman, Nancy O’Shea, Bob Pearson, and Mustang Athlete Student Council President Sara Matovic.

Update your information
alumni.westernu.ca/update

Stay Connected

We are working to foster a relevant and meaningful lifelong connection amongst fellow Mustangs and with Western Athletics and the University. It is important to stay connected and informed, and important for us to know where you are, and how to reach you. A strong, vibrant – and connected – alumni network contributes to the growth and prestige of Western’s athletic programs and traditions. Our work and objectives can only be truly fulfilled by engaging with you.

Currently, the University has some address or contact information for 75.8% of the athletic alumni population. We only have 50.8% of the population with an e-mail address in the central record. Stay informed, stay involved, and stay invested. We need your participation – and we need your help to improve this!

2016-17 Board of Directors, Western Mustangs Athletics Alumni Association

Guy Zink, BA’74, BEd’75, President
Mary Riezebos, BA’74, BA’75, MA’80,
Past President & Museum Chair
Marty Day, HBA’80, Finance Co-Chair
Rick Scarborough, BA’76, BEd’78, Finance Co-Chair
Patricia Kitchen, BA’74, BEd’75, MA’77, Hall of Fame Co-Chair
Bill McDonnell, BA’75, BEd’76, Hall of Fame Co-Chair
Rick Odegard, BA’69, Governance Chair
Karen Danylchuk, MA’81
William (Bill) Salter, BA’58
Angela Schneider, BA’82, MA’85, MA’87, PhD’93
Janet Takahashi, BA’79, BEd’80
Natascha Wesch, MSc’98, PhD’08, MA’15

Advisory Officers

David Edwards, BA’74, BEd’75
Helen Luckman, MEd’82, Programs & Events Chair
Glenn Yonemitsu, BA’85, MBA’89

Honorary Officers

Judy Alasczkiewicz, BA’75, MA’80
Ted Hessel, BA’58, BA’67
Helen Luckman, MEd’82
Bob Pearson, BA’63
Ron Potter
Mike Sheffar, BA’89
Helena Smeenk Pritchard, BA’73

Staff Partners

Therese Quigley, BA’75, BEd’77, Director Sports & Recreation Services
Gareth Cunningham, Director External Engagement Alumni Relations
WESTERN MUSTANGS ATHLETIC POPULATION

By Sport:
- Rowing: 1,833
- Football: 1,675
- Rugby: 1,077
- Swimming: 808
- Soccer: 793
- Basketball: 686
- Hockey: 635
- Volleyball: 543
- Fencing: 481
- Squash: 390
- Wrestling: 539
- All other sports: 2,121

By Geography:
- USA: 5.4%
- Canada: 91.7%
- Rest of the World: 2.8%
ETIC ALUMNI POPULATION
– By Geography –

South Western Ontario

- Toronto 34.5%
- London 21.7%
- Hamilton 4.8%
- Kitchener 6.3%

Update your information
alumni.westernu.ca/update
Honouring Our Past:
Western Mustangs Traditions of Excellence

The Western Mustangs Sports Hall of Fame

The W Club Hall of Fame was established as a way to recognize male athletes and builders who made outstanding contributions to Western Athletics. The Women’s Athletic Alumnae began the same recognition for outstanding female contributions with the Elfrida Berzins Awards. The formation of the unified Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni chapter prompted a decision to combine these two awards to form The Western Mustangs Sports Hall of Fame.

Along with this significant change, the Hall of Fame Committee, co-chaired by Patricia Kitchen and Bill McDonnell, worked to redefine and strengthen the induction criteria and expand and broaden the nomination process. Significant conversations and plans are underway for the future Hall of Fame inductions and displays at Alumni Hall.

The Western Mustangs Sports Hall of Fame honours outstanding contributions to Western Mustangs Athletics in three categories:

• Athlete
• Builder
• Builder/Athlete

The inductions for 2016 will take place as part of the Alumni Awards of Merit Event on September 30th, 2016 during Reunion Weekend. In addition to the new class of inductees, the committee began a process of extending complimentary invitations to past inductees celebrating 10, 20, and 30 year milestones of their induction date. For more information: http://www.alumni.westernu.ca/connect/awards/athletic-alumni-recognition.html

2015 Inductees:
Sean Basilio, BA ’94
Jerry Gonser (Builder)
Christian Heffernan, BA ’04, Bed ’08
Steve McCullough, HBA ’90
Marnie Rolt (Simpson), BA’00, MCl.Sc’02
Vickie Croley, MEd’87
Laurie Danowski, BA’88
Beth Johnston, BSc’74

2016 Inductees:
Craig Boydell (Builder)
Jim Grozelle
Cathy Lund
Janet Thompson (MacKay)
Andy Fantuz
Jennifer Kryszak
Sara Nathanson
Andy Van Ruyven
The John P. Metras Museum

The John P. Metras Sports Museum was founded in 1984 by the ‘W’ Club. Situated at the front of Alumni Hall in Room 100, the museum served to make visible what had long been the pride and joy of students and staff at Western: the university’s legacy of excellence in athletics. The museum was first managed by volunteer curator, Mustangs coach Dutch Decker, teaming up with Bob Gage of the London Free Press to establish a collection of photographs and artifacts, many donated by alumni and staff, with an array of financial contributions. Bob Gage took over in the 1980s, and carried on in that role through the new millennium.

When Bob passed away in 2009, he bestowed over $1 million to Western Athletics, with a large portion of that money going to the museum to ensure that Western’s athletic legacy would continue to be preserved. That task fell to Ted Hessel (BA ‘58, BEd ’69), a close friend of Gage’s and a long-time volunteer with the ‘W’ Club and Honourary Member of the Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni. Over his tenure as curator, Hessel has overseen a significant expansion of the museum’s collection, beginning with the opening of the museum’s workroom in Thames Hall that allowed him to move his large collection of memorabilia from his basement to campus. Along with his work of creating exhibits and entertaining visitors, Ted has made it his personal mission to collect and digitize all of Western’s team photographs– an ambitious task that has required him to enlist the help of countless hard-working individuals, including many from the [former] Women’s Athletic Alumnae.

A John P. Metras Museum Committee was established by the Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni. One of the first initiatives of the committee was the decision to hire a part-time curator, Nick Komarnitsky - the first time that the curator is a paid position. During the past nine months, Nick has fully developed the museum’s website and continued work on team photos and artifacts. Of significant importance is the work now being conducted to update the Museum’s display of the Western Mustangs Sports Hall of Fame, including all past inductees and award winners. There will be a reception this Fall 2016 to mark the occasion of launching the new display.

We invite you to visit the website to learn more of 100+ years of Mustangs Athletics:
www.metrasmuseum.ca
The Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni Programs & Events Committee annually looks at athletic alumni engagement opportunities to bring together our Mustangs in support of Mustangs Athletics and one another and further the lifelong bond established through our time with Western athletics. Additionally, the committee will look at the team-specific opportunities and determine the best ways the athletic alumni chapter can offer assistance, and celebrate athletic alumni opportunities.

The Extraordinary Mustangs Gala

On May 5, 2016, The Board of the Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni was proud to support and be represented at The Extraordinary Mustangs Gala, a Toronto-based event that honoured the first two recipients of the Mustangs Award of Excellence: Scott Russell, BA’80, BEd’81, MA’85, Olympic broadcaster and sports journalist; and Marnie McBean, O.C., BA’97, LLD’03, three-time Olympic rowing champion, in an evening dedicated to the support of Mustangs Athletics.

3rd Annual Mustangs Ring Ceremony

This past year, we aligned our Annual General Meeting to coincide with the 3rd installment of an important new tradition for graduating athletes. 136 graduating athletes qualified to receive a Mustangs Ring, and the ring was passed to each graduating athlete and newest member of the Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni from a former Mustang!

52nd Annual Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni Golf Tournament

Thurs., Aug. 18, 2016 - 1pm – 8pm
Forest City National Golf Course, London ON

Join us at the 52nd Annual Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni Golf Tournament, presented by TD Insurance Meloche Monnex – a great day of fun, golf, and prizes. Proceeds from the tournament will be directed back to Mustangs student-athletes as scholarship opportunities.

Registration fee is $150 per golfer, and includes:
18 holes of championship golf, BBQ lunch, driving range & practice facilities, buffet dinner, prizes & more. Each varsity team that has 12 golfers representing them will automatically receive $1,000 towards a student athletic scholarship – upon registration, please indicate the team your entry is supporting.

We hope to see you there!
http://www.westernconnect.ca/site/Calendar?view=Detail&id=132908

Alumni Awards of Merit Dinner

Each Fall, the Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni partner with Alumni Relations to honour and induct the latest class into the Western Mustangs Sports Hall of Fame. Join us September 30th, 2016

http://www.westernconnect.ca/site/Calendar?view=Detail&id=133030

Future Events & Program Opportunities:

The best way to stay informed and involved is to ensure we have your current contact information and that you keep up-to-date with events at: alumni.westernu.ca/connect/events/
Alumni Support for Mustang Athletics

The Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni chapter exists to foster a lifelong engagement of Western’s athletic alumni and encourage us to support and contribute to the growth and prestige of the University’s athletic programs and traditions. Our own work is supported through an endowment fund, while Western is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our high performance teams are nationally competitive each and every year.

Support for the Next Generation of Mustangs

The ability for our student-athletes and coaches to compete at a high level and capture OUA and CIS championships takes dedication, practice, teamwork, and ongoing financial investment. We aim for sustainable efforts that will enhance the university’s ability to recruit and retain outstanding coaches and be the destination of choice for the nation’s best and brightest student-athletes.

Scholarships for Student Athletes

Starting in the 2016-17 season, varsity teams will be able to award a maximum of $4,500 per year to eligible student-athletes. Mustangs Athletics goal is to raise $4.8 million in support of Mustang student-athletes.

Investment in Our Coaches

In much the same way that an endowed chair supports a university professor and/or program, endowed coaching positions within Mustangs athletics will help us attract and retain high calibre coaches to lead our student-athletes and enhance the quality of our programs. We have set an ambitious goal of $12.5 million to create endowed and term-funded coaching positions.

Adopt A Mustang Program

Great athletic programs rely on a team of supporters. The Adopt A Mustang program helps Western attract exceptional student-athletes, giving them opportunities to learn from the best coaches, train in world-class facilities, and compete at the highest levels each and every year. To learn more, visit: westernconnect.ca/aam

To learn more, please contact:

Terra Ahrens
Director of Development, Sports & Recreation
e. tahrens@uwo.ca
t. 519.661.2111 x 85568

Kenji Saito
Development Officer – Leadership Giving
e. ksaito5@uwo.ca
t. 519.661.2111 ext. 82118

Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni Legacy Fund

Over the past year, the Board worked on a new agreement to combine the historical W Club Endowment, the W Club General Fund, and the Women’s Athletic Alumnae Endowment. The new combined endowment opening balance this past year was approximately $560,000, which generates approximately $21,000 annually to support the activities of the Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni in the engagement of athletic alumni and support to other athletics related needs and priorities.

Highlights of 2015-16 Expenditures and Support from the Fund:

Student Athlete Support
$5,000 - Student Athletic Financial Aid support at the Chapter Golf Tournament
$2,000 – FISU Games support to qualifying athletes
$500 – Championship Support

Team Athletic Alumni Functions
$2,500 - entries and sponsorship of team golf tournaments
$1,500 – table for Football Wall of Champions Event

Sports & Recreation Services Priorities
$2,500 – table for the Extraordinary Mustangs Gala
$3,000 – Sponsorship of the 3rd Annual Mustangs Ring Ceremony

Hall of Fame and Metras Museum
$1,000 – Hall of Fame and Alumni Awards of Merit Dinner support

Chapter Expenses, Other
$800 – program ad and table for London Sports Council
$700 – misc., telephone, branded golf shirts
Western led the CIS in Academic All-Canadians

For the 3rd year in a row, Western led the way with 150 scholar-athletes earning the honour. Another 179 were named either OUA Academic Achievement Award Winners or Western Scholar-Athletes. In total, just under a third of our student-athletes had over an 80% average last year.

Launch of the Mustangs Care Program

Our student-athletes were also active in the community this season. 23 teams were involved in the program, and over 200 student-athletes put in around 700 hours of community service, not including the efforts that many of our student-athletes do on an individual basis in their own communities.

Provincial Successes

It was also a successful year on the field as well, as Western captured 6 provincial championships, winning titles in baseball, men’s and women’s rowing, softball, women’s lacrosse, and our 33rd consecutive men’s squash title.

National Successes

Three teams won national titles, as cheerleading one their 30th championship in 31 years, and the men’s and women’s rowing team completed the ‘double-double’ taking both the provincial and national titles for the second time in three years.

Championship Hosts

Western also hosted 5 OUA championships this past season, including baseball, football, swimming, women’s fencing, and men’s hockey.
77th Annual Athletic Awards Gala

It was the biggest in history with over 700 people in attendance at the London Convention Centre. Quarterback Will Finch was named the winner of the Dr. Claude Brown Memorial Trophy, while pole vaulter Robin Bone earned the FWP Jones Trophy.

Football’s Annual Wall of Champions Dinner

Held at the London Convention Centre for the first time, with over 400 people in attendance, it was the largest Wall of Champions event to date, and one that will continue to grow in the years to come.

Teams Honouring their Athletic Alumni

Engagement of our alumni continues to be a priority for us, and many of our teams hosted Wall of Honour events this year, including Football, Rowing, Men’s Basketball, Women’s Basketball, Men’s Hockey, and Men’s Volleyball.

Enhancing The Display of Our Historical Achievements

We’ve greatly enhanced the presence of our history with trophy cases now installed at Thames Hall, TD Stadium, and Thompson Arena. We’ve also enhanced our Wall of Honour displays, moving teams to a more unified look in each of our venues.

Extraordinary Mustangs

A vision of honouring some of the greatest contributions to sport, and hosting our Athletic Alumni in Toronto, the Extraordinary Mustangs Gala held this past May at the Arcadian Court in Toronto. With a growing majority of our alumni based in the Toronto area, we look to continue the engagement of more and more of our alumni each year.
Stay connected!
If you have moved or changed contact information, please send us your new coordinates so we can keep you up-to-date on all of our news, events, benefits, and services: alumni.westernu.ca/update

Join the conversation on Social Media

#purpleandproud

Join the conversation on Social Media

You can also e-mail The Western Mustangs Athletic Alumni at: mustangs.alumni@uwo.ca
Are you an Insider? Get team updates directly to your inbox through the Mustangs Insiders. Email mustangs@uwo.ca