

RUGBY APPS: SCHOLARSHIP OPS

> WOMEN'S RUGBY PROGRAMS



BY KAREN FONG DONOGHUE

I started playing rugby in 1997, when collegiate women's rugby was still gaining speed. So it gives me great joy and pride to see how far we have come in the last couple years with many more teams earning varsity status on campuses and providing scholarships to top female rugby players. It is an exciting time to be a female rugby player indeed!

I present to rugby clubs all over the nation and many teams want to know which programs offer athletic scholarship opportunities for female rugby players. On the opposite page, you will find a list of the current

colleges and universities who have rugby athletic scholarship money available to prospective players. Please remember that the women's rugby world is dynamic and changing each year, and I predict this list to continue to grow every year!

The teams below have access to admission support (meaning, they can help an applicant through the application process) and provide athletic scholarship money. However, I warn all parents and students reading to be cautious. To put it into NCAA terms (which many families seem to understand), there are two different types of scholarship: "Head Count" and "Equivalency." A Head

Count scholarship means "Full Scholarship." Within the NCAA, "Head Count" includes sports like football, volleyball and basketball. Equivalency scholarships basically mean there is scholarship money available for the program (e.g., \$20,000) which can be split up any way the coach decides. One program may decide to offer the entire \$20,000 to one very talented player ("a full ride") or some may choose to split that money into three or four scholarships. Rugby scholarships for both men's and women's

Photo: Harvard (left) and American International College (right) are both varsity, but one offers scholarships and the other doesn't. (Photo courtesy AIC Rugby)



Norwich University, another very successful scholarship program. (Dobson Images)

programs operate under the Equivalency model. Therefore, just because a program has the ability to award scholarship money, it does NOT mean a player will get “a full ride” based on their rugby talent. These types of scholarship offers are few and far between. And, for the most part, money is offered based on a combination of both athletic talent AND academic success.

As always, I emphasize “Student First, Athlete Second.” Therefore, before reaching out to any of the programs, ensure a student researches each school, academic programs offered, locations, and whether the school atmosphere fits what will eventually support a student’s academic success. Each program below is as different as every player’s personality. It is up to the student to recognize which will be the best fit for her. There are many, many more colleges and universities to consider, with scholarship being only one factor to apply in a student’s college search.

**Please note that I intentionally left off programs such as Harvard University, Bowdoin College, Vassar College that have Varsity status, but do not offer athletic scholarship money for their rugby players, which is the focus of this article. However, these colleges have historically provided lots of money for students who demonstrate need and make it affordable to attend.*

American International College (Springfield, MA)

Private, Co-Ed, 1,492 Undergrads (3,142 Total Enrollment)
www.aic.edu

Eastern Illinois University (Charleston, IL)

Public, Co-Ed, 10,417 Total Enrollment
www.eiu.edu

Quinnipiac University (Hamden, CT)

Private, Co-Ed, 6,500 Undergrads (8,800 Total Enrollment)
www.quinnipiac.edu

West Chester University (West Chester, PA)

Public, Co-Ed, 13,800 Total Enrollment
www.wcupa.edu

Lindenwood University (St. Charles, MO)

Private, Co-ed, 7,175 Undergrads (10,924 Total Enrollment)
www.lindenwood.edu

Life University (Marietta, GA)

Private, Co-Ed, 792 Undergrads (2,437 Total Enrollment)
www.life.edu

Notre Dame College (South Euclid, OH)

Private, Co-Ed 2,156 Total Enrollment
www.notredamecollege.edu

Davenport University (Grand Rapids, MI)

Private, Co-Ed, 2,600 students on main campus
www.davenport.edu

Norwich University (Northfield, VT)

Private, Co-Ed, 2300 Cadets
www.norwich.edu

Central Washington University (Ellensburg, WA)

Public, Co-Ed, 10,400 Undergrads (10,900 Total Enrollment)
www.cwu.edu

Facts pulled from each college/university’s respective websites, Cappex.com, or CollegeBoard.org if enrollment information was not listed on school’s website.

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