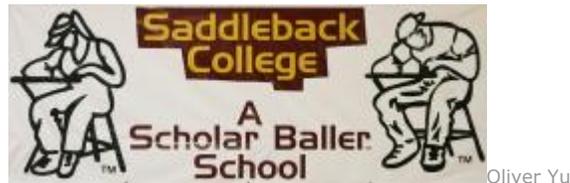


# Scholar Baller program produces stellar results, many transfers

By: Leif Kemp & Austin Messick

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*To become a Scholar Baller, a student athlete is required to be on track to obtain an AA degree and carry a 3.0 GPA or higher. Saddleback athletics had 115 student athletes qualify for fall 2010 and was the first to adopt the program for the entire athletic department.*

Athletes are dumb. That is the general consensus when discussing student athletes. The tragedy of stereotypes is they generalize an entire group of people made up of several individuals, and more often than not, they are incorrect.

The Saddleback College athletic department shatters the myth. Not only does Saddleback enjoy a rich athletic tradition, the student athletes that make up the department perform not only on their respective playing fields, but also in the classroom.

In 2005, Tony Lipold, the college's athletic director, made Saddleback College the first college in the country, community college, or four-year institution, to install the Scholar Baller program for every sport the school participates in.

While the NCAA has used the Scholar Baller program for years, typically it has only used it for the core sports of football, basketball, and baseball. The incentive program is also used to motivate a particular sport when its athletes are struggling with their classroom achievements. The Scholar Baller program is an incentive program for student athletes to don a patch on their uniform during their sophomore year signifying they are not only on track to earn their associate degree, but that they have maintained a 3.0 GPA in the process. There are now close to twenty California community colleges participating in the program.

This past fall, Saddleback placed 115 of the 329 student athletes to the Athletic Honor Roll for fall 2010 including 15 student athletes with a perfect 4.00 GPA.

“Saddleback has a rich tradition of athletic success since the college opened. What some people might not realize is the academic success that our student athletes have also achieved,” Lipold

said. "We are proud of these numbers and want the community to know just how well our student athletes are doing."

The statistics back Lipold up. Since 2009, 83 percent of sophomore student athletes have transferred to four-year institutions.

Compare that to the general student population, where the statistics say that close to 80 percent of students fail to complete their associate degree within three years, or drop out altogether.

The men's cross country team took the Pepsi Scholar Team Championship crown for 2008-2009, while the Gaucho's undefeated state champion women's tennis team finished as the top

team in 2009-2010, finishing with a cumulative 3.51 GPA. The Pepsi Scholar Team

Championship is measured by taking account of a teams performance both on the athletic field and in the classroom.

Two Gaucho athletic teams are once again candidates for the 2011 award. The Saddleback women's water polo team and the cross country team which completed their season ranked

fourteenth in the state with a 3.52 combined GPA. While spring 2011 grades have yet to be determined, Gaucho student athletes are once again performing both on and off the field.

Sixteen of the 34 student athletes participating in baseball have a 3.0 grade point average or better, according to Jerry Hannula, the sports information director.

"From day one I emphasize that at some point, 'You're responsible for not only your career in baseball, but your performance in the classroom as well,'" said baseball coach Jack Hodges. "It's not your parents, or your coach, an instructor or an umpire who determine your success, ultimately it comes down to you."

Saddleback's student athletes are succeeding as a result of the Scholar Baller program. It is an institutional ethos of hard work, both on the athletic field and in the classroom that is producing results. With leadership provided by the likes of Hodges and Lipold, whose priorities lie in not just winning but in developing the complete individual. Gaucho student athletes have taken advantage of the opportunity to continue their athletic and educational goals.

"If you look at your college as a house, the athletic program is not the most important room," said Dean Smith, Hall of Fame basketball coach formerly of North Carolina University basketball, "It's the front porch, it's the first thing people see, and it's the most visible area."

The Saddleback Gaucho student athletes are making their house the envy of the neighborhood.

Along with producing 115 scholar student athletes, so far Saddleback College has confirmed that it will transfer 23 sophomore athletes in the fall semester.

Of those athletes transferring, 18 intend on participating in athletics at their respective colleges, and 17 of them have accepted scholarships to help them continue their education.

Saddleback athletic director Tony Lipold said that historically, Saddleback athletic programs have moved on about 80 percent of their sophomore athletes to four-year colleges and universities, and 50 percent participate in competitive athletics. This far exceeds Orange County's 32 percent average of community college students who transfer, and Saddleback's own 62 percent average.

"It's really indicative of the kind of people we get in athletics that are committed and are goal driven," said Lipold. "They serve us and we serve them, makes us look good and then they're able to move on so its a two way street, and that's the coolest thing about it is to see them go on and succeed."

## **Saddleback 2011 Scholar Ballers**

### **Baseball**

Ryan Forkel, Tanner Gore, Jordan Helmkamp, Spencer Kuehn, Wayne Leon, Elliott Martin, Brian Murphy, Zach Nuno, Matt Paradise, Ian Parvin \*, Andrew Powers-Davis, Tyler Pugmire, Gilbert Viera, Andrew Wellman, Kevin Witt, David Wylie

### **Men's Basketball**

Myron Green, Philippe Zarif

### **Women's Basketball**

Emily Montelongo

### **Cheer**

Lauren Bagan, Kim Feccia, Allyson Guzman, Ashley Harris, Shyann Howard, Sophia Larsen, Hannah Lester, Kristine Montgomery

### **Football**

John Akiba, Dustin Alewine \*, Jack Anderson, Craig Belardes, David Belz, Michael Campana, Kasey Closs, Michael Frisina, Scott Graves, Blake Harrah, James Hong, Brennan Kelley, Kevin Lindeman, Max Little, Erik Ogunsanya, Lanny Papanikolas, Shawn Priester, Sean Reilly, Matthew Reza, Kevin Schick, Sean Sierra, David Skora, Steven Watts, Lee Woods, Michael Zangl

### **Golf**

Johanna Stuart \*, Ricky Taylor \*

### **Soccer**

Lindsey Doncost, Victoria French, Jessica Goodman, Devyn Higgins, Kaelyn Kaichi

**Softball**

Chelsea Bertoglio \*, Christina Bolin, Mandy Gutierrez, Nicki Jacobucci, Ashley Welsh, Shannon Wilkison

**Tennis**

Eric Barnard, Allen Darmawan, Lauren Fetter, Parham Khansari, Eemaun Latifi \*, Will McKinney, Karley Pletcher, Brenden Poblete, Chris Poole, Sina Sharifi-Hosseini, Charley Thompson, Avriel Tomaiko, Jonathan Tran \*

**Track and Field / Cross Country**

Kristine Anderson, Dillon Bales, Remington Conatser, Josh Eisenberg (track & CC), Joseph Fusco, Kelli Gibson, David Hanlin, Mark Irwin, Amy Jystad (track & CC), Kaelyn Kaichi, Andrew Kokinakes, Trent Merrill, Chelsea Owens (track & CC), Christina Perez, Evonna Ramirez (track & CC), Cameron Savage, Clinton Schooler, Taya Sebring, Edgar Vazquez, Max Waters

**Volleyball**

Tayren Burns, Jacqueline Oda, Crystal Richter, Danielle Van Liefde

**Swimming/Diving/Water Polo**

Auguston Anastasia (water polo), Carolina Conway (swim/diving), Shaylee Edmonds (swim), Nicole Elias (swim), Cheyenna McCartin \* (swim Ashley Montgomery (swim/diving), Lauren Nichols (swim), Antoinette Pham (swim/diving), Andrew Stark (swim), Daniel Tayenaka (swim/diving), Bayron Guajardo \* (swim/diving), Kaylie Lewis \* (swim/diving), Rachel Novelli \*(swim/diving/water polo), Matthew Villanueva (swim/water polo)

\* = 4.00 GPA

**Confirmed Transfers****Baseball**

Matt Paradise: Penn State; Elliott Martin: Valparaiso

**Basketball**

Wendell Faines: Idaho

**Cross Country**

Kris Anderson: CSULB; Chelsea Owens: UCSB

**Football**

Blake Harrah: Oregon State; Max Little: Humboldt State; Sean Reilly: UNLV; Samuel Tautolo: Iowa State; Steven Watts: Stony Brook; Michael Frisina: Boise State; Andrew Douglass: Robert Morris; Taber Cheo Evangel: Weber State; Lanny Papanikolas: Weber State; Chais Pinesett: Jackson State; Matt Reza: Cal Poly SLO; Brad Curtis: SW Oklahoma State; Alex Castellanos: Rhode Island; Michael Campana: Humboldt State

**Soccer**

Brie Carter: UC San Diego; Lindsey Doncast: UCLA

**Track and Field**

Jeremy Johnson: St. Mary's (KS)