

CLEMSON ATHLETICS

TIGER PATHWAYS



2025 - 2026
ANNUAL REPORT



Connect. Equip. Collaborate. Serve.

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Overview

Clemson Tiger Pathways supports student-athletes by offering comprehensive resources and opportunities in four key areas: leadership development, career development, personal development, and community engagement. These pillars guide our approach, ensuring that student-athletes are equipped to succeed not only in their time at Clemson, but in life after graduation. We are aligned with the Clemson University strategic initiative and mission to deliver the number one student experience, and we fulfill the mission of Clemson Athletics to provide life changing experiences through sport as we operate from our four core values daily; equip, connect, collaborate, and serve.

This report highlights the impactful initiatives and programming within each of these pillars and outlines how they collectively contribute to the holistic development of our Clemson student-athletes.



Message From The Director

Tori Niemann Lukens

Assistant AD/Student Athlete Development

This year has been incredibly meaningful for our department. Every day, I am reminded how special it is to work alongside student-athletes who are committed to growing not only in their sport, but also as leaders, professionals, teammates, and members of the community. It is a privilege to support them as they prepare for life beyond Clemson and to witness the impact these experiences have on their confidence, leadership, and future goals.

Throughout the year, our student-athletes engaged in leadership programming, career development opportunities, internships, networking events, mentorship initiatives, and community service experiences that challenged them to grow personally and professionally. From meaningful one-on-one conversations to large-scale programming events, our student-athletes continued to show intentionality, resilience, and a willingness to invest in themselves and others.

This year also marks an exciting new chapter for our department as we are officially re-branding from Student-Athlete Development to TIGER PATHWAYS. While our name is changing, our mission remains the same. Every student-athlete's journey is unique, and no two paths look exactly alike. Whether they are exploring leadership opportunities, preparing for a career, navigating personal growth, or discovering their purpose beyond sport, our goal is to help student-athletes get on, stay on, and thrive on the right path for their future. Tiger Pathways reflects our commitment to walking alongside our student-athletes as they navigate both their Clemson experience and the lives they will build after graduation.

We are incredibly grateful for the support of our administration, coaches, employers, campus partners, donors, alumni, and community members who continue to invest in our student-athletes. The experiences and opportunities highlighted throughout this report would not be possible without your support, collaboration, and belief in holistic student-athlete development.

Most importantly, I want to thank our student-athletes for fully engaging in these opportunities and continuing to represent Clemson with excellence. Their commitment to growth beyond the game is what makes this work so rewarding, and I am excited for all that lies ahead for them.

We look forward to continuing to equip, connect, collaborate, and serve our student-athletes in the year ahead.

Thank you and Go Tigers!

Tori Niemann Lukens



Strategic Initiatives

The mission of Clemson University's Tiger Pathways program is to **holistically develop and empower student-athletes** by offering opportunities that span leadership, career readiness, personal growth, and community engagement. Specifically, our objectives include:



Preparing for life after Clemson

by providing the tools, skills, and experiences they need to thrive in their post-athletic careers.



Fostering Leadership

through experiential learning and involvement in leadership-focused activities.



Supporting Career Readiness

with a structured series of career development programs, one-on-one advising, and internship and shadowing opportunities.



Promoting Personal Responsibility

through training including financial literacy and community-building.



Encourage Community Involvement

by providing the tools, skills, and experiences they need to thrive in their post-athletic careers.

Total Engagement Overview

Clemson's Tiger Pathways team maintained strong and meaningful connections with the student-athlete population throughout the 2025–2026 academic year. We tracked a significant number of interactions with student-athletes this academic year through various channels, including one-on-one appointments, group sessions, and career programming.

Engagement & Impact with Student-Athletes

3,260

**Total contacts including one on one meetings
and event attendance**

Key Highlights:

- Total Individual Student One on One Meetings: **350**
- Total touch points through events: **2,929**

Additional Notable Impact and Program Outcomes:

- Community Service Hours: **2,424**
- Wages earned by student-athletes through UPIC Beyond the Game: **\$138,880**

Programming Events and Breakdown

Over **90 events** were facilitated across four key development pillars, engaging student-athletes in intentional programming that supports holistic growth.

A cumulative **attendance of 2,929** reflects robust engagement and strategic alignment with student needs.

Leadership Development had the highest cumulative attendance and the highest number of events hosted throughout the year.

Core Values had the highest attendance for an individual event with **95 student-athletes in attendance**.

Career Development included **25 events** focused on preparing student-athletes for life after sport.



Key Achievements and Milestones

Throughout the 2025-2026 academic year, the Tiger Pathways office achieved several key milestones that reflect our commitment to student-athlete growth and success:



88

SAAC had 45 student-athletes participate in the fall semester and 43 student-athletes participate in the spring semester.

65

Tiger Leadership Academy participants engaged in leadership development workshops and initiatives.

20

POWER members participated in personal responsibility programs.

\$138,880

UPIC wages earned by student-athletes through the University's Professional Internship and Co-op (UPIC) program.

2,400+

Community service hours contributed to the local community through outreach programs.

103

Recruits met with Tiger Pathways staff this academic year.

Program Description

Clemson University's Tiger Pathways program is organized around four core pillars, each designed to support and empower student-athletes in different facets of their lives:



POWER LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

POWER is a one-year, cohort model leadership program. The eight-session curriculum is rooted in ownership and focuses on: leadership skills, building confidence, networking, and community building. The program concludes with a five-day experiential learning trip and finally a student-led leadership conference. The five-day trip includes site visits with companies and organizations and attending networking opportunities with professionals in the city. The half-day leadership summit is led by the POWER cohort. This program is designed specifically to develop the leadership potential of student-athletes, offering support, resources, and a network to help them excel professionally.

Key Highlights:

- **20** student-athletes completed the POWER Program this year.
- **135+** participants in attendance at the POWER Summit

Leadership Development

TIGER LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

This is a two-year, multi-sport program designed to refine the student-athletes' leadership abilities to gain skills and perspective to enhance team culture, promote high performance, and prepare them to successfully lead in any phase of life. Student-athletes complete 10 workshops over the course of two non-championship semesters. **65** student-athletes participated in TLA this year.



STUDENT-ATHLETE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAAC)

Composed of student-athletes from each team, SAAC serves to amplify the voices of student-athletes to serve their community, advocate on behalf of their teams, and unite and connect with athletic staff and administration through leadership and commitment.

Key Highlights:

- **88** total members participated in the SAAC this year
- **45** Fall semester and **43** Spring semester



SAAC has allowed me to develop true relationships with other athletes that I could not have developed outside of that space.

The lessons I have learned in my three years have allowed me to grow my leadership abilities on the baseball team. SAAC has also allowed me to understand that everyone comes from a different place, but Clemson has brought us all together as athletes doing what we love”

JOE ALLEN, BASEBALL



STUDENT-ATHLETE LEADERSHIP TEAM (SALT)

Composed of one student-athlete from each team and meets quarterly with the athletic director and Clemson Athletics executive staff. Student-athletes provide feedback and engage with upper administration on topics impacting Clemson student-athletes and college athletics as a whole.



“My experience in the UPIC Beyond the Game program has been instrumental in my growth as both a student-athlete and future professional. Through internships with the Nursing Department and Health Professions Advising, I gained hands-on experience in research, technology, and student support while strengthening my communication, adaptability, and problem-solving skills. UPIC prepared me to earn a larger internship with a non-profit healthcare foundation and gave me the confidence to pursue a career in health services administration. Balancing academics, athletics, and internships taught me discipline, time management, and resilience, while helping me discover how my strengths as a student-athlete translate into the professional world. UPIC has expanded my professional network, reinforced my passion for healthcare, and prepared me to pursue future leadership opportunities.”

BROOKE NOWICKI, ROWING

Career Development

Student-athletes have many opportunities to build professional skills and network with industry professionals in our six-program career series. We connect student-athletes to internships, job shadowing experiences, full-time jobs, and offer individual career advising to each student-athlete. We maintain a database of professionals with a desire to connect with Clemson student-athletes, as well as a database of our current student-athletes' career interests in order to intentionally connect our student-athletes to the right people and potential opportunities.

Four-Year Career Development Series

A mandatory career preparation program consisting of six key events aimed at increasing career readiness beginning in the spring semester of their first year and ending in fall semester of their fourth year.

CORE VALUES

Spring semester of first year

Introduces student-athletes to the importance of aligning personal values with career goals and decision-making. Of the surveys completed, **98.8%** of first year student-athletes reported that the session helped them reflect on whether their actions and decisions align with their personal values.

Biggest takeaways reported from student-athletes:

- “The overlap of core values and sport help teach transferable skills/lessons.”
- “Core values can be key in networking to see if you feel you are a good fit with an employer.”



ELEVATOR PITCH CONTEST

Fall semester of second year



Provides student-athletes the opportunity to hone their personal branding and deliver concise, impactful elevator pitches.

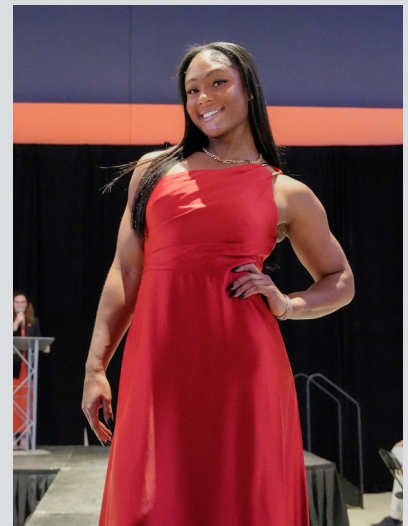
- Of the surveys completed, **98.9%** of second year student-athletes rated the event very helpful or somewhat helpful for their professional development.
- Of the surveys completed, **82.9%** of second year student-athletes reported being very confident or somewhat confident in the execution of their elevator pitch.
- Of the surveys completed, **95%** of professional judges reported the student-athletes were highly effective or effective at communicating their ideas, skills, and enthusiasm.

ETIQUETTE DINNER AND FASHION SHOW

Spring semester of second year

A unique event designed to teach professional dining etiquette and proper attire for career-related events.

- Of the surveys completed, **100%** of second year student-athletes reported feeling confident in their ability to determine what is appropriate to wear to a professional event.
- Of the surveys completed, **98.1%** of second year student-athletes reported a 3 or higher (on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the highest) when asked to dine over a business or professional meal in the future and navigate table settings.
- **22** campus partners were in attendance.
- Student-athletes used what was learned in Core Values and Elevator Pitch to help build connections with professionals at their tables.



One-on-One Career Advising

Personalized guidance on resume building, cover letters, LinkedIn optimization, interview prep, job searches, salary negotiations, and graduate school.

TIGER NETWORKING SOCIAL

Fall semester of third year

- Brings together student-athletes, alumni, and employers to foster connections and professional relationships based on career interests.
- Of the surveys completed, **89.9%** of third year student-athletes felt very confident or somewhat confident in their ability to communicate in a professional manner.
- Of the surveys completed, **89.9%** of third year student-athletes felt very well or adequately prepared for this event due to Tiger Pathways programs.
- **39** employers and professionals were in attendance.



MOCK INTERVIEWS EVENT

Spring semester of third year



Simulates real-world job interviews to provide student-athletes with hands-on practice and constructive feedback. Interviews are conducted by company hiring managers and career center professionals.

- Of the surveys completed, **100%** of third year student-athletes reported a 3 or higher (on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the highest) when asked if they felt more confident in their interview skills after the event.
- **75** employers in attendance.
- **150** mock interviews conducted.

TIGER PRO NIGHT

Fall semester of fourth year

A dedicated event where student-athletes meet employers offering internships and post-graduation job opportunities.

- **69** student-athletes attended.
- **28** companies were in attendance.



UPIC Beyond the Game Internship Program

This unique initiative offers **paid, on-campus internships** each year, allowing student-athletes to gain valuable work experience while balancing academics and athletics. UPIC Beyond the Game is a semester-long paid internship program that is a partnership with Clemson University's UPIC office and Tiger Pathways to place student-athletes in internships across campus. Student-athletes complete professional development sessions throughout their internship that focus on identifying and articulating their transferable professional skills in addition to their internship work.

Key Highlights:

- **62** paid internships completed this academic year, providing student-athletes with real-world experience.
- **\$138,880** earned by student-athletes in wages this academic year through the UPIC program.

Micro-Internships

Short-term internships that provide flexible, hands-on work experience, broadening career exposure for student-athletes.

Key Highlights:

- **5** Student-athletes participated in Micro-Internships across the country.



Personal Development

Financial Literacy Workshops

Programs designed to teach student-athletes the essential skills needed to manage their finances, including budgeting, saving, and investing.

Gender Violence Prevention Training

This initiative provides education on prevention of gender-based violence, helping student-athletes understand the importance of respectful relationships and personal responsibility.

Conference and Networking Opportunities

Student-athletes are encouraged to attend conferences such as the ACC Career Trek and NCAA Career in Sports Forum which offer valuable networking opportunities and insights into critical issues impacting athletes

- 9 student-athletes attended conference and networking opportunities this academic year.

"The NCAA Career in Sports Forum was an experience that will have a lasting impact on my personal and professional growth. Throughout the week, I connected with industry professionals, learned from leaders, and built meaningful relationships with student-athletes from around the country. This experience challenged me to think bigger about my future and reminded me that growth happens when we step outside of our comfort zones. I left CSF with greater confidence in my future, a stronger professional network, and lots of gratitude for the opportunity to represent Clemson!"



GRACE LACROSSE, GYMNASTICS

Community Engagement

We provide intentional service locally and regionally while building meaningful relationships by aligning student-athlete passions to community needs. Some examples include but are not limited to children's hospital visits, classroom readings, food drives, and our Paw Pals Mentorship program.

Key Highlights:

- 36 student-athletes participated as Paw Pals mentors this academic year.

”

Being a mentor in Paw Pals has had a big impact.

It has taught me patience, empathy, and how to be a positive role model. Spending time with my little 2nd grader shows me how small acts of encouragement can build confidence and make a real difference in someone's day. Lastly, my experience has strengthened my passion for helping others and making a positive impact in my community”

MCKENZIE CALLOWAY, WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD



Coach Perspective and Team Impact



Our Men's soccer program has been totally immersed in the benefits provided by our Tiger Pathways programming. I believe there is no other program that rivals it anywhere in the country. We have had several UPIC Intern students over the past several years who have used their experiences to secure employment post graduation and to bolster their resumes for graduate degree programs at Clemson and elsewhere. The Tiger Leadership Academy has also provided significant opportunities to help our players learn leadership skills that have benefited our program. Most of our captains in recent years have graduated from TLA. However, I think the most rewarding takeaway from this program is the "Lifetime" leadership skills that I have seen evolve in our young men. Many of these skills are on display as our team works into our greater communities to provide opportunities for people and young people who may not be as fortunate as we are. Our Tiger Pathways program knits the entire athletic experience together for our players and we are greatly appreciative for all the services they provide.

MIKE NOONAN
HEAD COACH, MEN'S SOCCER,
4X NATIONAL CHAMPION



Conclusion

The Tiger Pathways Office continues to support our student-athletes' growth in every aspect of their lives. With a focus on leadership development, career readiness, community service, and personal wellness, we are proud of the impact we've made this year. We remain committed to providing resources that ensure our student-athletes excel both during their time at Clemson and in their lives after graduation.

We are excited about the ongoing support from our stakeholders, and we look forward to continuing our mission of equipping, connecting, collaborating, and serving our student-athletes.



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