The men's basketball team earned the nickname "Dunk City" for its dazzling performance during the 2013 NCAA championship tournament.
In 1997, when Florida Gulf Coast University first opened its doors, an intercollegiate athletics program was only a dream. Today, 15 FGCU athletics teams compete in NCAA Division I in both the Atlantic Sun Conference and the Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association. In March 2013, the campus gained national acclaim and was christened “Dunk City” for the men’s basketball team’s phenomenal run to the Sweet 16. Our women’s basketball team has made history of its own by playing in the NCAA championship tournament in 2012 and again in 2014, not to mention winning 44 consecutive conference games in the Atlantic Sun. The women’s team has earned the nickname “Raining Threes” in recognition of our student-athletes’ proficiency in shooting from behind the arc.

We are proud of our Eagles and the recognition all our teams have received. Twenty-four student-athletes have gone on to successful careers in professional sports, and our student-athletes hold a significantly higher average GPA than the overall student population at FGCU. In fact, in a recent semester 27 student-athletes had a GPA of 4.0, and 107 exceeded 3.5.

The University is firmly committed to the development of our student-athletes, challenging them to compete at the highest levels in the classroom as well as on the field, court, or in the pool. Our student-athletes continue to dazzle with their commitment and performance in the classroom (cumulative 3.3 average GPA),

CHRIS SALE

Photo by Linwood Ferguson/CaptivePhotons.com

CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES – INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY
in the community (more than 5,000 hours of volunteer service annually) and in competition (35 regular season and conference tournament championships since joining NCAA Division I).

A successful athletics program can be a unifying element across an entire campus, galvanizing faculty and students, and building both spirit and identity. The Eagles have accomplished this and much more. They have become an electrifying force across the Southwest Florida community, a point of pride that brings together FGCU and the region’s residents. Now, just 14 years after launch, it is time to dream big again, with a focus on investing in three key areas: our facilities, our students-athletes, and our programs.

**Investment in Facilities**

First-class facilities attract first-rate student-athletes and signal to current and prospective coaches that FGCU is committed to excellence in its athletics programs. FGCU athletics facilities have become a hallmark of distinction, and the “face of FGCU” to many both inside and outside Southwest Florida. In 2013 alone, Alico Arena was viewed by millions of people across the country when NBC’s “Today Show” broadcast live from the arena. We know that our facilities must continue to evolve as our athletics program grows.

Athletics staff has teamed up with area architects and engineers for ideas on “smart” expansion and to design retrofits to enhance existing facilities. Alico Arena, the heart of our campus sports program, is now 12 years old and was initially built to sustain a top level Division II program. Our facilities investment plan starts with additions to that facility, and other enhancements that benefit all our sports. The priority facilities projects include:

- Two-story addition to the southeast front of Alico Arena to include sports medicine and coaching facilities, as well as expanded team and staff areas.
- New weight room, dedicated to student-athletes, attached to Alico Arena.
- Modernized Alico Arena scoreboard.
- Soccer stadium expansion.
- New tennis complex, including new courts and tennis-specific building.
- Improvements to Swanson Stadium and the Softball Complex.
- Enhancements to the Aquatics Center.

**Investment in Scholarships for Student-Athletes**

To succeed, our student-athletes need support — and scholarships are the core around which thriving athletics programs are built. FGCU could be funding even more student-athletes in most sports. The University has yet to reach its NCAA-approved full level of scholarships. Only a small fraction (four out of our 15 teams) are fully endowed with athletics scholarships. Our goal is to fund 100 percent of our current student-athletes by our 20th anniversary year in 2017. Currently, this deficit is our biggest competitive disadvantage when compared to more established athletics programs at other universities.

FGCU created the Eagles Scholarship Society to fund scholarships through private gifts. Donors are matched with eligible students based on the donors’ interests, and they often take a personal...
Architectural renderings show the Alico Arena addition which will house a new weight room dedicated to FGCU’s student-athletes, expanded sports medicine facilities, new and renovated coaching and recruiting offices and improved team areas.
interest in their scholarship recipients’ progress in school and life. Individuals, families and businesses can join the Eagles Scholarship Society by making a gift or pledge annually for five years, or creating an endowed scholarship for student-athletes of $150,000 or greater.

Your donation to athletics scholarships can help FGCU significantly build its scholarship endowment, which will generate vital additional scholarships for our programs and student-athletes. Gifts to create scholarship endowments provide the resources to our FGCU student-athletes as they strive to be champions in the classroom and at the highest level of athletic competition, while preparing them to succeed in their careers and in their communities after graduation.

Investment in Athletics Programs — Eagle Funds for Excellence

The competition for nationally recognized sports programs is fierce. Only those universities that have committed to building the infrastructure to support a successful athletics program truly can compete at the national level. At FGCU we have identified the most critical areas for investment in our athletics program and established the Eagle Funds for Excellence. The Eagle Funds for Excellence will provide unrestricted operating funds annually to ensure that FGCU can compete in the national arena and continue to attract top student-athletes, coaches and other key personnel. Support from the Eagle Funds for Excellence will underwrite athletics programs including:

- National recruiting capabilities, enabling coaches to successfully compete.
- Enhanced coaching resources, allowing FGCU to recruit and retain outstanding personnel, and expand coaching staffs to continue student-athlete development.
- Modernized training and conditioning equipment to ensure safety, quality, and competitiveness.
- Increased academic advising staff with the expertise to facilitate success of the student-athletes and programs.
- Additional state-of-the-art technology and computer software to assist coaches and staff, and aid in improving sports performance.

Our goals have been crafted with both vision and purpose. We invite you to be a part of our team and support FGCU Athletics. If we expect to continue the successful momentum that created “Dunk City,” we must provide the necessary resources to our athletics program by increasing our annual donations, building our scholarship endowment, and improving our athletics facilities. Your gift not only encourages our student-athletes today, but can create opportunities for generations to come.

Just hours before the FGCU women’s basketball team opened play in the 2014 Atlantic Sun Conference’s Championship tournament, senior captain Sarah Hansen was named the Atlantic Sun Women’s Basketball Scholar-Athlete of the Year, Academic All-American and Rhodes Scholar nominee.

It is wonderful to know that there are so many people who care and are true FGCU fans, I feel honored and grateful to have this support. This isn’t something you can take for granted. What we have is something you won’t find at any other program.

— Sarah Hansen, ’14
2014 Atlantic Sun Conference Women’s Basketball Scholar-Athlete of the Year, Academic All-American and Rhodes Scholar nominee

Just before the FGCU women’s basketball team opened play in the 2014 Atlantic Sun Conference’s Championship tournament, senior captain Sarah Hansen was named the Atlantic Sun Women’s Basketball Scholar-Athlete of the Year. The honor, voted on by the Conference’s sports information directors, is Hansen’s third consecutive award. Hansen boasts a 3.88 cumulative grade point average as a chemistry major and mathematics minor. She earned a 4.0 GPA in four semesters and received Dean’s List or higher distinction in every semester.