

Spirit

FACULTY & STAFF NEWSLETTER

Rewriting the Playbook

Tim Brandle teaches students how to navigate a changing athletic landscape

By Thea Skokan ('22)

If you see Tim Brandle ('15 J.D.) in a nondescript sweatshirt, maybe wearing sunglasses and a hat, in the nosebleeds of the McCarthy Athletic Center enjoying some Zag basketball this season – no you didn't.

Or at least that's what he'll be telling his Washington State University friends, at the risk of ridicule.

Brandle is a WSU alum, having graduated with an undergraduate degree in history and education. He went on to earn a law degree from Gonzaga and is currently an adjunct professor at GU teaching Sports Law and Ethics for the master in Sport and Athletic Administration degree.

Brandle has worn a lot of hats throughout his professional career – moving to South Korea after undergrad to teach, pivoting to law school, paying his dues at a few firms that weren't the right fit, and finally, landing his dream job as an in-house attorney for Flying Squirrel, an international trampoline park company.

But it's his love of sports and passion for helping athletes secure fair Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) opportunities that led him back to Gonzaga to teach.

A Landmark Decision

In 2021, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled the NCAA could not restrict education-related compensation for student-athletes like scholarships, new computers and internships. NIL was never specifically mentioned in this ruling – however it set the legal foundation for broader change.



Tim Brandle (and his daughter, Millie) may be a die-hard Coug fan, but his love of sports has landed him at GU as an adjunct professor.

Within weeks of the decision, the NCAA suspended its longstanding rules that stopped athletes from profiting off their name, image and likeness – allowing them to sign sponsorships, deals and partnerships as long as they followed state laws or school policies. Think Drew Timme at Northern Quest Resort and Casino, Anton Watson miming a shot while ordering a Papa Murphy's pizza, or Ben Gregg fixing an air conditioner for Bill's Heating and Air – all goofy commercials starring Zags men's basketball starters that wouldn't have been possible without the reversal of rules.

However, it meant more than just the ability to star in local commercials, and with it came a lot of other stipulations that continue to alter the landscape of college athletics.

"A lot of people were wondering how this was going to work and what would happen next," says Brandle, explaining that, at the time, there was little enforcement of the rules, so tampering and recruitment violations were rampant. "Student-athletes were getting calls and direct messages, their families were getting called directly, all by schools around the country saying, 'Hey, what's it going to take to get you to our school?'"

Brandle

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The risk of losing big players to this new system was incredibly high.

“That first year, WSU lost a lot of student-athletes to the transfer portal,” says Brandle. “They were essentially poached off our roster, tampered with or taken away.”

A push to keep those players laid the groundwork for organized funding efforts across the country, including the Zags Collective and, co-founded by Brandle, the Cougar Collective. Both work with fans, alumni and businesses to fund NIL opportunities for college athletes.

Teaching the Legalities of Sports

“Athletics has fundamentally changed. NIL is here – whether we like it or not.”

This is written on the Cougar Collective’s website, and it’s a point Brandle wholeheartedly agrees with. It’s a large part of the reason he agreed to teach at Gonzaga. When it comes to the topic of NIL, even as the information continually changes, he says, “I can speak to the experiences I’ve had working with boosters, agents, coaches, student-athletes and tampering. I can tell students these stories, keep them engaged, and teach them about what’s really happening in today’s athletic landscape.”

And it is still complicated. As recent as June, U.S. District Judge Claudia Wilken approved a House settlement allowing schools to pay their athletes directly and requiring the NCAA to pay back nearly \$2.8 billion in damages over the next 10 years to athletes who competed in college any time between 2016 to present day.

Brandle says it’s already been challenged in a number of ways – including over gender equality as, so far, much of this settlement is going to male student-athletes.

So, passing on what he knows to the next generation of sports agents or future attorneys representing athletes in NIL cases feels pretty important to Brandle at this moment in time.

“But more than the subject matter,” he says, “I love being able to interact with motivated and fantastic young people. I love teaching them and hearing about what they want to do with their lives.”

His career may have started in a South Korean classroom, but he says his return to

teaching has been even more invigorating the second time around. One of the most memorable moments from the semester was during a mock negotiation where he instructed students to broker a mock deal in front of the class. One of his students, a native Spanish-speaker, asked to do his negotiation in Spanish. Another student volunteered to translate, and the simulation ran seamlessly through two completely different languages.

“The student came to me with that idea on his own, saying he’d be more involved and feel more confident carrying out the assignment in his own language,” Brandle explains. “And that is exactly why I wanted to be a teacher in the first place, for moments like that.”

Despite the air of uncertainty surrounding college athletics – there is one thing that

keeps Brandle invested, his students engaged in class, and players on the courts and fields – a true love for sports.

“Sports are unifiers,” he says. “They bring everyone together. Sitting in the stands, you watch your team have success and you cheer and high five the people around you, who are oftentimes complete strangers. You just don’t do that in a regular setting.”

He does, though, still live by the laws of loyalty when it comes to his first alma mater. “I was part of the original Zzu Cru, which is the WSU version of the Kennel Club,” says Brandle, whose college friends liken a cheer for Gonzaga basketball to a cardinal sin.

“It is high-level basketball, so of course it’s going to be fun to watch,” he laughs. “But you’ll only see me in McCarthey if the Zags are playing the Cougs.”



UPCOMING SCHEDULE

MEN’S BASKETBALL



NOV 8
OKLAHOMA
Spokane Arena



NOV 11
CREIGHTON
McCarthey Athletic Center



NOV 14
ARIZONA STATE
Tempe, Ariz.



NOV 17
SOUTHERN UTAH
McCarthey Athletic Center

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL



NOV 9
TOLEDO
Toledo, Ohio



NOV 13
COLORADO STATE
McCarthey Athletic Center



NOV 16
STANFORD
McCarthey Athletic Center

The CCE headquarters in the 90's, then called the Center for Community Action and Service Learning



Molly Ayers (below) is the assistant dean of CCE and a GU alum



By Alexis Sandoval ('27)

Assistant Dean Molly Ayers is celebrating 30 years of the Center for Community Engagement (CCE) with immense gratitude and meaningful reflection. An alum with over 20 years of experience in the field of community engagement in higher education, Ayers has witnessed the Center's evolution firsthand.

In simple terms, Gonzaga's Center for Community Engagement (CCE) provides practical opportunities for all members of the community to serve the university's Mission. From Campus Kids youth programs centered on social-emotional learning, to the Campus Kitchens that address food insecurity, CCE promotes positive societal change through a commitment to social justice and solidarity.

"Our programs offer such powerful ways of acting in the community," Ayers says. "I always learn from our volunteers and their vision for our world."

The Center's scope has grown significantly since its inception — an important development when the goal is wide-reaching transformation. In 1995, 15 volunteers served 15 youth at Logan Elementary. Now, around 250 volunteers serve 600 youth across 10 locations. And since 2005, when Campus Kitchens began, 540,000 meals have nourished members of the community.

One student, Alexis Kuchi ('27), can't imagine her experience without community engagement via Campus Kitchens. Her

involvement exemplifies the spirit of connection and service that has defined the CCE for three decades.

"Campus Kitchens ended up being one of the deciding factors of me coming to Gonzaga because I wanted to be involved in a community where we actually want to help each other, and serve each other," Kuchi recalls. "And now, as a team leader, I'm given more responsibility and choice in what we can do."

Through initiatives such as Campus Kitchens, the CCE continues to bridge the gap between campus and community, empowering students like Kuchi to deepen their understanding of social justice and civic responsibility.

"If I wasn't doing community service, I would not be out in the community," Kuchi admits. "I would be in a university bubble, but I definitely prefer getting to interact with the community."

Of course, another 30 years of progress will require even more adaptability, open-mindedness, and eager learning. With the help of students like Kuchi, staff, faculty, and the community, the CCE is prepared to serve an ever-changing world. The generous Scelfo family gift announced during the recent inauguration ceremony of President Katia Passerini will also support future initiatives, including food security efforts through Campus Kitchens.

"We will continue looking at where systems might need to be changed or challenged," Ayers says. "Ultimately, it's about continuing to work in ways that move our communities towards a more just world."

Mobile bus passes are **HERE!**

For the past decade, Spokane Transit and Gonzaga have partnered to keep our campus community moving. In 2022, Spokane Transit introduced Connect — the new fare system that features a choice of using the mobile app or a physical card. Gonzaga is transitioning from ZagCards to ride the bus to Connect. It's easy to get on board with a scan of your phone or a quick tap of your Connect card.

The transition to Connect is a great opportunity to ride the bus more! It can save you money on gas and car maintenance, finding parking on or around campus and breathing easier knowing you're helping to improve air quality. You can also experience local businesses and Spokane's vibrant neighborhoods.

Mark your calendar: Starting November 28, ZagCards will no longer work on Spokane Transit buses. To continue riding the bus, download the app or get a physical Connect card today!

» Questions? Email: sustainability@gonzaga.edu



Gonzaga Receives HEED Award

Recognized nationally for ongoing commitment to equity, belonging and academic excellence

Gonzaga University is proud to be named a recipient of the 2025 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award for the second consecutive year from Insight Into Diversity magazine.

Insight Into Diversity is the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education. The HEED Award recognizes colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to academic excellence and belonging.

"We are honored that Gonzaga University has been recognized for the second consecutive year," said Robin Kelley, Gonzaga's chief diversity officer in the Office of Inclusive Excellence. "This national recognition reflects our deep and ongoing commitment to fostering an inclusive, equitable and thriving learning community. Moreover, the award exemplifies how Gonzaga is living out its core values daily."

Ongoing collaborative efforts by students, faculty and staff continue to advance the University's vision for inclusive excellence. This includes the Inclusive Excellence Leadership Academy, which has cultivated a community of leaders dedicated to equity and belonging, and the implementation of the Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan, which continues to guide Gonzaga in embedding inclusive practices throughout the University.

Kelley points also to perpetual work and dedication to student recruitment, retention and success. This ensures that Gonzaga is a place where students from all backgrounds feel welcomed, supported and empowered to thrive.

"This achievement is the result of collective effort reflecting the contributions of our campus community and partnerships," Kelley said. "We celebrate this recognition with gratitude and with renewed dedication to advancing inclusive excellence."

» Learn More: insightintodiversity.com



If you try the recipe, don't forget to send your photos to spirit@gonzaga.edu!

Dessert of the Month

Apple Blondies

Adapted from Sally's Baking Addiction

Ingredients

About 2 medium Gala apples, peeled
and sliced into 1/8 in slices
1/3 cup apple cider
12 Tbsp [1 1/2 sticks] unsalted butter
1 1/2 cups dark brown sugar
3/4 tsp salt
1 Tbsp pure vanilla extract
2 large eggs
1 1/2 tsp baking powder
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

Topping

1/4 cup granulated sugar
1 tsp ground cinnamon
Pinch salt, optional

Instructions

Step 1 Preheat the oven to 350F and grease a 9-in. square baking pan lined with a parchment sling.

Step 2 For the topping: Whisk together sugar, cinnamon and salt in a small bowl until combined. Set aside.

Step 3 After cutting the apples into 1/8 in slices, run your knife through the pieces a few times, creating bite-sized pieces. Place the apples and the apple cider in a saucepan over medium heat. Cover the pan and let the apples steam in the cider until tender, 8 to 10 minutes. The apples should be soft but still hold their shape. Strain the apples and let cool to room temperature.

Step 4 In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter, brown sugar and salt. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla. Let the mixture cool to room temperature.

Step 5 Add the eggs and whisk until combined. Add the baking powder and whisk again until incorporated, then add the flour and use a spatula to stir until combined. Add the cooled, strained apple pieces and stir to combine.

Step 6 Transfer the batter to the prepared pan and use a spatula to smooth out the top. Sprinkle the cake evenly with the cinnamon-sugar mixture.

Step 7 Bake for 30 to 60 minutes. Start checking at 30 minutes then use a wooden skewer or toothpick to check every 10 minutes until it comes out of the batter with the faintest hint of crumb. The original recipe says to bake for 30 minutes but I found it took almost an hour in my oven.

Step 8 Transfer the pan to a wire rack and let cool completely. Use the parchment sling to gently lift the cake out of the pan. Cut into squares and serve.

Around Campus

Events, celebrations and lectures of note this month

Nov. 8, 7:30 p.m., Nov. 9, 2 p.m. Gonzaga's theatre, dance and music departments collaborate on Tony-winning musical "Urinetown," a satire that is both poignant and thought-provoking

Nov. 10, 7:30 p.m. Attend the screening of a 1926 silent horror classic "A Page of Madness" with live narration and commentary

Nov. 14, 7:30 p.m. Hailed as "contemporary chamber trailblazers," Hub New Music is a distinct ensemble of flute, violin, cello and clarinet

Nov. 20-21, 7 p.m. The Student Choreography Showcase is an evening of dance choreographed by students and performed by students, displaying creativity, vision and leadership

**All performance at the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center*

Noteworthy

New Hires

Ashlee Garrett, payroll tax accountant, Controller's Office; **Chanel Cheng**, AI engineer, Institute for Informatics & Applied Technology; **Daniel Rudnitskiy**, general maintenance technician, Plant

Position Changes/Promotions

Amanda Ma, program coordinator, Foley Library; **Jennifer Gill**, BSN clinical placement manager, Graduate Enrollment Management; **John Bongard**, technical director of theatre and dance, College of Arts and Sciences

Goodbyes

Noah Matthews, asst athletic trainer, Athletics; **Stacey Harrison**, administrative asst, Human Resources; **Yanxia Wu**, AI engineer, Institute for Informatics & Applied Technology

Anniversaries

05 Ashley Martin, senior director, Marketing & Communications; **Alyssa Hemingway**, enrollment operations specialist II, Enrollment Operations

L to R: Hugh Tribble, Rest Mugwagwa, Luke Parker, Stephen Cummins, Beth Moore, Jess Loomer, Jon Carlson and Grace Rowe

