

# WMGF News

www.wmgf.us

June 10, 2022

## Season Review

by Head Coach Jeff Crockett

Another season has come to an end, and as I look back on the year, I am truly grateful for the opportunity I've been given to lead this team. This year has been jam-packed for these Dawgs as classes have gone back to in-person, our fundraising efforts have increased, and competitions have also gone back to normal. It was a bit of a shock, but this team endured it well and came away with some stellar performances and placements. We also had one of our biggest fundraising years ever!

This year the Huskies were able to host three home meets on the main floor at Alaska Airlines Arena. The Washington Open, the Pac-12 Invite, and a coed dual meet vs. Iowa. This is the first time in 40 years that we've had so many home meets, something we are proud of and hope to be able to do again soon! We finished out our season with three meets: Collegiate Nationals, the coed dual meet vs. Iowa, and GymACT Nationals.

This year, GymACT used the Collegiate Nationals as an opportunity to have the first ever GymACT All-Star Meet. Each conference (East and West) sent their top five athletes on each event to represent their respective conferences. Washington ended up with six of our athletes making the cut, to compete on five events. Sophomore Andrew Layman and Junior Jameel Ali both came home Collegiate All-Americans; Andrew on vault (6th place) and Jameel

on rings (6th place).

The season finale, GymACT Nationals, was held on May 14 in Mesa, Arizona. Training leading up to this competition had some serious momentum. The guys were hitting some very good routines in practice, confident and excited to put it all out there on the floor. Even though our overall performance at GymACT Nationals wasn't perfect, it was by far the best competition we had all season! The Dawgs walked away with six All-Americans: So. Andrew Layman (AA, FX, VT), Jr. Adam Kerwin (PH), Sr. Connor Pattison (SR), and Sr. Oscar Hemmert (HB). This competition is by far my favorite so far as a Husky Head Coach! It was incredible to see the hard work the Dawgs put in all year really show on the competition floor.

Up next for the Dawgs is a team trip to Guatemala later in June! All of this year's fundraising efforts have given them the opportunity to visit and train with the Guatemalan National Team, as well as do some exploring in a beautiful country. International team trips are something the WMGF and I are proud to make possible for these athletes. The main goal is to experience gymnastics and culture in different parts of the world.

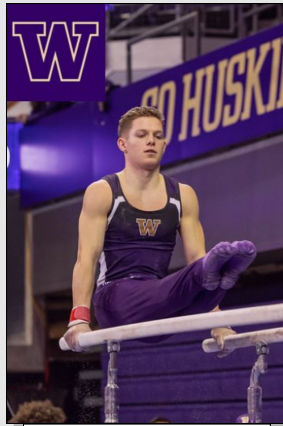
I want to thank all of you for supporting us! We wouldn't be able to accomplish so much without you! I look forward to another great year with all of you by our side, helping us grow even stronger!

**GO DAWGS!**

## WMGF

The Washington Men's Gymnastics Foundation is a non-profit organization that exists to assist the Men's Gymnastics Team at the University of Washington.

Photo credit: Shelby Schumacher



Senior Connor Pattison

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## *GiveBIG Success - Thank You!*

Many thanks to all who contributed during last month's annual GiveBIG fundraising event! Between direct donations and matching pledges, we were able to raise over \$10,000 this year. What does this do for our program? In the words of alumni themselves:

*"Being a team member taught me how to be successful in all aspects of life; accountability, responsibility, integrity, and following up your words with action. It taught me how to prioritize and manage my time, and to push through and finish the job no matter how tired I was. The work put in by Coach Mark, Dr. Hughes, the Board, our donors, and all of my teammates made me into the person I am today."*

-Franklin Stutevoss, team member 2011-2015

*"The Washington Men's Gymnastics Team creates a unique opportunity to improve oneself by striving to improve the experience of others, and ultimately offers a*

*stage for people to have moments that change their lives. I support WMGF because I have seen the success of their efforts first hand. I support WMGF because through gymnastics they have taught me to embody the highest standards of integrity, truth, work ethic, perseverance, dedication, desire, and reciprocity. But most importantly, I support WMGF because I know they will never fail to help people get back up on the bar if they fall."*

-Ben Fisher, team member 2015-2019

Donations also support our coaches, provide scholarships, cover competition travel, and pay for practice facility rent, gym supplies, uniforms, and recruiting; all in service of developing people through the Husky gymnastics experience.

To continue support year-round, please visit:  
[www.wmgf.us/donate](http://www.wmgf.us/donate)

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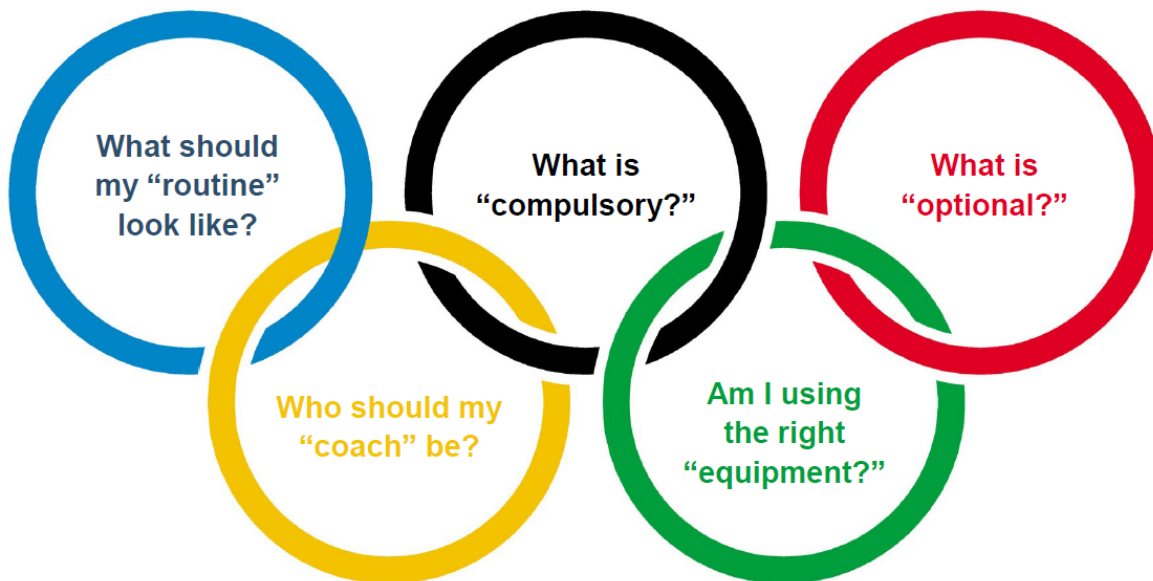
## *Your 2021 - 2022 Huskies*





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**Mark K. Oliver**  
President & Founder - Senior Wealth Advisor  
Former UW Men’s Gymnastics Team Captain

## Meet Assistant Coach Bob Young

by Peter Sawyer

Our assistant coach Bob Young has been a staple of men's gymnastics for over twenty years. During that time, he's developed four generations of gymnasts and been awarded "Coach of the Year" 17 times. He is a member of the Junior National Team Coaching Staff, heavily involved in the Future Stars program, and has helped craft the rules of both age-group and elite gymnastics. Known as an outspoken critic of gymnastics, Bob is also one of its staunchest advocates.

His own start in the sport began when his father saw a banner on the side of the Puget Sound Gymnastics building for a free lesson, and then suggested his baseball-playing son give it a try. Bob immediately objected, but his father insisted. Once he tried it, he was hooked. At 17, he did his first triple-back, and then in 1992 he received a full scholarship to compete for the University of Michigan, where he majored in Exercise Physiology.

After graduation, he moved with his college girlfriend back to Washington and took a job in physical therapy. Eventually a gymnast mother's inquiry about her son's elbow led him to reconnect with his former Puyallup gymnastics coach. Next came an invitation to join the coaching staff at Black Hills Gymnastics.

After more than a year since retiring from age-group coaching, a lunch with long-time friend Jeff Crockett led to the suggestion of coaching for the Washington Men's Gymnastics team. Despite the long commute between Olympia and Mountlake Terrace, Bob agreed to a trial. He found fierce motivation within the college guys, a more casual environment that didn't require him to filter his true self, and a place that appeals to his nature as a "great teacher, not a principal." With that, he officially joined our staff in March of 2021.

Now with an insider's perspective, he's truly realized the time commitment our program requires. "It's unbelievable the time commitment members of this program put in," he says, noting for example, that the gymnasts take just two days per week off from training, while Jeff not only manages the team but also volunteers as Regional Chairman for the age-group program. Bob's con-

tribution to the team comes not only in coaching, but also in things such as developing training plans, the timing of skill development during different phases of the training year, and techniques for what is referred to as "deduction reduction."

Bob says he is also enjoying his role within the team, feely offering advice to the guys, yet "very conscious about how I express opinions," often suggesting the guys

run things past Jeff. As he puts it: "It's easy for me being there, and I'm there to help in any way Jeff needs. The guys call him 'Dad' and they call me 'Uncle Bob'." When I asked Bob what drives him to be a coach, he replied, "It sounds cliché, but giving back? I like helping others have the experience I've had ... I've gotten everything from the sport - my wife, my career."

Outside the gym, Bob is an outdoors guy who enjoys kayaking, climbing, and hiking; so much so that he's climbed Mt. Adams, Mt. Rainier, and Mt. St. Helens. He married his college girlfriend and they've been together 22 years, with a son studying at Western Washington University.

On a personal note, I've casually known Bob several decades, but interviewing him was the first time I'd really learned much about him. I already admired his expertise and drive, but I came away reflecting on how so many of the coaches in our sport strive to not only develop great gymnasts, but also great people - it's one of our team's foundational principles. Bob shares this ideal too, and it's clear that we're lucky to have him as part of our team.



# 2021-2022 Scholarship Recipients

By Mark Russo

The WMGF is very grateful to have the resources provided by our many generous donors, as well as by the hard work of the team, coaches, volunteers, and Board members, to be able to provide modest financial support with scholarships to team members. We administer the Dr. Eric Hughes Endowment Scholarship Fund, set up to provide scholarships specifically for UW students on our team. We also offer assistance with scholarships from the general WMGF operating fund, which can be used for

either UW or local community college expenses. These important tools help our deserving student gymnasts, although it's clear from talking to these guys that scholarships are not the primary motivating factor for choosing our team. The choice is more due to our team culture and the coaches themselves.

Congratulations to this year's group of scholarship athletes!



Xander Agate



Oscar Coromina Pujol



Oscar Hemmert



Galen Henriquez



Andrew Layman



Perry Lightfoot



Connor Pattison

*“Understanding now what goes into fundraising for the team, I'm even more appreciative of what I've been given.”*

*- Xander*

*“While it was not the main factor for my joining the team, I think the fact that a self-funded team is able to give scholarships to its team members is really incredible and really says a lot about the stability and work of the team and the Board.”*

*- Oscar C.*



*“This is a great responsibility that the team and Board have placed on me, but in a good way. It exemplifies the work we have done as a program and the more than 40 years of previous hard work that past team members and Board members have done to help us .”*

*- Perry*

*“Being able to do my sport and receive the support that I do from being on the team ... feels amazing. As a scholarship recipient, I feel even more motivated at fundraising events.”*

*- Galen*

## *Get to Know a Board Member* : Husky alum **Graham Smith-Gordon**

by Mark Russo

Current Board member Graham Smith-Gordon was a vital member of UW teams from 2002-2006 and the epitome of a team player. Some might say Graham is a quiet man but as far as getting the job done, or taking on a task, no one's actions speak louder than Graham's. I had the pleasure of coaching Graham and then working with him as fellow WMGF Board member for some time now. It is with great respect that I thank Graham for all he has given to our program and would say to him, "What you do, you do so well that you don't need to say." I believe his responses to my interview questions below really show why we work to positively affect the gymnasts that go through our program.

### **What years were you on the team?**

2002 through 2006

### **Tell us about your family and current employment.**

I have a wife who I met at the University of Washington and a daughter in second grade. I work for PAC-CAR as an electrical engineer, which is what I studied at UW along with mathematics. I also volunteer on the PTA at my daughter's school and for a running club at the school.

### **When did you join the Board?**

I started on the Board as a team representative. I don't recall if it was my junior or senior year. When I finished school, I stayed on the Board and became a member-at-large. A couple of years after graduating, my wife and I moved overseas. When we came back to the States, our goal was to end up back in the Seattle area, but it took longer than we planned. When I did finally return to the area, I rejoined the Board as a way to reconnect with the team.

### **What are your roles on the WMGF Board?**

I help maintain the mailing list (both email and physical letters). Because of my involvement with the mailing list, I started working with the marketing committee. I now send out most of the emails that are not newsletters.

The other major role that I play on the Board is organizing admissions volunteers for meets that we host. I inherited that role from Dr. Hughes when he passed away. What I like most about that job is chatting with my fellow volunteers or parents during the slow parts of the competition.



Graham and his daughter

### **How do you feel about how the WMGF helps the team?**

As a former member of the team and scholarship athlete, the WMGF just made everything work for me. I know gymnastics is an expensive sport, but I didn't have to think about the money when I was on the team. I just showed up at the gym, the airport, or the fundraising events and everything that I needed to do my job was there. I could always work out, I had the grips, tape, equipment, coaching, etc. that I needed. For competitions, we had our uniforms and warm-ups provided, airfare, hotel, food, and entrance fees were all paid for.

Now that I'm on the Board, I see a lot more of how the budget is built and the efforts to keep costs down. I also have much more insight into where donations come from.

### **How do you feel about how the WMGF interacts with itself?**

Interacting with the Board reminds me a bit of working on equipment moves or other fundraising events when I was on the team. I'm always very impressed with the big things that we can accomplish when everyone is working toward the same goal. This is especially true for hosting meets. The one thing that is different with the Board is the level of specialization. When I was on the team, there were setup tasks that I would try to avoid (I always liked bringing floor boards downstairs more than assembling the floor), but on the Board, there are tasks that I have no idea how to do or what is involved.

(Continued on page 7)

**THANK YOU!**

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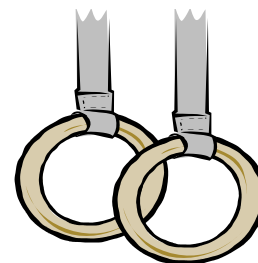
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## Graham Smith-Gordon

*(Continued from page 6)*

### **What would you say to someone who might be interested in helping out the team?**

I think that volunteering with admissions is a great way to get involved. I usually start looking for new admissions volunteers for the Washington Open in the fall. Admissions is a limited time commitment and doesn't require any special skills. You can immediately see how big of an impact you are having on the team by looking at how much money is in the cash box at the end of the session. Plus, you get to watch a gymnastics competition for free.

### **What is your hope for the team and WMGF?**

First, I hope the team wins collegiate nationals next year. That's my hope for the team every year. I'm also looking forward to seeing the new recruits next year.

For the WMGF, I can't wait to see how WMGF changes when we achieve the long-term goal of owning our own facility. It will really change the way we develop talent and change the types of events we can host. **W**

### **JOIN THE WMGF BOARD**

*The WMGF Board meets virtually once a month to develop ideas to promote the program and raise funds for the team.*

*We are always looking for new members!*

*You can join our meetings from anywhere in the world. No specific skills are required except a will to help the team and promote the sport of gymnastics.*

*If you are interested in joining the Board or have further questions, please email us: [team@wmgf.us](mailto:team@wmgf.us)*

*We'd love to have you!*

WMGF  
5529 27th Ave. NE  
Seattle, WA 98105



In This Issue...

Season Review, Scholarship Recipients, and more...

June 10, 2022

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for Your Support this Season!*

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