

THE CRUSADER

WELCOME BACK, CRUSADERS!

Welcome New Faculty

BY: STAFF WRITERS

Welcome to the new faculty members at the college.

Suzanne Campoli

Assistant Professor of Nursing
BSN, University of North Carolina, Wilmington
MSN Nursing Education, University of North Carolina,
Wilmington, 2020



I have been a nurse for 30 years and an instructor for 3 years. I have a BS in Communications from Appalachian State University, ADN from Durham Technical Community College, BSN from UNC Wilmington, and MSN from UNC Wilmington. My husband and I moved to Charlotte from Raleigh in 2020 (building a house during a pandemic is never a good idea). We have four grown children, 2 girls (mine) and 2 boys (his) and a 4-year-old granddaughter who is the light of my life. We also have two dogs, Gizmo and Roxy. I haven't had much spare time in the past 3 years, but I'm hoping to get back into reading for pleasure, hiking, and traveling (hopefully to Ireland next summer). One interesting thing about me is that I am the multiple illegitimate great-granddaughter of Sir Walter Raleigh and Queen Elizabeth I.



Abigail Cousino

Assistant Professor of Biology
B.S., Grand Valley State University
Ph.D., Wayne State University



Jonathan Evans

Assistant Professor of Sport Management
B.A., Baylor University
M.S. Ed., Baylor University
Ph.D., University of Tennessee, Knoxville



Jonathan joins Belmont Abbey College with 20 years of experience in higher education, including 6 years of full-time instruction. He began his academic career as an admissions counselor in 2003 before completing his MEd in Sport Management at Baylor University in 2013, where he published “An analysis of student-athlete and non-student athlete religiosity at the Division I-FBS level” for *The Journal of the Christian Society for Kinesiology and Leisure Studies*. He completed his Doctorate in Sport Studies at the University of Tennessee with a research emphasis on intercollegiate student-athlete culture. Following appointments at Iowa Wesleyan University and St. Andrews University, Jonathan introduces Sport Analytics as a course within the Department of Sport & Motorsport Management.

He enjoys integrating structured debate and gamification in the classroom, but when he is not teaching, he focuses on developing internship and employment contacts for his students. He is an avid softball player, Fortnite gamer and motorcyclist.

Lourdes James
 Assistant Professor of Nursing
 B.S., Winston-Salem State University
 MSN, Saint Joseph’s College of Maine



Lourdes is an Assistant Professor at Belmont Abbey College who brings 18 years of experience as a Registered Nurse and a Family Nurse Practitioner. Lourdes is certified through the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) and has experience caring for patients in the Emergency Department and Urgent Care setting as an FNP-C since 2017. Prior to that, she worked at Atrium Health in Charlotte and CaroMont Health in Gaston County caring for patients in units that include the CVICU, Medical /Surgical, Operating Room, and Emergency Department. Lourdes received her Master of Science in Nursing from Saint Joseph’s College of Maine and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Winston-Salem State University. This will be her first semester teaching at Belmont Abbey College as she transitions into her new role as an Assistant Professor of Nursing but will continue to practice as a Family Nurse Practitioner. Originally from Honduras but grew up in Queens, NY and moved to NC in 2007. Growing up in NYC gave me a great appreciation for different cultures, foods, and languages. I LOVE to travel, meet new people, and try new foods. Excited to start this next chapter in my career as an Assistant Professor and pass on my love for nursing and my experiences to the next generation of nurses.

Lauren Mault
 Assistant Professor of Nursing
 BSN, University of South Carolina, Columbia
 DNP, University of Tennessee, Knoxville



I obtained my Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of South Carolina. After obtaining my BSN, I worked bedside as a pediatric nurse for several years while working to obtain my Doctorate of Nursing Practice from the University of Tennessee. I am a Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner. I always felt a call to the world of higher education and am very thankful for the opportunity to join the Belmont Abbey family. I have been lucky to work at the Abbey as an adjunct faculty member since last September, and I love the environment here. I grew up locally, so I am very excited to help to grow an excellent nursing program for our area! I live in Belmont with my husband, Matt, and our 3 dogs. We will welcome our first child, a baby girl, in January!

Fr. Matthew Schneider
 Visiting Assistant Professor of Theology
 B.A., Our Lady of Thornwood
 STB, Regina Apostolorum Pontifical Athenaeum
 STL, Sacred Heart Major Seminary
 SThD, Regina Apostolorum Pontifical Athenaeum



I’m a priest with the Legionaries of Christ and Regnum Christi. I try to fulfill our mission of helping people know and experience Jesus, be transformed by him, and become his apostles.

In 2022, I finished my doctoral thesis in Moral Theology through *Regina Apostolorum* in Rome, while living in the Legionary community in the diocese of Arlington (Northern Virginia) and as Assistant Chaplain at Divine Mercy University. For the 2022-2024 school years, I teach theology and bioethics at Belmont Abbey College.

Pauline Press published my book, *God Loves the Autistic Mind: Prayer Guide for Those on the Spectrum and Those Who Love Us*, in June 2022.

I am one of the few openly autistic priests. I was diagnosed with autism after my first year of ministry when I failed to read the emotions on kids’ faces as a school chaplain.

Slowly I’ve become one of the biggest Catholic voices on Twitter, with over 68,000 followers, and 100,000 across all social media combined.

Started at Belmont Abbey College January 2023

Christopher Donoghue
Assistant Professor and Director of Theatre
B.A. Belmont Abbey College
M.F.A. University of Washington



Alaina Duncan
Assistant Professor of Nursing
B.S., Northeastern University
M.S. Nursing, Northeastern University
DNP, Duke University



I have been in Nursing for over 20 years, having earned my CNA in high school and most recently my Doctorate in Nursing Practice from Duke University in 2021. Before coming to the Abbey in January 2023, I worked as a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, specializing in Maternal mental health. I am married to my wonderful husband, Chandler, and we have a beautiful daughter, Olivia. I am delighted to join the Nursing Faculty at BAC as an Assistant Professor and look forward to our first cohort of nursing students graduating in May!

Margaret Hunter
Assistant Professor/CLC of Nursing
B.A. Economics/Business Administration, Rhodes College,
B.S. Nursing, Rhodes College,
M.S. Nursing, University of Tennessee, Memphis,
Ph.D. Nursing, Catholic University of America



Professors as Students?

BY: STAFF WRITERS

Did you know that some of our professors and staff members are also college students or were recently college students? We wanted to highlight their experiences and ask for their advice for students interested in pursuing graduate degrees.

Emily Arledge
Assistant Professor of History
PhD in Public History/American History, Loyola University of Chicago

I finished a Ph.D. in Public History/American History. Public history is both a theoretical field of history contemplating how people interact with history outside of the classroom and a practical field of training for working in museums, archives, and other forms of heritage tourism.

I studied at Loyola University of Chicago, a Jesuit institution located on the shore of Lake Michigan.

Her advice: Pursuing a PhD should come from a place of passion, especially for humanities students. When you're in the program, enjoy every moment of learning about a subject you love. However, I strongly urge students to ask programs how they prepare graduates for diverse career paths and to look up what their alumni do after graduation.

Toni Berbrick
Chair of Accounting Dept

Doctorate of Business in Accounting, Liberty University.
Will graduate in 2025

Her Advice:
The highlight of my experience is learning how to tie accounting into the realm of faith and reason. Since Accounting is ultimately founded on ethics, it is an important aspect of this discipline. As part of my program, I am required to incorporate my values and beliefs into each assignment. This has taught me how to authentically incorporate the Belmont Abbey Mission into course content. I believe my quest to foster an environment that encourages spiritual growth and critical thinking is best learned from the eyes of a student. Therefore, my goal was to pursue my DBA-A at a faith-based college that required me to be more intentional and introspective about how God is present in the daily events of my life and the world. My decision to pursue my DBA-A is part of my journey in the endless pursuit of truth.

Words of encouragement for students: The pursuit of truth and wisdom is a journey that doesn't end when you earn your undergraduate degree. Whether you decide to pursue your graduate degree straight out of college, or come back years later, you will find the experience to be transformational. It is not limited to a one-time benefit of landing a job or promotion. It leads to continued advancement opportunities throughout your career.

Nate Bolton

Director of Student Activities
M.Ed. in Student Affairs, from Regent University, Graduate in May 2024.

His Advice:

I was initially hesitant and nervous when considering pursuing a master's degree. I had been out of higher education (as a student) for a few years and my wife and I were expecting our first child the July before I would start my graduate program. I was also worried about completing my schoolwork and my job responsibilities at Belmont Abbey.

The moment that inspired me to pursue a master's degree occurred when I was on a walk around campus with my supervisor, Dr. Tom MacAlester (Vice Provost and Dean of Student Affairs at Belmont Abbey). He supported my interest in furthering my education, and his response to my worries will forever be ingrained in my memory: "Nate, there is never a perfect time to start a master's program. If you have found a program that interests you and will prepare you for what you want to do now and in the future, you must go for it." This advice, coming from a father of multiple kids who just completed a doctorate program, meant a lot to me. My wife, family, and other coworkers have supported me, and I credit all my success to that support.

For those of you considering graduate school, there is no perfect time to begin your studies. If you are considering attending graduate school and have found a program you like, go for it! Another piece of advice for you is to surround yourself with people you can lean on throughout your studies and who will support you every step of the way.

If you have any questions about my experience in graduate school, feel free to email me at natebolton@bac.edu or stop by my office on the second floor of the Student Commons, Room 204.

Cathy Comeau

Coordinator of Student Life

M.Ed in Higher Education/Student Life from Wilmington University in Delaware. I will complete it this semester, but will walk in the June 2024 graduation ceremony.

Advice to students: "I encourage everyone to be a lifelong learner."

Erin Jensen

Associate Professor of English

Masters in Technical Communication and Professional Communication Graduate Certificate from Eastern Carolina University. As I take one class a semester, I hope to graduate by 2027

Advice to students: I recommend all students pursue their goals. I enjoy being a life-long learner and enjoy taking classes in areas where I can continue to learn more about digital communication.

Tom MacAlester

Vice Provost and Dean of Student Life

PhD in Leadership Studies. University of the Cumberland (Williamsburg, KY). June 2022

I would give four pieces of advice to anyone considering a terminal degree:

1. There is never an optimal time to get your doctorate, so just begin. You can do anything for a few years if it is something you really want! Take it one semester at a time and determine what you can and cannot handle in 8 or 16-week chunks of time.
2. Have an idea of what you would like to study in your dissertation phase but allow other topics the ability to make themselves known throughout your program. Think of your dissertation/research like this: you walk into a room of experts talking about a topic you think is interesting. Listen in on the conversations happening and if there is a gap in information being shared or you hear someone say "I don't know" or "Wouldn't THAT be interesting...", there you would find a possible contribution to the discussion through your dissertation and research!
3. Butt-in-Chair. Advanced degrees cannot be done on a whim and without time set aside to do the work. Find your optimal approach to work and just do it. There will be temptations to 'find' times to get your research and/or assignments finished but you will more than likely find easier ways to fill those times set aside if you are not disciplined (a Benedictine Hallmark). I found that I could read and annotate 2-3 articles a day but I needed large chunks of time to write - so I would read/annotate on an ongoing basis and schedule out entire weekends to write, write, and then write some more. This approach certainly took coordination with my wife and family but it worked for a short time. You will have to say no good things that you will really want to do (for me it was a family vacation, concerts, get-togethers with friends, etc) but a short-term sacrifice is absolutely worth the long-term reward!
4. Find a mentor(s) and a colleague to journey with through your program. I had two dear friends and mentors who got their doctorates while working full-time and with families. They were able to clue me in on how to make it through the process with my life still intact at the end. I was blessed that Dr. Karen Price (Vice Provost & Dean for Institutional Effectiveness) here at Belmont Abbey College was in the same program but one semester behind. We were able to collaborate and support one another through the program. While I recognize ours was a unique arrangement, the truth still remains: find someone you can trust and work with throughout the process.

Carrie Minnich

Disabilities Coordinator

EdD in Educational Leadership at Gardner Webb University. Graduate in May of 2025.

Advice to students: While I have waited until after retiring from my first career to work on this dream, I would encourage students to "Just keep swimming," as Dory would say. If you know what your passion is, go for it! I believe it is easier to stay in a "learning mode" than it is to restart one.

Karen Price
Vice Provost and Dean of Institutional Effectiveness
Associate Professor of Data Analytics

PhD Leadership from the University of the Cumberland in Fall 2022.

Her advice: This was my second attempt at a PhD after being the dreaded “ABD” in my first attempt. My advice is don’t give up! I wish I had finished the first degree but I have no regrets earning my doctorate after a ten-year hiatus and virtually starting over.

Peyton (Anderson) Taylor
Tutoring Services Coordinator

Master of Library and Information Science – MLIS,
Louisiana State University, Graduated October 2023

Advice to students: If you are thinking about a graduate program, do ample research! Consider your post-grad plans and choose the program that is going to work for you and what you plan to do during your studies. I chose LSU because of its competitiveness for my degree, but also because it allowed me to customize my pathway. I completed this program in less than two years, fully asynchronous while working full-time! I thoroughly enjoyed being able to work and pursue school at the same time. Not only did I receive a specialized degree, but I also gained even more transferable skills to use in any career I choose!



3rd Annual Undergraduate Poster Research Conference

BY: ERIN JENSEN

The third annual Undergraduate Poster Research Conference will be held, Friday, April 19 from 12-1 pm in the Hub.

All students from Freshman to Seniors are invited to participate. Please email erinjensen@bac.edu for more info

More information on the website:
<https://thehub.bac.edu/academics/undergraduate-research-conference/>

Why Take EN 361 Social Media Writing?

BY: ANNA LI

Are you interested in social media marketing? Internet writing? Or simply want to learn about a different type of writing? If so, you may want to take “EN361 Writing for Social Media” course. This class is offered at Belmont Abbey College every summer, as well as on a rotating basis for the other semesters, and taught by Erin Jensen, Ph.D. This course does not require any specific background, other than “rhetoric” prerequisites.

EN361 is a unique course that focuses solely on writing for social media. It is a unique type of writing as it almost entirely goes against any academic form of writing. This class teaches students about this specific style, which is short, concise, and catchy as the primary goal on any social media platform is to attract the audience’s attention. Being able to write in different styles based on the objectives, is a beneficial skill to possess.

The primary goal of this course is to implement essential concepts of social media, in practice. The professor for this course, Erin Jensen, Ph.D., stated, “The focus of the class is on the application, and so students in the class will be required to use and interact on social media platforms.” First, students learn about popular social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, Pinterest, Reddit, etc., and then, apply that information to their own works.

Professor Erin Jensen, Ph.D. mentioned that this class is helpful for “anyone interested in a career in social media marketing or internet writing,” but also emphasized that “anyone with an interest in social media is welcome.” I was interested in the topic of writing for social media but not as a career choice, so I took this course. It was enjoyable and exciting as I learned a tremendous amount of new information. I was also able to test my skills in the field of social media with a real business by creating content for the company.

If writing for social media is something you are curious about, then you should take this course!



EN 361. WRITING FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

COURSE: 3-CREDIT ENGLISH ELECTIVE

OFFERED: EVERY SUMMER & ON A
ROTATING BASIS FOR THE OTHER
SEMESTERS

PROFESSOR: DR. ERIN JENSEN





First Friday and Saturday Devotions

BY: ANDREA ANTEZANA

Every first Friday and Saturday of the month, members of the Belmont Abbey community come together in gratitude and reparation to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Join us on the first Friday of the month at 11 am for Mass at the Abbey Basilica, followed by causal social and on the first Saturday of the month at 10 am for devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and 11 am for Mass at the Abbey Basilica followed by a causal social. Everyone is welcome to join!

What are the First Friday and Saturday Devotions?

The First Friday devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus originated in the late 17th century when our Lord appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alocque, a French nun in the Visitation Order, with a mission to spread devotion to His Most Sacred Heart.

The Lord said to her:

"Behold this heart which, notwithstanding the burning love for men with which it is consumed and exhausted, meets with no other return from most Christians than sacrilege, contempt, indifference, and ingratitude, even in the sacrament of my love. But what pierces my heart most deeply is that I am subjected to these insults by persons especially consecrated to my service."

Jesus asked for prayers and practices in reparation for past and present offenses made against Him and to increase our love for Him.

To meet the requirements of the First Friday devotion, one must go to Holy Mass and receive Holy Communion for nine consecutive months every first Friday.

For those who faithfully do this devotion, our Lord made twelve promises, one of which was called the Great Promise:

"I promise you in the unfathomable mercy of my heart that my omnipotent love will procure the grace of final penitence for all those who receive communion on nine successive first Fridays of the month; they will not die in my disfavor [the grace of final repentance], or without having received the sacraments, since my divine heart will be their sure refuge in the last moments of their life."

The first Saturday devotion of the Immaculate Heart of Mary originated in the 20th century when Our Lady of Fatima appeared to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal.

Our Lady said to Lucia:

"I shall come to ask . . . that on the First Saturday of every month, Communions of reparation be made in atonement for the sins of the world."

Our Lady again repeated the request to Sr. Lucia:

"Look, my daughter, at my Heart, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce me at very moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You at least try to console me, and say that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the rosary, and keep me company for 15 minutes while meditating on the 15 mysteries of the rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me."

For more information about the Abbey's First Friday and First Saturday devotion, please contact Mary Thierfelder at MaryThierfelder@bac.edu or (704) 813-5626.



Trip to Washington, DC

BY: YOUTHAN LOVE



In October 2023, a group of students from the Department of Politics traveled to Washington, DC. The theme of the trip this semester was presidential, allowing students to gain a better understanding of the Executive Branch of the Federal Government. Students toured the White House and got to see where American history is made and unfolding daily.

Students had an opportunity to lay a wreath at the Tomb of The Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. As well as hosting a dinner/social get-together at Belmont House with some former Presidential Administration members, including Dr. Henry Nau who was an Advisor to President Ronald Reagan and a member of the National Security Council and David Spooner who was Assistant Secretary of Commerce for President George W. Bush.

When asked about the trip freshmen Luke Pullin said "The Washington, D.C. trip with the Politics Department was amazing. I was able to learn about the American Presidency by visiting the White House, going to museums, and even talking to a past member of the Reagan Administration."

"Laying the wreath at the Tomb of The Unknown Soldier was my favorite part of the trip. I got to share a special moment with my classmates. I am grateful to those who risk their lives for our country" Katie Branch

"We live in a country with rich history, and traveling to these locations that history really comes alive. The Tomb of The Unknown Soldier stands as a reminder to all Americans of the horrors of war, and the cost of freedom. We stand forever grateful to those who fought for us, bled for us, and died for us that we might have life, liberty and engage in the pursuit of happiness" Joey Stansberry



St. Joseph's Adoration Chapel

BY: ANNA WILLIAMS

The St. Joseph's Adoration Chapel, located on campus, is an instrumental part of campus life. It provides students, faculty, staff, and the greater community with a place to pray, recenter, and be at peace in the presence of Our Lord.

The Adoration Chapel was completed in 2008. It has since had the Eucharist exposed in it almost every day. Right now the Eucharist is exposed Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 8 PM.

Junior Alyssa Merkel says, "The Adoration Chapel is the heart of the campus and the heart of my spiritual life. It is a beautiful place: a place to adore Our Lord, a place of peace, and a place to rest from the businesses of college life."

The St. Joseph Adoration Chapel is unlocked daily for personal prayer. Contact Campus Ministry to get involved or to sign up for a holy hour.



Belmont Students to Florida

BY: YOUTHAN LOVE

The Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) hosted its yearly Society Leader's Conference in Fort Lauderdale Florida September 15th-17th, 2023. Belmont Abbey's ISI chapter Abbey Political Thought Society was fortunate enough for its President Nikolas Von Spakovsky and Vice President Youthan Love to attend the conference.

At the conference, Nikolas and Youthan heard talks from scholars such as Tom Woods, George Nash, Tyler Dobbs and more. As well as having the opportunity to gain knowledge on how to host events, speakers, and grow the chapter on campus at Belmont Abbey. The conference also provided both students the opportunity to talk with like-minded people and fellow society leaders across the country.



Belmont Abbey New Residence Halls

BY: FRANKEE HENDRICKS

Belmont Abbey has built two new residence halls on campus. St. Gertrude the Great (girls) and St. Gregory the Great (boys) and located across from the apartments and next to the Wheeler Center

Students had to live in hotels while the residence buildings were finishing up. The girls were able to move in in September and the boys in October. The long wait was worth it though with these beautiful dorms being great to live in.

Both dorms are four floors consisting of a mix of suite-style rooms along with regular rooms of two students per room. The ones who reside in suite-style share a couch space and bathroom with another pair of students. Other students can use the shared bathroom at the center of each hallway while having three lounge areas on each floor. Student Lexi Burkhalter, a resident of St. Gertrude’s says, “I like how there are a lot of bathrooms so I never have to wait to use one. I also like how there are a lot of common area spaces that my friends and I can study in without having to walk all the way to the library.”

Floors 2-4 have a laundry room on each floor with six washers and six dryers each. Plenty of room for laundry, and even for the first floor it is just a short elevator ride up. Not terrible considering the long walk outside O’Connell to get to the laundry. Students are enjoying their living spaces in the new residence halls! Consider choosing to live in one of these two halls next year!

The Accounting, Data, and Technology Honor Society

BY: ANDREA ANTEZANA

The Accounting, Data, and Technology Honor Society is a great honor society for any student interested in accounting. The society is an excellent opportunity to learn more about accounting, data, and technology and connect students with professionals in Charlotte.

Not only will students get more insight about these fields of study from professors, but they will also learn much from alumni.

Students will have the opportunity to participate in networking events, connecting them with local professionals and volunteering events, encouraging students to give back to their community.

As a member of the Accounting Honor Society, one belongs to a group that embodies Belmont Abbey's core values of love, conversation, discipline, humility, stewardship, hospitality, and community in the pursuit of knowledge and excellence in accounting.

The Accounting Honor Society points out scholarships and career and internship tools, ensuring students can access all the resources needed for a successful career.

At the Abbey, we strive for excellence in all we do, and the Accounting Honor Society is no different, helping to nurture excellence and growth in students.

Anyone who wishes to become a member of the Accounting Honor Society is welcome to join given that they have achieved at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA, have attained a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in upper-level courses (in their declared area of concentration), have achieved a rank within the first 35% of their class, have attained a 3.25 cumulative GPA on the most recently completed 30 semester hours, or have earned an honors distinction utilized by Belmont Abbey College deemed to be equivalent to the above by the Accounting, Technology, and Data Honor Society faculty advisor.

If you are interested in joining, please contact Professor Toni Berbrick, the faculty member in charge of the Accounting Honor Society.

Crusaders

BY: ALLEN HOUSER

What is a Crusader you may ask yourself?

The Crusades were a series of wars fought by early Christians to secure what is considered the holy land. A crusader is a participant of said war(s). The founder of the first abbey Francis Wegg-Prosser and the German monks who established the first school with him in 1876 were like peaceful crusaders. Originally roman catholic converts wanted to spread their Benedictine principles and presence. Similarly, the monks who established Belmont Abbey took their time to develop the foundations of the school and didn't just pick any old mascot to represent that. They chose one with purpose and a deeper meaning. The Crusader can be defined as a person who works hard or campaigns vigorously for a cause as well. A crusader in a modern sense is someone who will fight for their religious freedom.



Caromont Hospital

BY: YOUTHAN LOVE

Several members of the Executive Student Government members had the opportunity to tour the hospital being constructed on campus. With Belmont Abbey partnering with CaroMont Health, the hospital is set to be finished in the summer of 2024. The hospital will have 55 rooms for patients, as well as an emergency department, and a medical office building. There is also the opportunity to add to the hospital in the future with the possibility of adding two more floors to the top.



Eligible Rising Juniors Can Join Army ROTC at Belmont Abbey College

BY: RICK NASH

The Army ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps) is offering qualified rising juniors (for Fall '24) an opportunity to enroll in the program at Belmont Abbey College. By attending one of the 30-day Basic Camps next summer at Fort Knox, KY, students become eligible to enroll in the final two-year Advanced Army ROTC program.

Belmont Abbey College's Army ROTC is a partner in the 49er Battalion, hosted at UNC Charlotte. The Department Chair and Professor of Military Science at UNC Charlotte, LTC Joseph Frederick, noted several benefits of entering the Army ROTC program through Basic Camp. Two 30-day camps (Cycle #1 - 27 June to 28 July or Cycle #2 - 13 July to 11 August) will be offered during the 2024 Summer months.

First, there is no military service obligation to attend the camp, and participating in the program is an opportunity for students to determine if serving in the military is right for them. Other benefits include:

- Students will be flown (for free) to and from Fort Knox, KY.
- Students will receive free meals, free lodging, and a \$40 daily per diem while attending.
- After completing our Basic Camp, the student will be offered (after meeting all contracting requirements)

the opportunity contract in the Fall. If they contract, they could receive a \$5000 contract signing bonus and would also start receiving a \$420 monthly, tax-free Cadet stipend, during the academic year, until they graduate.

- Additionally, if they have a competitive college GPA and do well on the Army Combat Fitness Test, they could end up being awarded a 2- or 2.5-year Army ROTC scholarship. If they receive a scholarship, then they will be required to forfeit the signing bonus mentioned above.

To qualify for Basic Camp, students:

- Must be a U.S. Citizen.
- Can only have four (4) or five (5) semesters (starting in the Fall) remaining until they will complete their Bachelor's Degree.
- Must be medically cleared to attend by a physician.
- Complete all required documentation.

For more information and further details, students may contact Rick Nash, UNC Charlotte Army ROTC, at rnash3@charlotte.edu or (704) 687-8633.



SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

Conference Carolinas: New and Improved

BY: BAILEY PRESLEY

Conference Carolinas is the first Division II conference to announce its partnership with Abakus, LLC, as well as implement a three-division model where all 14 teams will be geographically split into segments. The sports that are participating in this new concept as of the 2023-24 season, are men’s and women’s soccer, women’s volleyball, men’s and women’s basketball, and softball.

The three divisions are segmented into Northwest, Southwest, and East divisions. The Northwest division will feature Belmont Abbey, Converse, King, and Lees Mcrae, while the Southwest division will feature Emmanuel, Erskine, North Greenville, Southern Wesleyan, and Young Harris. Lastly, the East division will feature Barton, Chowan, Francis Marion, Mount Olive, and UNC Pembroke.

The partnership with Abakus, LLC known for providing smart, digital, and cutting-edge solutions and services, will introduce KPI, a computer-generated metric, to Conference Carolinas. KPI will determine seeding for conference tournaments by measuring the relative strength of the athletic teams, W-L-T results, and strength of the opponents and location of contests by using a sophisticated model.

Belmont Abbey softball coach Tony Mele says “I’m proud and excited to be part of a growing conference that continues to provide great competition for our athletes. The new divisional layout allows us more localized matchups to protect our athlete's time as well as assist us with expense control.” Conference Carolinas Commissioner Chris Colvin believes these new implementations to be a historic time for Conference Carolinas, and cannot wait to see how the division standing will play out.

Women’s Soccer

BY: REAGAN CULLEN



The Abbey women’s soccer season drew to a close on November 12, after losing to UNC Pembroke in the Conference Championship Finals. The Crusaders battled to the 90th minute to try and take home the title of Conference Champions, only to run out of time, losing 2-1. Despite the recent upset in the finals, the 2023 women's soccer team had an amazing season, obtaining a conference record of 8-1-3, and winning the Conference Western Division. Abbey women’s soccer was recognized for multiple awards, as Coach Michael Lynch received Coach of the Year, Junior Mia Muckenthaler received Defender of the Year, and seven players received all-conference.

The team’s success on the field can be credited to both the hard work and skill on the pitch, but also the atmosphere and culture off the field. The Crusaders commonly used the phrase “TEAM loves TEAM,” which originally started as a corny phrase that Coach Lynch mentioned in a preseason meeting. However, the players noticed the more the phrase was used, there was some truth behind it. According to Gabby Enciso, a fifth-year all-conference player, “This year was bigger than soccer, we created a lifelong sisterhood with one another. What we accomplished this season was the product of a tight-knit group of girls. Being a member of the program myself, I can speak on every player's behalf that being a part of a team that you love makes you want to put 100% effort both on and off the field. Sabrina Whitehouse, a junior, agreed as she stated, “Losing with a ring so close insight was devastating, but you could every player battling up until the last minute, proving how much every player is bought into this team’s success.”

I look forward to the reunion of this team come 20 years, as this program truly has created a sisterhood. Losing is never an easy thing, but almost every team finishes their season on a loss. However, the 2023 Belmont Abbey women’s soccer team has not allowed this loss to define their groundbreaking season. Their success can be credited to the lasting legacy all alums and absent sisters have created in their four years of representing the school, along with all the seniors who have dedicated their time and energy to the program. This year’s team has created a culture and team environment that will hopefully leave a lasting impression on the players in years to come.



Photo Highlights from Other Fall Sports

BY: ABOUBACK DIOUF, ANALY CENTENO, MORGAN COWARD

Women’s Volleyball



Men’s Volleyball



Freshman Men’s Basketball



Women’s Softball



Meet The Staff Writers

Student Editors: Emily Nagel, Spring 2024
Joy Dygowski, Fall 2023

Andrea Antezana
Reagan Cullen
Frankee Hendricks
Allen Houser
Anna Li
Youthan Love
Bailey Presley
Anna Williams

Photo Credits

Analy Centeno
Morgan Coward
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