

BIG BLUE

Millikin's Sports Magazine

Illustrated

Love of the Game

The Integration of
Sports and Acadamea

Spring '23
Vol. 1



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Letter from the Editor



First off, I want to welcome you to the first edition of Big Blue Illustrated. I started this magazine to highlight all sports for men and women from swimming to basketball to golf. I have always been in and been a fan of sports, especially the underrated ones. As the creator, I want to push the equality of student athletes across the NCAA and beyond. Playing a sport in college is a big deal regardless of level, and being on the Track and Field team my freshman and sophomore year taught me that and much more. Throughout this magazine I want people to see that women, non-binary, and all Division III athletes overall are forces to be reckoned with. Every team member I have met has more passion than I have seen in a group of athletes so far. That's why the theme of this edition is Love of the Game.

Women's sports are on the rise. The WNBA is expanding and the women of the PHL are getting sponsorships equivalent to their male counterparts in the NHL. This magazine strives for equality and an unbiased approach to sports for any gender. Men's and women's opinions, awards, wins, losses, and passion are very real. Those are not something to be hidden, but something to be shared. So here I am, sharing all of these things done by the athletes of Millikin from winter to spring of the 22-23 school year.

Division III athletics is a different level of competition. I know from experience we compete against D I, D II, and DIII schools and win. We prioritize our education and hands-on classroom experiences at Millikin while still continuing on with the sports we love. As you're reading, know that everything adds up to the love of the game.

There is a long way to go in the world of equality and acceptance of women in sports and maybe this can be a start. My hope is that if you ever think you are less than someone else you're not. You are just as important as anyone else.

Thank you for being here,
Skylar Meents

Skylar Meents



A History Lesson

Millikin University has a proud tradition of academic excellence and a storied history in Big Blue athletic endeavors.

Millikin University opened its doors in 1903, the athletic programs were right on its heels with football, men's basketball and baseball all competing in the University's first full academic year (1903-04). Since its start, Big Blue athletics has achieved considerable success both as a member of the College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin (CCIW) and at the national level as a member of the NCAA Division III. Prior to joining the NCAA, was a member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).

Athletic programs got an early start, and so did the nickname "Big Blue." According to historical records, the "Big Blue" is generally attributed to Carl Head, a professor of mechanical engineering who used the name on posters during the 1916 football season.

Millikin joined the College Conference of Illinois (CCI) on April 26, 1946 as one of its nine charter members (Augustana, Millikin, Carthage, Elmhurst, Illinois College, Illinois Wesleyan, Lake Forest, Millikin,

North Central and Wheaton). The league was renamed the CCIW in 1967 to recognize Carthage, which had moved its campus from Illinois to Wisconsin as well as Carroll's entrance in 1955. Regarded as "The Best Small College Conference In The Nation,"

Millikin is one of four charter members with uninterrupted membership. The NCAA added championships for women's sports in 1981 while women's team titles were added to the CCIW slate during the 1985-86 season. A testament to its label as the "Best Small College Conference," CCIW schools have accounted for 58 national championships at the NCAA Division III level since the organization divided into three divisions in 1973.

Big Blue athletes also garner significant respect in the classroom with 81 athletes having earned the prestigious Academic All-America honor during their careers. While several other organizations honor athletes' academic success, the only honorees officially recognized are the Academic All-America awards administered by the College Sports Information Directors of American (CoSIDA).



BASKE

MEN'S

Three sports were available for men in the 1903-1904 academic school year: football, baseball, and basketball. Men's basketball had its first season during that time but did not have a team the following year. Millikin welcomed the basketball team back for the 1905-1906 academic year and has had a team since. 119 years after the start of the men's basketball team, the Big Blue has wrapped up the 2022-2023 season. A strong start and close calls led to a 11-14 season with an average of 70.3 points per game.

MENTAL HEALTH TIP:

**Do at least 1 thing a day
that makes you happy**

FAVORITE PRE- GAME MEAL:

**Water and veggie sand-
wich from Jimmy John**

COACHES:

**Head Coach: Kramer
Soderberg**

**Assistant Coach: Doarian
Hobbs Jr.**

**Assistant Coach: Tom
Noonan**

TBALL

WOMEN'S

Women's basketball has made a lot of progress since the program's first season of four games in the 1970-1971 academic year. That first season, the women went 3-1 and since then the program has only grown. Women's basketball has been a large part of Millikin's culture especially in more recent years with a few star athletes who can truly work as a team. This past season was outstanding with a record of 24-5, an average of 72.8 points per game with a point margin of 16. This season has been a treat to watch but for an inside look at the player's daily life, check out page X for CJ McCullum (Sr.) who has been a huge asset to the team.



FITNESS TIP:

**Make sure to stretch
after every workout or
game!**

COACHES:

Head Coach: Olivia Lett
Assistant Coach: Grace
Yaunches
Assistant Coach:
Whitney Getz



Baseball

Athlete Spotlight *Tyler Procajlo*

The Baseball team at Millikin has been here since the beginning in 1903, only two years after the school officially opened and is part of the original three sports that men could play. After the beginning of the baseball program J. D. Moss, class of 1906, was the first ever inductee of Millikin's Hall of Fame. Thanks to alumni and Millikin Emeritus and Emeriti Trustees, the Big Blue also has the newest addition to the baseball team, the stunning \$5.4 million Workman Family Baseball Field that opened in the fall of 2019. The Big Blue baseball team is a great team to watch play. The audience can always tell the players love the game and enjoy every moment of being on the field. The team is about halfway through their season with a current record of 15-3.

Sophomore Tyler Procajlo from Elmhurst, IL says to take a step back some days to keep your mental health in check but to keep his physical health good he says to track your sleep and make it a priority to rest. Procajlo usually listens to rap music but before games he likes to listen to girly music with the boys. Nothing wrong with a little bit of bonding time!

COACHES:

Head Coach: Brandon Townsend

Assistant Coach: Dylan Hamilton

Assistant Coach: Nathan Bonter

FITNESS TIP:

Create an environment that reminds you to stay on your fitness journey. Make it easy to start the habit.

Softball

Softball is about halfway through their season with a strong start and current record of 11-7. Since the program began in the 1982 - 1983 academic year, the women of this team have been progressing in ways some cannot even imagine with the past season (2022) ended with a 37-9 record and making Millikin history by winning the first Super regional in the school's history and advancing to the NCAA tournament. Judy and Gary Workman, class of 1965, contributed to two fields in two years but the first was the Workman Family Softball Field which is a \$2 million investment built for the program in 2017.

FAVORITE PRE-GAME MEAL:

A big blue energy drink, eggs, and toast

COACHES:

Head Coach: Whitney Sowers

Assistant Coach: Katie Tenboer

Assistant Coach: Martin Stopek

MENTAL HEALTH TIP:

Find fulfillment outside your sport

MEN AND WOMEN'S GOLF

Men's golf at Millikin started in the spring of 1978. Their season is divided into two halves, one half in the fall and one in the spring. The Millikin men have done well so far in their fall season with high placements in tournaments as a team as well as some individuals such as Jack Patterson (Grad) who has consistently done well in tournaments scoring for the Big Blue. Men's golf has quite a bit of season left with dates listed below.

Women's golf started 20 years after their male counterparts in 1998. Like men's golf, the women's season is also split into two halves. They have had a good first half with a first place win in one

of their tournaments. The Big Blue have consistently ranked high in the later half of their season with four of out six tournaments being in the top four teams. This will be an exciting second half of their season and to watch you can find dates for matches below.



FITNESS TIP:

Go to the gym 3-4 times a week to stay in shape

MEET THE DIRECTOR OF GOLF

Samuel Osborne has been coaching men and women's golf for 12 years. Coach Osborne makes sure that his athletes put academics first. He says you have to be mindful there's a reason we say "student"-athlete. The coaching staff plans our practice and tournament schedule around classes and are flexible with things that come up with classes and study groups. Some academic advice he has for students is to form good relationships with your professors and visit during office hours. His favorite memory from this season so far is when senior Summer Dick shot her personal best (79) at conference last fall. 5th year Jack Patterson finishing 2nd place at the Carthage Invite in the fall, the place where he suffered a knee injury a year ago. Osborne clearly loves his team even during the 6AM morning workouts when the team is cracking jokes and making every morning memorable.



COACHES:
Assistant Coach:
Hunter York

**MENTAL
HEALTH TIP:**

**Have a good support
system**



Men and Women's Swimming

Both men's and women's swimming began 1981 and has a winter season with it coming to a conclusion in the middle of February. Both teams have done well with similar wins over the course of the season adding nine new records to the All Time Top Ten records for the swim program at Millikin. Some of these times and records include Jack Hughes (Fr.) now holds the fifth all time 100m fly with a time of 52.55 and Aly Barnes (Sph.) who has added 4 more records to her resume. The team practices at the local YMCA and keep improving every year.

COACHES:

Head Coach: Molly Duesterhaus

FITNESS TIP:

Be thankful for having an able body that allows you to use it

MENTAL HEALTH TIP:

Create something. It may seem like a lot of work, but it will help you feel better later.

Meet the Coaches

Andrew Perry is a Triathlon and Swimming Assistant Coach for both men and women from Fort Mitchell, Kentucky. He has been coaching the triathlon for three years and this past season was his first coaching swimming here at Millikin. Perry was able to get to know the swim team for the first time at their preseason retreat but his favorite memory from this year is when Kendall Rossignol (Sph.) had the best race of her life at the East Regional Triathlon in Virginia. She held on to a bike pack for the first time. While this is a huge accomplishment the funniest memory Perry has from the season is making Julia Druml (Jr.) practice buckling her helmet in transition 1 which she has some trouble with. Every little bit of practice helps! The pre meet meal is easily chipotle and when his team is needing a little bit of inspiration Perry reminds us all that “scared money can’t win.”



Ed Pacey is also an assistant coach for triathlon, men's and women's swimming. Unlike Perry, Pacey is a veteran after coaching for 19 years. His best memory of the season is seeing the athletes work with the Special Olympics swimmers on Sundays but for Pacey, nothing will top watching Assistant Coach Perry try and be polite to restaurants that severely messed up their orders. His pre meet meal is right along side of AC Perry's by being quick and healthy with a Panera Mediterranean Bowl.

men's TENNIS

108 years ago the men's tennis team began at Millikin. The men's team has had three athletes be recognized as CCIW Athlete of the Week only halfway through their season. Their home court is located in Fairview Park near campus. Like golf, their season has a portion in the fall and the spring semester but ultimately plays a majority of the season in the spring. The Big Blue has won most of their matches so far this season.

COACHES:

Head Coach: Andrew Coon

Assistant Coach: Reiss Naylor

MENTAL HEALTH TIP:

Mental health really effects your game so it needs to come first. Go into your game with a clear mind

FITNESS TIP:

Stay active daily, try to get at least one good walk a day.

womens TENNIS

The women's team started in 1979 and has had a great run recently. After their record breaking year in the 2021-2022 season the hopes are high for this season. So far the women of the Big Blue are delivering with lots of rallies leading to success. Last year, they were able to set six different records including Most Season Wins in both Single and Doubles, and Best Winning Percentage. The team's home court is also Fairview park

PREGAME RITUAL:

The team huddle



Athlete Spotlight

Senior Briana Barconi shared that her pregame must-do is to have a fun hairstyle before every meet. She prioritizes breaks throughout her routine whether its ljust leaving the house or going to the gym to keep her mental health good. Barconi's favorite pre meet meal is pasta.

TRACK AND FIELD

The men's Track and Field team started in 1906 shortly after the opening of Millikin making it one of the oldest sports on campus. Men's and women's teams compete side by side in the present day and are two of the largest teams with a combined roster of 94 student athletes. There are so many different sections within this team from sprinters to throwers to multis who do it all.

The women's team came 74 years later in 1980 and is comparable to the men's team in every way. With record breakers on both teams and countless personal records from this indoor season, the outdoor season for the Big Blue is looking exciting. Athletes Adriyanna Patterson (Sr., Throws) and Jake Schumaker (Jr. Mid Distance) were able to compete at the DIII National Championships this past March and continue to impress the crowd with record breaking results.



Pictured: Gabe Bush, Senior

MENTAL HEALTH TIP:

Take it one task at a time. Focusing on everything you have to do can be really overwhelming.

Meet the Director of Cross Country and Track and Field

Andrew Craycraft is the Director of Cross Country and Track & Field and has been coaching it for 17 years. His favorite memories from this season are the whole team rushing the men's 4x4 as they crossed the line, conference champions (1st time in program history). It was an awesome way to end a conference meet and a great example of what an inclusive, team-first-type environment that we believe in. One of our athletes who injured her ankle earlier in the meet even

hopped on one foot over to join the mob-like celebration. Watching the video of Coach Ben running/cheering across the infield of the indoor track at Conference and falling as he tried to jump over the flags is his funniest memory by far. Coach Craycraft says to put your mind first and your body second. His mental health tip is to master an internal dialog that is positive, hope-seeking and joyful. Work hard to cultivate your self-worth. Use writing and journaling as a way to reflect and emphasize on the positives in your life. Find and hold on to gratitude each day. At every meet you can see the passion that he has for the sport.



COACHES:

Assistant Coach: Joe Swayer

Assistant Coach: Steven Talbot

WRESTLING

Wrestling was one of the more recent sports to be added on the men's side coming to the school in 1956. Their season starts in the middle of november and goes on through the spring and with multiple record breaking seasons and national championship wins behind them, Millikin had a good run going 10-6 in their season. 36 athletes on the roster in the incredible Millikin Wrestling Facility located at 151 West Wood st. here in Decatur. There are amenities that athletes can utilize the video room, hot or cold tubs, or the four regulation sized wrestling mats.

BIG M BLUE

COACHES:

Head Coach: Ryan Birt
Assistant Coach: Jason Eckenrod
Assistant Coach: Brendan Ladd

FITNESS TIP:

If you don't do it, no one will do it for you.

MENTAL HEALTH TIP:

The difference between fear and courage, is a step forward. Putting yourself in the best position possible that comes your way.



Beyond

♥ the ♥

Field



Q&A With CJ McCullum

Senior Digital Media Marketing and Spanish double major and shooting guard for the Big Blue

CJ loves the competitive nature of basketball. She says there's a rush when you step onto the court right before tipoff

What are some of the best foods you use to fuel your body?

"Some of the best foods that I use to fuel my body is lots of protein and pasta. I like to make big meals for myself during the season. Mostly it's a lot of chicken, baked, or pan fried with some type of carb, sometimes pasta or rice. And I always have something green on my plate, whether it's a salad or an assortment of vegetables! "

What advice do you have for other female athletes?

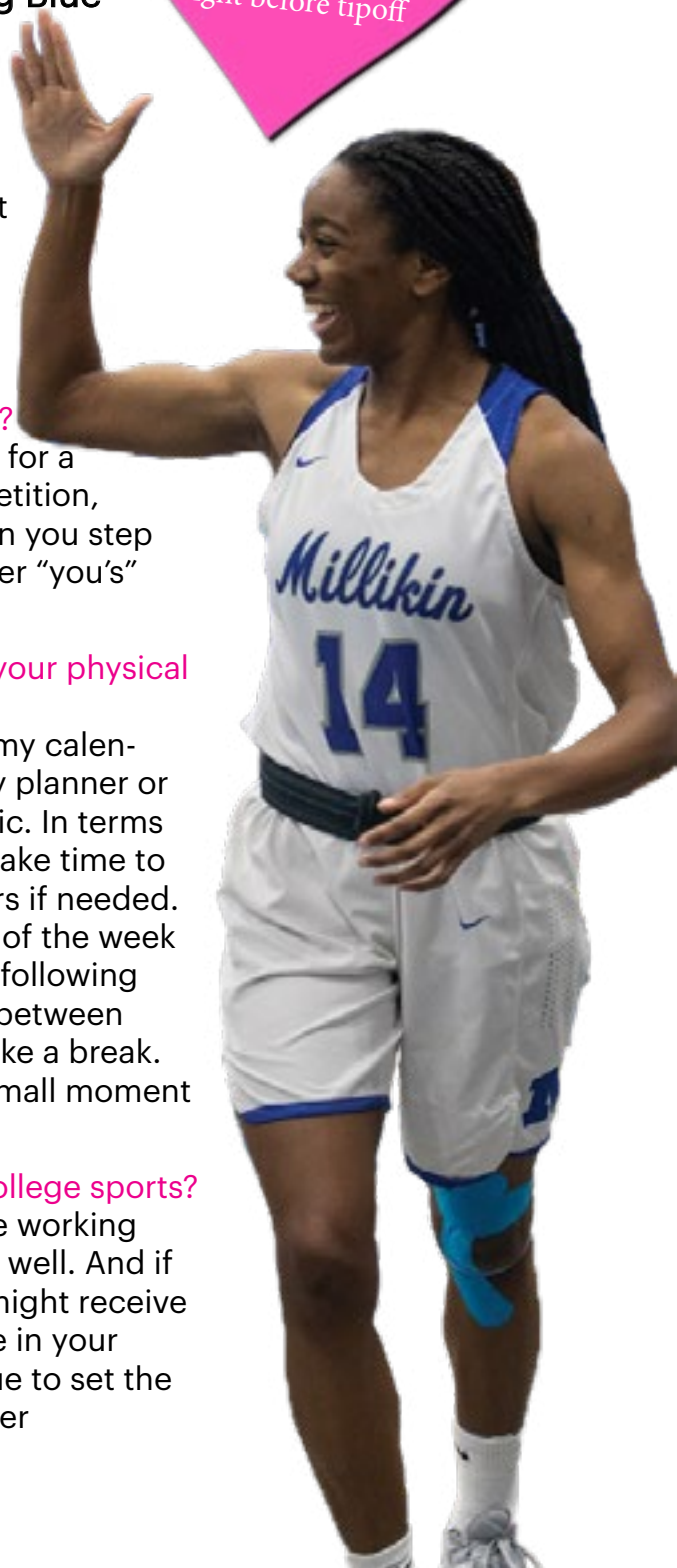
"Play for your younger self. You entered your sport for a reason, you liked the intensity, you liked the competition, you were having fun. Remember those things when you step onto the court, the field, etc. Play for all the younger "you's" in the stands!"

How do you stay on top of your studies as well as your physical and mental health?

"I have to plan out my weeks using my planner or my calendar at home in order to stay on top of school. If my planner or calendar isn't up to date, everything gets so chaotic. In terms of my physical health, after my practices I always take time to stretch and get treatment from the Athletic Trainers if needed. I try to get heavy treatment more towards the end of the week after our games to basically reset my body for the following week. Lastly, my mental health. I always take time between classes, practices, and homework to just sit and take a break. Whether it's 10 minutes to an hour, just getting a small moment to do nothing always seems to help."

What would you tell people who want to go into college sports?

"Be prepared to work and be competitive. You'll be working hard not only in your sport but in the classroom as well. And if you don't put in extra work in your free time, you might receive negative results. You'll also need to be competitive in your sport and in the classroom setting as well. Continue to set the bar higher for yourself, create new and harder goals and you'll be set for life!"



The Music We Love

Our Top 3 Songs of the Season



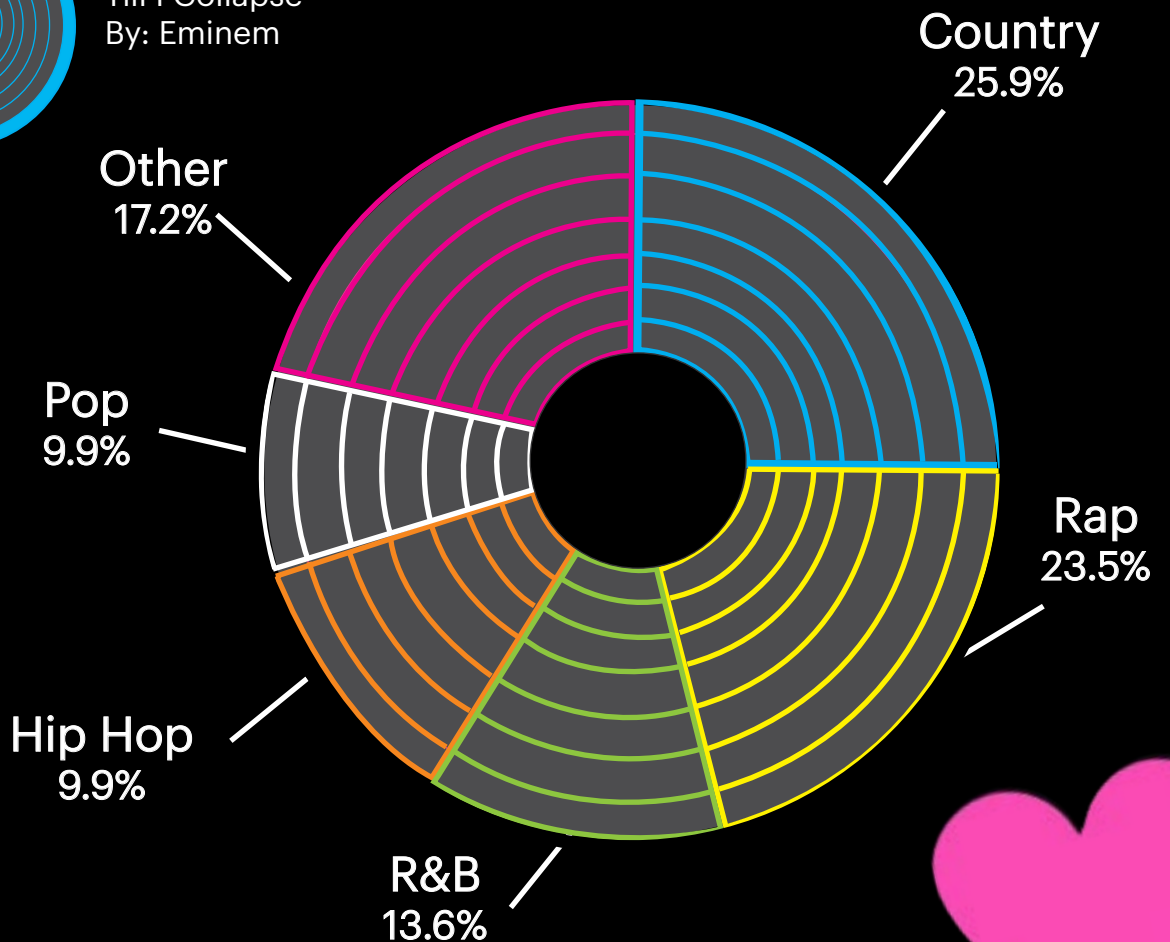
Dreams and Nightmares
By: Meek Mill



Anything by Nicki Minaj



Till I Collapse
By: Eminem



AWARDS

MEN:

JT Welch - Academic All District

Cole Laurence - CCIW Respect
Award

Braden Birt - Lindsay Medallion

Caleb Buehrle - CCIW Pitcher of the
Week

Drew Detmers - CCIW Pitcher of the
Week

Hasting Bjorkman - CCIW Men's Ten-
nis Student Athlete of the Week

Cole Phillips - CCIW Men's Tennis
Student Athlete of the Week

WOMEN:

Elyce Knudsen - 2023 Jostens Trophy,
College Sports Communicators (CSC)
Academic All-America® First Team,

2023 WBCA NCAA
Division III Coaches'
All-America team, Women's
Basketball Student-Athlete
of the Week (x4)

Bailey Coffman - CCIW Women's
Basketball All-Region

Taylor Chase - CCIW Women's Golf
Student-Athlete of the Week

Summer Dick - CCIW RESPECT Award

Aundrea Jenkins - CCIW Hitter of the Week

Aly Armstrong - CCIW Pitcher of the Week

Addison Sargent - CCIW Pitcher of the Week

Aly Barnes - CSC Academic All-District

Brianna Brunk - CSC Academic All-District

Shay Buchanan - CSC Academic All-District

Kendall Rossignol - CSC Academic All-District

Brigid Duesterhaus - Lindsay Medallion

Adriyanna Patterson - CCIW Athlete of
the Week

Who, What, and Why?

You might have found yourself reading this whole magazine and wondering why you only saw one person on the staff. Well, hello! Thanks for making it this far and I hope you've enjoyed the visual design and content you have seen. I'm Skylar Meents, and you've already read about some of my passion in my letter to you all, but what you did not know before this is that this entire magazine is also a portfolio piece.

I made this entire magazine by myself as my senior capstone project for Millikin University. Senior level students are able to choose any project of their liking from marketing pieces or video content, some students even make music. I chose to challenge myself and create a sports magazine in two months while working 30 hours a week at my part-time job and four other classes. I chose to learn more about Adobe InDesign and keep expanding my skillset with illustration, photography, and lots and lots of design. I was able to add in fun doodles and bright pink hearts to keep the theme. I love the little details such as the foot steps on the baseball field and the grass on the golf cart.

This is something that I want to do for the rest of my life. I am looking for a career in sports, graphic design, editorial design, and or marketing. I can create a wide variety of pieces such as this one, infographics, branding, social media campaigns, video editing and VFX editing, and logo design. I have a passion for all of these and want to continue to grow in these areas and more.

I have been lucky enough to be part of multiple internships and student run ventures at Millikin like Millikin Creates which is a student run marketing firm where I was able to work with real clients and get firm experience in areas such as logo design and video editing. This is also the place I was able to learn how to run a social media account and use the tips I picked up in the growth of my own personal brand and social media presence.

This magazine will be presented at the Celebration of Scholarship held at Millikin University on April, 28th, 2023. It is also going to be shown at the Designer Showcase on May 4th, 2023. If you did not like a single thing in this magazine, I have a wide variety of skills. Please take a look at my resume on the following page or scan the QR code below if you're interested in any of the skills that I bring to the table.





Skylar Meents

Sports Media Specialist

Contact



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-364348209/

Tech Knowledge

Adobe Photoshop

Adobe Illustrator

Adobe InDesign

Adobe Premier Pro

Adobe After Effects

Noteable Elements

Social Media Marketing Certification

Digital Media Marketing

Video Post Production and Editing

Awards

Deans List, 2019 - 2022

Alpha Lambda Delta, 2019

Education

2019 - 2023

BA Arts Technology

Concentration in Visual Media and Minor in Digital Media Marketing

Millikin University

Experience

Winston Salem Dash Baseball Team

Social Media and Marketing Intern, Summer 2022

Development of a brand position and consistent brand message through all forms of communication, including digital media and content, game operations, and fan communication and implementation of creative marketing campaigns supporting brand exposure and awareness and the measurement of campaign results

Millikin University Athletics

Creative Director of Internship, 2021-2022

Create sports media content such as photos, animations, and graphics following the branding of Millikin University's Marketing Department while overseeing a team of 3 other interns

Millikin Creates


Social Media Manager, Staff Member, 2021-2022

Creating and scheduling posts across all social media as well as working with clients, project management, communication between client and firm, as well as video and design projects for clients

Aldi

Associate, 2022 - present

Customer priority, upkeep of weekly tasks such as cleaning, organization, and customer relations



For more information about
schedules, rosters, or statistics visit:
athletics.millikin.edu

To join the Big Blue, apply to Millikin at:
millikin.edu/admission/apply

Pictured: Skylar Meents on visit day, 2019