

Region 8 – Student-Athlete Panel



DeMarr Harvey – UNC Asheville

DeMarr Harvey, a **UNC Asheville representative and student-athlete**, is making an impact both on and off the track. A member of the **Bulldogs' Track & Field team**, DeMarr specializes in sprints, competing in events like the **200m and 400m**. His dedication to athletics is matched by his commitment to leadership and personal growth.

DeMarr will share insights on perseverance, teamwork, and the mindset needed to excel in both sports and life. His experience as a collegiate athlete and his passion for inspiring others make him a valuable voice for young leaders looking to make an impact in their schools and communities.



Samantha LaFon – Appalachian State University

Samantha LaFon, a **student-athlete and representative of Appalachian State University**, is making an impact both on and off the court. As a member of the **App State Women's Basketball team**, Samantha brings dedication, resilience, and leadership to her sport.

Samantha will share insights on teamwork, perseverance, and the mindset needed to succeed in athletics and beyond. Her experience as a collegiate athlete, combined with her passion for inspiring others, makes her a valuable role model for young student-athletes striving to lead and excel in their schools and communities.



Greg Gantt Jr. – UNC Asheville

Greg Gantt Jr. is a **former North Carolina student-athlete** from **Fayetteville, NC**, who has excelled both on and off the court. A **standout at Trinity Christian High School**, Greg was a **4-star recruit**, ranked among the top players in the nation, and graduated as his class **valedictorian**.

Greg began his collegiate basketball career at **Providence College**, where he earned the team's **Most Promising Prospect Award**. He then played at **NC State**, where he became a key contributor, before transferring to **UNC Asheville**, where he currently plays for the Bulldogs.

Throughout his journey, Greg has embraced leadership, resilience, and the importance of academics in athletics. He looks forward to sharing his experiences as a **college athlete, leader, and student**, offering valuable insights to the next generation of student-athletes.



Elle Thigpen – UNC Asheville

Elle Thigpen is a **dedicated student-athlete** and a standout member of the **UNC Asheville volleyball team**. Originally from **Hickory, NC**, Elle was a **multi-sport athlete** at St. Stephens High School, where she excelled in volleyball and soccer. She was named **All-Conference in both sports** and was recognized as a **leader on and off the court**.

At UNC Asheville, Elle has continued to thrive as a **defensive specialist/libero**, contributing to the Bulldogs' success while also prioritizing her academic and leadership development. Her journey as a **college athlete** has taught her the importance of **time management, teamwork, and perseverance**.

Elle is excited to share her experiences with high school student-athletes, offering insights on **leadership, overcoming challenges, and balancing academics with athletics**.