

The 2007 Garnish Scholar-Athlete Awards

From the Director's Chair

George VanderZwaag

Director of Athletics and Recreation

Today we recognize some of our senior student-athletes as Garnish Scholars. The Garnish Program was created in honor of Lysle "Spike" Garnish, coach and mentor to many Rochester student-athletes from 1930 to 1948. He became a trainer and assistant basketball coach in 1931. He was named an assistant baseball coach in 1932. Spike was an assistant football coach from 1945-48.

The Friends of Rochester Athletics, through an alumni committee, reviews nominations of students from our varsity teams who have achieved at a high level in both their athletic and academic pursuits through their junior year. From these nominees, a small number are selected as Garnish Scholars.

Periodically, the Garnish Memorial Citation is given to an alumnus, faculty member, or a staff member for dedication and contributions to the intercollegiate athletic program.

These students represent the ideal of the scholar-athlete. They lead our teams on the field of play, while doing outstanding work in the classroom. I am continually inspired by what our students are able to achieve when given the opportunities at a great institution like Rochester. What we know about the students that we recruit is that they set high goals for themselves inside and outside the classroom. What we learn from our Garnish Scholars, and reaffirm today, is that Rochester students are able to demonstrate educational excellence through an outstanding combination of athletic and academic achievement.

The Garnish Committee is proud to present to you these exemplary University of Rochester undergraduates and the Friends of Rochester Athletics continues to remind us of the values of this institution through the Garnish Program.



Last year, the committee awarded its Garnish Citation to Sally Morales (l.), longtime administrative assistant to the Director of Athletics. The presentation was made by University President Joel Seligman (c.) and George VanderZwaag (r.).



Image: Chris Landon

Members of the Garnish Scholar Committee include Peter 'Pat' Stark (l.), Hal Johnson '52 (c.), and George VanderZwaag.

Scenes from the 2006 Garnish Scholar Presentations...



Zachary Freed

Men's Swimming & Diving

Majors: Economics & Political Science



Jena Robertson

Softball

Major: Psychology



Mary DiMatteo

Field Hockey

Major: Political Science

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Rachel Cahan

Hometown: Evanston, Illinois
Major: Mechanical Engineering

By Rhea Lyons '08
Sports Information Assistant

When Rachel Cahan decided to pick up field hockey on a whim at the North Shore Country Day School in Evanston, Illinois, she never anticipated how far it would take her. Cahan only wanted something to pass the time when soccer and basketball weren't in season, and field hockey fit perfectly in the gap. "Field hockey looked really fun and intense... [it] was 'the sport to play' at my school at the time so I tried it out. It wasn't until 10th grade when our goalie graduated that I volunteered to try goalie out on a whim."

That whim led Cahan to be named Field Hockey Player of the Year in the Independent School League as well as First Team All-ISL honors both her junior and senior year. She also received All-Illinois honors as well as a letter award from the school. At the same time, Cahan was busy receiving honors for both soccer and basketball. She earned letters both in soccer (as a goalkeeper and as a midfielder) and in basketball (as a shooting guard). She was chosen for the First-Team All-ISL in soccer and received Honorable Mention for basketball.

Playing field hockey was a passion that Cahan planned to continue pursuing in college. "When I was looking for a school I promised myself that I would find the best overall school for me. That included field hockey, academics, and the school 'vibe.'" The University of Rochester just clicked. "The vibe from the team and from other students I met was what I was looking for."

Cahan says that it's the "vibe" that has made being part of the field hockey team such an unforgettable experience. She is extremely proud of beating Utica in the fall of 2006 after losing to them badly the year before, but her most vivid memories of field hockey are of her teammates and the experiences they share off the field. "Our team is just so amazing. Whenever we're all together we're having an amazing time. We're always laughing hysterically and we are for sure the loudest people in any room we're in."

With her team behind her, Cahan played in all nineteen games of her freshmen season. She guarded the goal with ninety-nine saves and two shutouts. She was named Liberty League Rookie of the Week (October 25th, 2004) and finished her season

by being named Liberty League Rookie of the Year. In 2005, Cahan played in eighteen games, making 129 saves, two solo and one shared shutout, and only allowing 28 goals. She was named Liberty League Defensive Player of the Week and ECAC Upstate New York Defensive Player of the Week (September 14th, 2005). Cahan was also named to First Team All-Liberty League, First Team All-New York State, and Second Team All-North Atlantic Region by the National Field Hockey Coaches Association. She reaped many of those same honors (LL, NYS) last year and was named a Second Team All-American.

Between playing field hockey and majoring in Mechanical Engineering, Cahan amazingly had time to study abroad. She spent a semester in Sydney, Australia, where Cahan was able to experience her favorite sport through an international perspective.

"Australia is amazing at field hockey. [Playing in Australia] really taught me a different way to look at the game, and allowed me to look at a whole new style of play than I'm used to. It was amazing. Our weekly games were held in the 2000 Sydney Olympic hockey stadium so that was unreal on its own."

Cahan knows that her experience at the University is not all play and no work. Her effort towards a degree in Mechanical Engineering has earned her a place on the NFHCA's Division III National Academic Squad for three consecutive years.

After graduating, Cahan plans to get a job in development and design. She also plans on playing field hockey in any way possible. Whatever the future holds, Cahan will continue to draw on what she learned by being a part of the University's field hockey team.

"Being part of a team sport is one of the best preparations I think I've had for life. I strongly feel that every life lesson can be learned somewhere during your experience on a team. It has taught me all about teamwork, leadership, commitment, dealing with failure and success, etc. Obviously my classes here at the U of R are very important, but real life lessons that will allow me to best use my academic knowledge were learned on the field and in practice."



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Kelly Fischer

Hometown: Greenville, Delaware
Majors: German and English

By Alexander Moeller '08
Sports Information Assistant

Many college students complain about the amount of work that they are burdened with, and some even have a valid point. Few, however, carry the workload that swimmer Kelly Fischer takes on.

As a double major, member of the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps, athlete, and member of numerous clubs, Kelly is undoubtedly one of the busiest students on campus. So how does she handle all of the time commitments?

"I don't sleep!" is the first thing out of her mouth. "I've had to learn a lot along the way. Having two activities (swimming and ROTC) that have schedules opposite a normal college schedule is tough. I've gotten up in the morning and seen people who are coming in and going to bed."

The ROTC program takes an incredible time commitment from Fischer. She has a morning commitment every weekday, as well as physical training two or three times per week. In addition, three hours each Wednesday are devoted to the program. When you add in the daily swimming practices, it seems like Kelly's schedule would leave her no time for a social life. That isn't exactly the case.

"You make some concessions, but my social life hasn't suffered," she says. "If I have something to do one weekend that keeps me from hanging out, then there's always next weekend."

"Being in these programs gave me a circle of friends right off the bat, but I have enough friends outside of ROTC and swimming too."

ROTC will have an impact on her life after she leaves school. As part of the program, she will spend four years in the United States Navy, although she doesn't plan on making a career out of it.

"After my time in the Navy, I'm thinking about going to graduate school," she said. "But, for the most part, I'm focusing on finishing up here and fulfilling my commitment to the Navy."

What shouldn't be lost in all of this is the fact that Kelly will graduate this spring with a double major in English and German. She got into English by working on her high school newspaper, and in the spring of 2006 she turned that knack for journalism into an internship with the Office of Communications at the

university. She wrote press releases for the university web site, as well as a main feature and numerous smaller articles in *Currents*.

But the academic accomplishments don't stop there. Kelly also spent a month of this summer studying in Germany. She traveled to Berlin with nine other Rochester students and professor Reinhild Steingrover to take a language course and study the German culture. They also toured a number of historical sites in the area.

"The trip really improved my [German] speaking, and it was a great cultural experience," Fischer said. "Professor Steingrover lived in Berlin previously, so she was able to take us to a bunch of places that other visitors don't normally get to see."

In spite of these numerous commitments, Kelly is still an excellent swimmer. She has been with the team for four years, swimming primarily breaststroke events and relays. This specialty just happens to add even more of a workload.

"When I came in, we didn't have too many breaststroke swimmers, so there's not a whole lot of room for rotation [among swimmers]," she said.

While that leads to more work for Kelly, it seems to work for the teams, as she's performed well in big events. Last season, she secured important points in the breaststroke events by exceeding expectations at the Liberty League Championships. She placed 8th in the 100 breast after being seeded 13th and placed 5th in the 200 breast after being seeded 7th, helping the team to a second place finish overall. She also won one individual race last season —the 100 breaststroke against Rochester Institute of Technology — and three medley relay races.

This year, she looks to continue racking up strong performances, but she also knows that, as a senior, she has additional commitments to the team.

"When I joined the team [as a freshman], it was nice to have that group of friends," she said. "The seniors on the team provided such strong leadership. Now, it's my turn."

Looking at how Kelly has handled the first three years here, it doesn't seem like that will be a problem.



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Stephen Goodridge

Hometown: Attica, New York

Major: Optics

By Rhea Lyons '08
Sports Information Assistant

While other kids his age were watching TV shows like *Transformers* or *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, ten-year-old Stephen Goodridge was busy watching golf. "When I was a kid, I would watch golf on TV and that really motivated me to get better at it. It was such a fun challenge to get better at golf," he says.

But golf isn't for just anyone who watches it on TV. Goodridge shows that it takes practice, dedication, and passion to excel at golf. In 2004, his freshman year, Goodridge won three golf tournaments and held a scoring average of 73. He won the Phil Mickelson Award from the Golf Coaches Association of America as the outstanding freshman golfer in Division III. He was named a Third Team All-American.

How do you top that? As a sophomore, he pushed the Yellowjackets to an entirely new level of success; he won the Division III National Championship to become the University's first individual National Champion (in any sport) in eighteen years. At the awards banquet following nationals, the GCAA filled his bag with plenty of trophies. He was named a First Team All-American, won the Jack Nicklaus Award as the outstanding Division III player, and received the Arnold Palmer Award as the Division III medalist. Palmer later sent a handwritten note to Goodridge, complimenting him on winning the national title on the same day he was taking a final examination in his major.

During the 2006 UAA championship, Goodridge placed second and received First-Team All-UAA Honors. Rochester won the UAA team title for the second straight season. In April he was named UAA Golfer of the Week for two weeks in a row and was a medalist at four competitions.

Over the summer between his sophomore and junior seasons, Goodridge competed in the John H. Ryan Memorial Championship, sponsored by the Rochester District Golf Association. He won the title with the lowest score registered (72 holes) in more than 40 years.

In his recently completed junior season, Goodridge had six victories and one runner-up finish out of nine competitions and was selected to compete in the 2007 NCAA Division III

Championships as an individual. He finished the season with a 74.2 stroke average for nineteen rounds. Over the summer, he played on a 12-person team representing the United States vs. Japan in the Fuji-Xerox Championships.

His fondest memory playing golf for the University was winning the Division III National Championship in Lincoln, Nebraska in 2006. "On the final day, I took half of my OPT 261 exam in the morning and the other half at night after the tournament was over. I decided that if I took the whole exam in the morning, I would be too tired to play good enough to win, and if I took the whole exam after the tournament, I would be too tired to do well on the exam. So I decided to split it up and it worked out pretty well."

Clearly, Goodridge knows that there's more to life than golf: working hard off the course is just as important. He came to the University of Rochester because it offers a fair balance between academics and athletics.

"Division I schools focus mainly on athletics and I think if I went to a school that plays golf year round and practices tirelessly every day, I would get burned out and not have as much fun. The U of R offers a good balance in that it allows me to compete at a high level but also focus on school."

He was inspired to pursue a degree in Optics when he learned about the Laboratory for Laser Energetics and the unique opportunities offered by the University in this field. Goodridge hopes to pursue a career in Optics after he graduates.

"I think golf is valuable because it teaches life lessons like patience and teamwork. Not many sports offer the things that golf does."

A good sense of patience and teamwork are invaluable talents to the senior Optics major from Attica, NY, who has excelled in the classroom as well as on the golf course. In 2005 he was named to All-Academic teams in both the UAA and in the Liberty League. This year, Goodridge was selected to the Scholar All-American Team by the Golf Coaches Association of America and to the 2007 *ESPN The Magazine* Academic All-American College Division Men's At-Large Team.



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Jonathan Onyiriuka

Hometown: Painted Post, New York
Major: Financial Economics

By Alexander Moeller '08
Sports Information Assistant

Jon Onyiriuka makes things look awfully easy on a basketball court. He has a plethora of skills, combining a powerful inside game with a solid jumper and strong defense. The same “plethora of skills” line can be applied to his academic life.

Jon is a financial economics major with minors in electrical and computer engineering and legal studies. His pursuit of numerous concentrations stems from a choice he made after his freshman year.

“My original plan coming into college was to be an ECE major,” he said. “However, after the conclusion of my freshman year I realized ECE probably wasn’t the career for me. I think the main reason why I decided to opt out of the program was due to the fact that I wanted to pursue other areas of study. Luckily for me, Economics was a program that I had been exposed to in high school, so the transition was relatively easy.”

The unique curriculum made it easier for Jon to change majors after a year of study, as he could use his ECE work to complete his requirements in the natural sciences.

Jon has put his knowledge to good use over the past few years. He has spent the past two years working as a research assistant to Professor Gerald Gamm from the Political Science department – again, showing his wide range of academic skills. Jon has helped gather information for Gamm’s upcoming book, which deals with the interactions between state legislatures and local governments.

In the summer after his sophomore year, Jon participated in the Urban Fellows program. The program places students in a 4-day-a-week fellowship at agencies located in the city of Rochester. Urban Fellows attend seminars about urban systems in the Rochester area and participate in community events throughout the summer. At the end of the ten week program, the fellows write and present a paper on their experiences.

“This was a valuable experience for me in that I was exposed to issues that I otherwise would not have been exposed to,” Jon said. “The weekly seminars and my job placement at the Rochester Regional Community Design Center both were great tools.”

Last summer, his experience was more closely related to

his major. Jon was an intern at AXA Advisors, a large financial advising firm. He worked with a broker on individual retirement accounts, gathering information on different stocks and mutual funds.

So how does someone like Jon, with his diverse set of activities, add basketball to the mix without going awry?



“Playing a sport at a highly competitive institution such as Rochester takes a lot of commitment. The biggest thing in managing both academics and athletics is time management. So my best advice to incoming freshmen is to utilize their free time wisely. You can still have fun doing extracurricular activities in college just as long as you are able to set aside time to do your work.”

Jon certainly has mastered both sides of the coin. In addition to his academic resume, his basketball achievements are significant. Jon has been a starter since his freshman year, racking up NCAA tournament berths and a number of awards. He has been an All-UAA selection every year, (honorable mention as a freshman, First Team the past two years). He was a Second Team All-Region selection as a sophomore, First Team last season. He was also named to the JPMorgan Chase All-Tournament First Team, the Rochester area’s most prestigious basketball tournament, the past two seasons.

Despite all the accolades, Jon knows the real reward lies in being part of a team.

“For me, the best part of playing basketball at UR is my teammates,” he said. “Over the years, I have been extremely fortunate to have played with several talented players. I can honestly say that each of my teammates at some point or another have had a positive impact on me.”

On the whole, Jon can see that his extensive range of activities have served him well over the years.

“The biggest change that I have seen in myself has been my maturity level. Like most freshmen entering college, I was very immature when it came to certain things. As I go into my fourth year here, I can honestly say that I am far more prepared for the real world and life as an adult following graduation.”

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Andrew Rape

Hometown: Zelienople, Pennsylvania

Major: Biomedical Engineering

By Alexander Moeller '08
Sports Information Assistant

Cornerback Andy Rape knows that the key to succeeding as a student-athlete is setting realistic goals. But even he admits that it wasn't always that way.

"When I came in as a freshman, I thought I'd change the world," Rape said about his mindset when he first arrived on campus from his hometown of Zelienople, Pennsylvania. "But you spend time around so many people and you realize that you're not the greatest at everything."

While he may not be the greatest at everything, he certainly makes a case for it on and off the field. A Biomedical Engineering major with a 3.86 cumulative grade point average, Rape has spent the past year working part-time in a research lab with Dr. Richard Waugh. His goal? Creating a mathematical model of the cytoskeleton of a blood cell. The research is ultimately aimed at discovering how red blood cells maintain their stability, and could lead to a better understanding of a disease called hemolytic anemia.

After working together for a year, Dr. Waugh has only positive things to say about Rape's work.

"Andy accomplished a lot in moving this project forward," Dr. Waugh said. "With all my distractions as department chair, he had to work independently most of the time on the project. He could finish assignments faster than I could come up with new questions for him to address. Andy is smart and hard-working, and who could ask for a better combination?"

The feelings seem to be mutual, as Andy was quick to praise the Biomedical Engineering department for shaping his academic development.

"The whole staff is absolutely amazing," he said. "They do a great job of motivating us to work hard."

While the research sounds complicated, this is the kind of project that Rape has wanted to work on since he got here.

"I always wanted to go into the medical field, but I also liked math," Rape said. "[Biomedical Engineering] seemed like a good compromise between the medical and engineering fields. It's really gratifying to achieve what you wanted to do as a freshman."

Another thing Rape was sure about when he came to UR as a freshman was playing football. He started five games for the

Yellowjackets as a freshman, and was ready to become a mainstay on defense as a sophomore. However, a back injury forced him out of action for the entire year. Rape says there was a silver lining to the injury.

"Playing football has taught me a lot about overcoming adversity," he said, "especially due to the fact that I had to overcome the back injury."

Last year, Rape emerged as a defensive leader. Starting all 11 games, Rape was the leading tackler for the Yellowjackets, racking up 53 solo tackles and 57.5 total tackles. Perhaps even more impressive were his nine passes broken up, as the next highest team member had five. Rape also had two interceptions and one forced fumble on the year. He was an integral part of a Yellowjackets team that went 7-4 — the highest win total in 14 years — and competed in the ECAC playoffs.

For his achievements, Rape was named a Second Team *ESPN The Magazine* Academic All-American by last season. He was one of three Yellowjackets to be named an Academic All-American (along with then-seniors Nick Zappia and Jason Goeller), and no other school had more.

As a senior, Rape can attest to how his mindset has changed over the years. Gone are the days of taking on the

world.

"After three years here, I now know that you have to what's best for you and what makes you happy. Set goals that are achievable, and then don't let anything stop you from reaching them. As a student-athlete, it's just about time management and goals. If you really put your mind to that, nothing is going to stop you."

To that end, Rape isn't just talking the talk. He's already looking at going to graduate school for biomedical engineering, and the list of schools is quite impressive.

"Right now I'm interested in the University of California – San Diego, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Duke University, and Stanford University," he said.

Impressive goals, yes, but achievable nevertheless. Especially for someone like Andy Rape.



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Mark Stevens

Hometown: Pittsford, New York

Major: Economics

By Alexander Moeller '08
Sports Information Assistant

Mark Stevens has been one of the most dominant runners to don a Yellowjackets jersey in recent memory. He has won numerous races and awards on a local and regional scale. And yet the most defining moment of his athletic career so far just may have been a race he didn't even run.

Through a series of dominating performances last season, Mark had easily qualified for the NCAA Division III national championship cross-country meet. However, he suffered a quadriceps injury and was clearly not in top shape for the meet as it drew near. If he withdrew, it would allow the next highest individual runner to compete. But it also meant giving up a spot in the most prestigious race of the year, a race in which he had finished 43rd a year before.

The deciding factor in his eventual choice to withdraw: the runner who was next in line was teammate and classmate Pat Hughes.

"If Pat hadn't been the next runner to get in, I might have tried to run [the race] myself," Stevens said. "But I withdrew because I knew Pat had a shot."

Hughes finished 120th out of 279 runners at the meet, placing him in the top half of the field. While it was a comfort to know that he had given one of his teammates a trip to the national meet, the feelings weren't all positive for Stevens.

"It was disheartening, seeing guys that I beat pretty handily during the year finishing in the top five. But I'm not one to complain, and I don't think about it much now."

He's got enough on his mind to spend time thinking about that anyway. Mark is an economics major with a 3.41 cumulative GPA, and he is using his undergraduate studies to prepare him for the Simon Graduate School of Business Administration. He spent the summer furthering his education on the job by working on marketing and promotions for the Rochester RazorSharks, the area's premier professional basketball team. The experience was something that can't be learned in a classroom, he says.

"It wasn't just static models like you find in all the textbooks. It was a real corporate environment."

Stevens says combining high academic and athletic

achievement is a matter of will power and motivation.

"You have to get up sometimes when you really don't want to," he said. "You have to make sure you do something of value every single day."

The motivation comes in part from head coach John Izzo, whose teams are constantly receiving academic honors.

"Coach Izzo is a big motivator for us," Stevens said, "because he definitely prides the program on [those academic awards]."

As impressive as his academics may be, his athletic achievements are just as stellar. He missed the freshman cross country season here because he transferred from Cornell after his first semester there. He immediately had an impact as a sophomore for UR, with the highlight being a second place finish at the UAA meet. His finish at the national meet that year was not as dominating. While he finished in the top quarter of the field, he knows it could have been higher.

"Sophomore year I had a ton of confidence coming in, but I also had a target on my back," he said. "I ended up peaking a week early and didn't have a lot left in the tank for nationals."

He paced himself better last season, but looking at his accomplishments shows that he hardly slowed down. He won the UAA championship and was named UAA Runner of the Year and First Team All-Association. It was the first time a UR

runner had taken top honors at the UAA meet since 1997, and only the seventh time in the history of the school. He followed that performance up with a second place finish at the New York State Collegiate Track Conference Championships, which helped the team take third overall at the event. For the season, he was named All-Region for the Mid-Atlantic Region.

As for this year, his quadriceps is healed and he's looking forward to another strong season, both individually and as part of the team. The team started the year by easily winning their first meet of the year at RIT.

"Right now I'm just going through the motions," he said. "It's a long season, and I hope things can just keep on rolling."



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Ashley VanVechten

Hometown: Brighton, New York
Majors: History and German

By Rhea Lyons '08
Sports Information Assistant

It may be surprising that Ashley VanVechten, a driving force on the Rochester women's soccer team, started out as a gymnast and interpretive dancer. "I am so not flexible," she said, "so I started playing soccer because my brother was playing it and loved it." VanVechten traded her leotard for shin guards and has never regretted it.

When VanVechten graduated from Brighton High School in Brighton, NY, she wanted to play competitive soccer but also have freedom to pursue her academic dreams. She realized that however much she loved soccer, she didn't want it to control her life.

"One of the schools I got into was DI (Northwestern). I went to talk to the coach and she was talking about how they had practice at 8 pm on Saturdays during the off-season. And I said, 'Absolutely not.' I wanted to experience college, I wanted to have friends! [The University of Rochester] was the obvious choice to me, because you're able to still play at a really high level, but also go abroad and have an actual off season."

Soccer at the University of Rochester was everything she had hoped. Not only was VanVechten able to play at a very competitive level, she thrived. Her freshman year (2004) she was named All-UAA First Team and scored a goal. The next year her defensive line only allowed four goals in their first twenty games, and held a sixteen-match unbeaten streak. She was named UAA Women's Soccer Defensive Player of the Week (on October 26th, 2005) for helping the Yellowjackets hold two opponents to only five shots, and later named First Team All-UAA for helping the defense record five shutouts in seven UAA wins and fourteen shutouts overall. That same year she was also named NSCAA/Adidas All-Northeast Region First Team and NSCAA/Adidas First Team All-American by National Soccer Coaches Association of America.

As a junior defender, she played in all 21 games and helped the Yellowjackets shutout their opponents fifteen times during the season. Because of her staunch defensive play for UR, she was named an NSCAA/Adidas First Team All-American for the second consecutive year. She was also named to the 2006 Scholar

All-America Team by members of the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.

Her favorite soccer memory at the University was when the 'Jackets beat Union to advance to the Sweet 16 round of the NCAA Division III Playoffs in 2005. "We beat Union in a penalty kick shootout. I remember saying 'We need to make this tournament,'

and we did! It was unbelievable... this was the furthest our team had ever gone in the past few years." VanVechten scored one of the goals in the penalty kick shootout to help Rochester advance.

VanVechten approaches her academic goals with the same passion and drive she demonstrates on the field. After spending a summer studying in Berlin, VanVechten realized that her calling was learning about language, history and culture. "It's cool to be able to communicate using completely different words than normal." She is now earning a double major in German and in History.

VanVechten also spent a semester studying abroad in Ghana, taking classes for her degree in History. While studying in Ghana, VanVechten joined the women's club soccer team for fun. VanVechten quickly learned that soccer is a bit different across the Atlantic. "The first game they threw me on a bus and said, 'Ok, we're going to play the Women's National Team.' I remember getting to the

field and seeing the Women's National Team doing these awesome technical movements to warm up and I look over at my team and they're lying on the ground."

Despite their best efforts, the Women's Club Team was still no match for Ghana's National Team. But it was sport played for the pure love of the game, free from all the politics and regulations of major American sporting organizations. "That sort of thing would never have happened in America. They would have made you try out and there would have been tons of red tape before you could even step on the bus with them. It was a really cool and different approach to sports."

After her experience playing sports abroad and with the Yellowjackets, VanVechten knows that playing soccer will always have a place in her future. After graduating she will pursue her options to return to Europe to teach.

