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RUTGERS UNIVERSITY RE-ENVISIONS
THE ELITE STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPERIENCE







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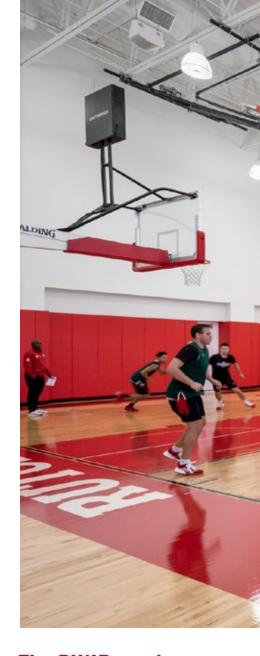
Recent collegiate athletic training centers typically have focused on a programmatic compilation of practice courts, locker room amenities, and athletic support programming. However, a new way to promote elite student-athlete performance, practice, and recovery has emerged at Rutgers University.

In 2014, Rutgers University gained national exposure as the newest member of the premier Big Ten Conference. The RWJBarnabas Health Athletic Performance Center (APC), which opened in September 2019, demonstrates the university's commitment to creating a championship culture and supporting student-athletes of the highest caliber. The APC creates a destination on campus that transforms the student-athlete experience and embodies Rutgers Athletics' unique character and tradition.

Designed by Perkins Eastman, the 307,000 SF, four-story APC is the new home for the Men's and Women's Basketball, Women's Gymnastics, and Men's Wrestling programs at Rutgers. The building supports student-athletes with: sports medicine, hydrotherapy, strength and conditioning, a Nutrition Center and Training Table programming, a

dedicated RWJBarnabas Health facility, NBA and WNBA scouting decks, a "Closing Room," coaches' and athletic directors' offices, a rooftop terrace, and a parking garage connected by a central courtyard.

This report highlights the findings from a post-occupancy evaluation research study* that was conducted in 2020 on the APC. The goal of the study was to understand the use of the facility and the impact of the design on the institution, athletics program, and building occupants (i.e., staff and student-athletes). The study focused on several key design goals, including the use of the facility and its impact on occupant performance, wellness, and experience. Key findings, presented herein, center on how the building fosters a sense of community and campus connections, improves performance, supports recruiting and fundraising, and offers flexibility-even during a pandemic.



The RWJBarnabas
Health Athletic
Performance Center
at Rutgers University
represents a new
way to support
student-athletes'
performance,
wellness, and
experience.

^{*} Refer to Appendix A to learn more about the research study's methodology. Appendix B lists data from the survey, and Appendix C shares archival data findings.



KEY FINDINGS



SENSE OF COMMUNITY STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN AND ACROSS TEAMS



RECRUITING A PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION OF THE PROGRAM'S QUALITY AND

RUTGERS' COMMITMENT



FUNDRAISING A DEMONSTRATION OF HOW DONATIONS ARE TRANSFORMED INTO REAL, IMPACTFUL RESULTS



CAMPUS CONNECTIONS A CAMPUS KNITTED TOGETHER AND THE RUTGERS **BRAND REINFORCED**



KIT OF PARTS MORE THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS



ALUMNI RELATIONS DEEPER ALUMNI/STUDENT-ATHLETE CONNECTIONS



IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

WITH INCREASED ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND LESS WASTED TIME



PANDEMIC RESPONSE

FLEXIBILITY, ADAPTABILITY, AND HIGH PERFORMANCE HAS ALLOWED CONTINUED USE

A NEW APPROACH

"I don't think I ever could have imagined a place like this. Just to be here makes me want to work harder."

Geo Baker, Guard '21

In designing the APC, Perkins Eastman helped Rutgers University go beyond traditional practice facility design by creating a vibrant center of community. The APC functions as a place that synthesizes practice, training, social connectivity, and wellness into a holistic one-stop-shop. The facility supports a broad range of activities, with a mix of shared and dedicated spaces. Additionally, opening just months before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the APC's built-in flexibility and integrated clinic has enabled Rutgers Athletics to adapt and continue practice, training, and recovery—while simultaneously serving as a hub for COVID-19 testing.

The APC provides support for distinct programmatic elements in a cohesive, unified design. First and foremost of these, of course, are the practice facilities for the four athletic programs housed in the building. Each team's practice spaces were designed with the input of coaches and staff, with an eye towards maximizing access by players and providing abundant natural light. The spaces for training, nutrition, and sports medicine received similar attention. The hybrid indoor/outdoor Strength and Conditioning Room is state-of-the-art; and large hydrotherapy facilities, with both hot and cold plunge pools, are popular with the teams.

The element that sets the Rutgers APC apart from its peers is the presence of the in-house health clinic, staffed by the RWJBarnabas hospital system (the building's primary sponsor) along with staff from the Rutgers University Medical School and hospital system. On-site medical care promotes a culture of wellness, and student-athletes don't have to travel to remote locations across town, as they may have before. They can visit the doctor or a specialist and rejoin practice, rehab, or their locker room

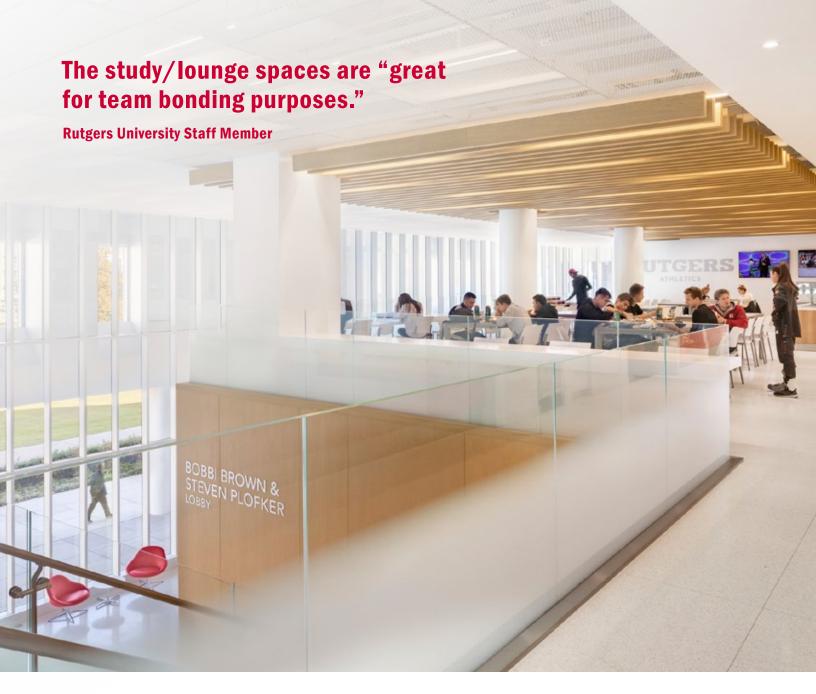
suite in mere minutes. Likewise, COVID-19 testing and seasonal flu-related vaccination programs are conducted swiftly and efficiently on-site, with minimal hassle and disruption.

Further, all of the core building elements connect via a public "spine" of circulation, gathering areas, and outdoor terraces, which provide space for teams to socialize and intermingle. Used for both day-to-day activities (like meals and studying) as well as for special events, spaces like the Nutrition Center and Training Table provide opportunities for happenstance encounters—the kinds of interactions that can help make connections and foster a sense of community.

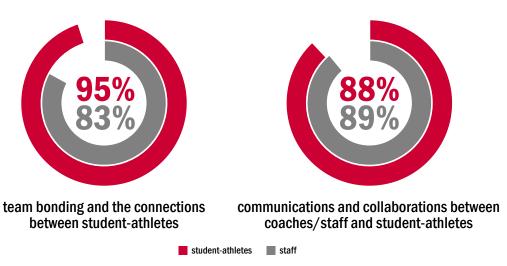
In designing the APC, Perkins Eastman not only tapped their deep knowledge of sports facilities, but also brought in additional Perkins Eastman designers from other market sectors to add their expertise—from introducing Hospitality thinking to the first impressions of the building's lobby, to the Healthcare practice's insights in designing the clinic, to Workplace's best-practices around offices and collaboration spaces. Collectively, the APC's thoughtful organization of programmatic elements, coupled with an innovative holistic wellness approach, results in a building—and experience—that is exceptional in the realm of collegiate (and professional) sports.

The study's survey data revealed that the building's occupants are quite pleased with the design. Eighty-three percent of the staff and 94% of the student-athletes reported that the overall design of the APC is either "good" or "very good"—with no "poor" or "very poor" responses from either group. As one student-athlete noted in the survey, "There is nothing I would change; the APC was designed to perfection."





The design of the APC has a "Good" or "Very Good" impact on...





STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPERIENCE

The new APC has generated a number of positive outcomes related to the student-athlete experience. The study's findings center on how the building supports the sense of community among the student-athletes, the connection to the greater Rutgers University campus, and improved athletic performance.

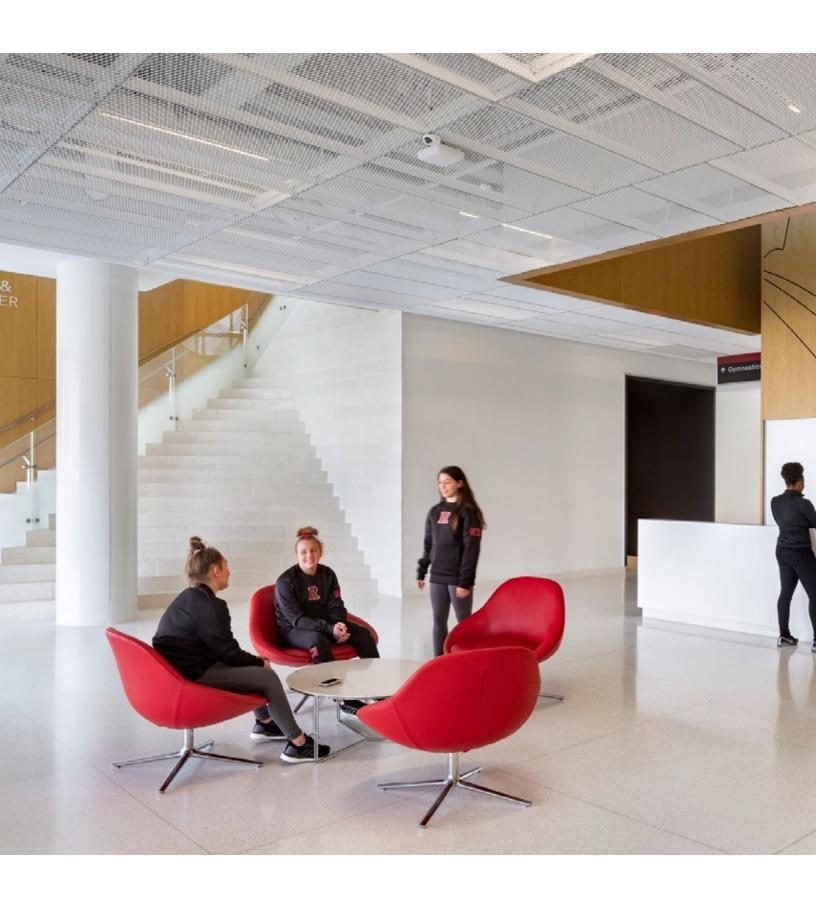


One of the most significant impacts of the APC has been how it has increased connections between student-athletes. Among teammates, the opportunity to strengthen these connections "off the court" have come from the creation of spaces to gather and socialize. Living roomstyle lounges, with big screen TVs and kitchens, in the locker room suites are a favorite place to watch TV, play video games, and just relax. The all-hours access to the facility allows the student-athletes the opportunity, at any time, for individual practice sessions, pick-up games, or workouts.

Connections across the four sports that use the building have also been strengthened. The Nutrition Center, in particular, has become a central gathering point for many sports on the campus—even those not housed by the APC. "The APC allows [the Women's Basketball team] to eat together with the wrestlers and the gymnasts; we've become much closer," says Women's Basketball Coach C. Vivian Stringer. "It's a beautiful thing to see—everyone eating and talking and communicating."

Beyond socializing, perhaps the best illustration of the inter-team connections is an encounter staged by Women's Gymnastics Coach, Umme Salim-Beasley, before the start of the pandemic. To simulate the pressure of competition, Coach Salim-Beasley invited members of the Men's Basketball team to provide "crowd noise" during balance beam practice. The presence of the basketball players unsettled the gymnasts, affecting their routines and triggering nerves like they might feel during a competition. Not only did this allow the gymnasts to learn to work through those nerves, but the experience also built connections across the two teams. Later, the gymnasts were invited to visit the Men's Basketball practice to reciprocate during freethrow practice.

Typically, intercollegiate practice facilities are program-focused and individualized to their sport(s)—where student-athletes spend countless hours that are highly scripted and focused to the limits of practice and school work. The comradery within teams and, uniquely, between teams at the APC is rare and unique, and deepens the student-athletes' intercollegiate experience.





The Rutgers APC fosters a sense of community for student-athletes in multiple ways.



"The APC allows a sense of pride in the athletic department. Intentional decisions were made in this building to make a positive and rewarding student-athlete experience."

Carli Northrup, Senior Associate Director of Athletics and Associate Vice President of Development at Rutgers University

The APC creates a destination that knits the campus together.



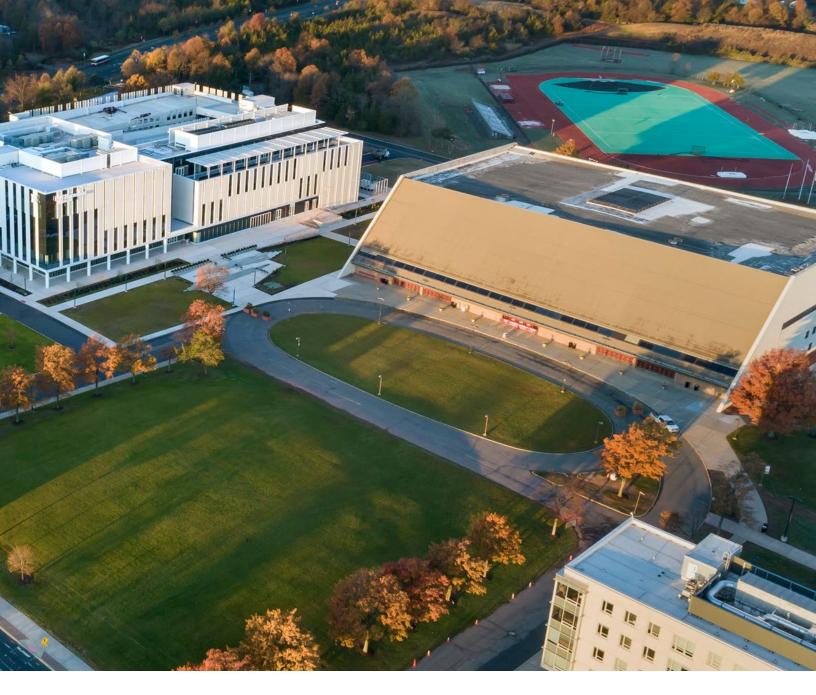
Not only does the APC create a sense of place within the building, it also helps connect the Rutgers Athletics program with the broader campus community. In fact, 78% of staff and 88% of student-athletes said in their surveys that the design of the APC has a "Good" or "Very Good" impact on the connection between the APC and the overall university campus. The APC completes a new Rutgers Athletics Quad and Plaza at the heart of the Livingston campus, which was previously disrupted by large parking lots. The APC creates a destination that knits the campus together by integrating existing pedestrian routes, providing a lively and pedestrian-friendly campus edge, and linking dormitories and the academic campus.

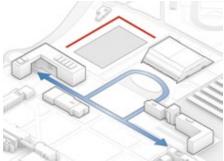
As part of the still-evolving Livingston campus, the APC, along with the Rutgers Business School's new building. has helped to anchor this part of the campus and creates a connection with other existing buildings. In the words of Carli Northrup, the Senior Associate Director of Athletics and Associate Vice President of Development at Rutgers University, "The APC is not just an investment in Rutgers Athletics, but in Rutgers as a whole and the Livingston campus." In both the placement of the building and the character of its architecture, the APC has re-established the Livingston Campus. It is building momentum for the University towards further development and construction. According to the surveys, 72% of staff and 93% of student-athletes also feel the APC helps reinforce Rutgers' brand and identity. The school's colors and its Scarlet Knight mascot are incorporated elegantly throughout the museum-like interior-weaving the "Rutgers, Rah!" story across all experiences in the building.



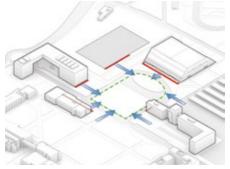
"Overall, the building is a game changer."

Rutgers University Staff Member

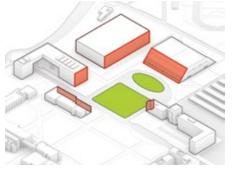




CONTINUOUS OUTER STREET-EDGE, DEFINING THE LIVINGSTON CAMPUS AND VEHICULAR ACCESS



CONTINUOUS BUILDING-EDGE, DEFINING THE SPORTS QUAD AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS



CONTINUOUS STREET WALL AND CONTEXTUAL MASSING





Alumni Relations

Beyond creating connections in space, the APC is also creating connections in time. By encouraging Rutgers Athletics alumni back to the campus, the APC has helped foster deeper alumni/studentathlete connections. Particularly in the context of Women's Basketball, which has a strong history of sending players to the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), alumni are coming back to campus to practice in the new facility and share their intercollegiate and professional experiences with current team members. Coach Stringer explains, "We've got six players in the WNBA and they all want to come back and practice here. They would not have wanted to do that before [the APC]." Even for those who did not go on to play in professional leagues, the chance to reconnect with their alma mater and share knowledge with the current student-athletes is a powerful experience. The strengthening of the Rutgers Athletics "family" has been a significant outcome of the APC.

"The main thing at our alumni event was the new facility; it was a highlight for them."

Umme Salim-Beasley, Women's Gymnastics Coach The fundamental purpose of the APC is to improve the performance of the teams that use it; and by all accounts, it has delivered on this objective.



Improved Performance

The APC has helped improve the sports performance and academic achievement of student-athletes by increasing their access to resources, technology, on-site medical care, and the rest of the Rutgers campus. In addition, the APC offers the time-savings, convenience, and collaboration opportunities of a one-stop-shop.

Ninety-eight percent of student-athletes said in the survey that they feel the design of the APC makes practicing their sport better; and 93% say the design of the training spaces makes their overall wellness better. Further, 100% of the student-athletes said that the design of the APC is influential in improving their ability to compete for Rutgers University. One student-athlete noted they now have "much better resources to help us get as competition ready as we could."

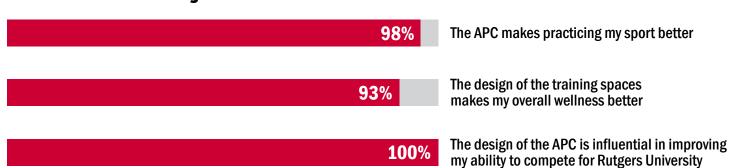
ACCESS AND RESOURCES

The fundamental purpose of the APC is to improve the performance of the teams that use it. By all accounts, it has delivered on this

objective. The 24-hour access to the facility and dedicated practice courts for each team have been nothing short of transformative. "When the facility first opened," says Pat Hobbs, the Director of Athletics, "they doubted what we said about 24/7 access. The Women's Basketball team tested it on day one: They went in at 2AM and played a pick-up game." From changing how practices are scheduled to enabling student-athletes to get in reps at any hour, the APC has created new and expanded opportunities for training.

As one student-athlete explained in the survey, "The APC has completely changed the basketball program for the better. It has given us our own space and the 24-hour gym access is so important to this program." The other teams agree: A staff member said, "The Women's Basketball practice gym has been a game changer for us," while another noted "Our wrestling room is one of the best in country." A student-athlete also stated, "[I] love the APC; it has made gymnastics at Rutgers so much better."

Student-athletes "Agree" that...









89% of staff said the design of the APC has a "Good" or "Very Good" impact on sports practice

(official activities with coaches as part of NCAA approved practice)

89%

of staff said the design of the APC has a "Good" or "Very Good" impact on sports training

(unofficial practice activities that support student-athletes to keep in shape, train, and recover)

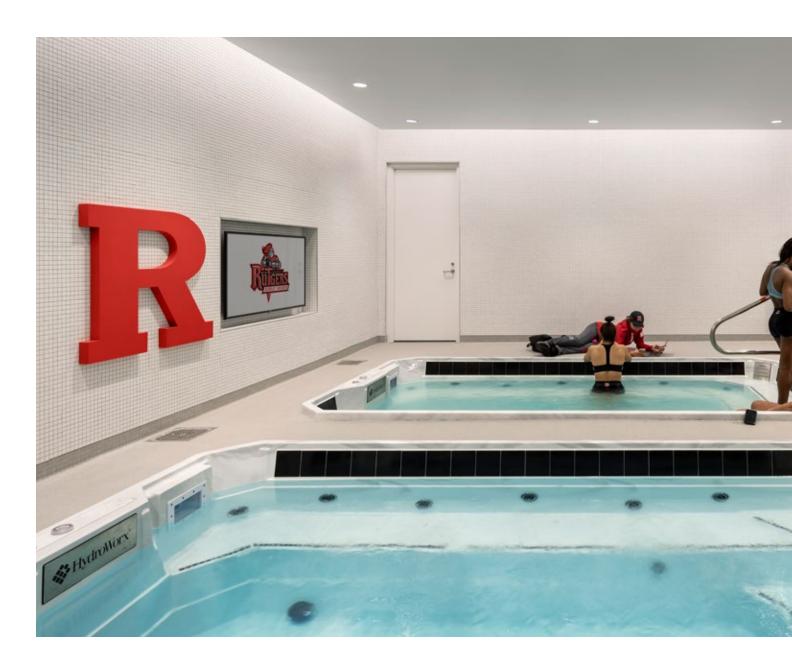
Embedded technology allows for real-time feedback and advanced coaching.

Numerous members of the coaching and training staff also spoke of the time gained by having technological resources at their fingertips. Steve Pikiell, the Men's Basketball Coach, described the new ways they can incorporate technology into practice. Where the team used to have to pause practice to go watch tape several floors away in the film room, they can now run a drill and replay it in real time with courtside smart boards and TV, and then run the drill again. "This is a paradise for a serious basketball player," says Coach Stringer. "We can say how many shots were taken and from where."

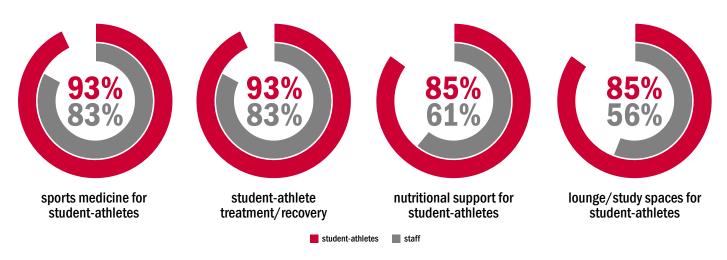
Along with improved access to practice areas, equipment, and advanced technology, the availability of sports medicine and recovery resources have also yielded tangible outcomes for Rutgers' student-athletes. For instance, no longer having to share individual tubs, the use of dedicated hot and cold plunge pools has become a social activity, with the positive benefits of those resources shared broadly among the teams. These benefits extend, as well, to the food the student-athletes consume and how nutritionists engage with the teams. "The medical aspect of managing nutrition has been made easier," says Katie Salmone, Director of Sports Nutrition. "It's beneficial for me to be around the [student-]athletes and to have a space to do nutrition consults... [and] it's easier to communicate with coaches, medical staff, and conditioning coaches."







The design of the APC has a "Good" or "Very Good" impact on...

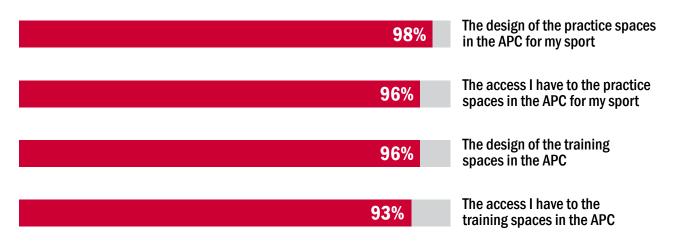




The hot and cold plunge pools have become a social place, with the positive benefits of those resources shared broadly among the teams.

The student-athletes are also very pleased with how the facility supports the athletics program. Ninety-eight percent of the student-athletes said in the survey that they were "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the design of the practice spaces in the APC for their sport; and 96% for the access they have to the practice spaces in the APC for their sport. Ninety-six percent are also "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the design of the training spaces in the APC, and 93% for the access to training spaces in the APC.

Student-Athletes are "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with...



"There was a vision that studentathletes could take care of all their health needs... Now we have a facility that makes it easier to provide optimal medical care."

Pat Hobbs, Director of Athletics

ON-SITE MEDICAL CARE

What sets the Rutgers APC apart from other collegiate athletic training sites is the integrated medical facilities and the proximity and access to on-site medical professionals. Teams previously had to send Assistant Coaches to remote clinics simply to hold a space in line for members of the team; now, doctors are just steps away. Coach Salim-Beasley lamented how before the APC, "Our [student-]athletes would suffer through a nagging injury because they had to go to another campus or take a bus. Now it's so much easier for them and they have no excuse."

In addition to sports medicine and a medical clinic, greater access to preventative care has meant fewer injuries—and when injuries do happen, they can be addressed immediately. The effects of this new model are further amplified by the use of technology during practice that enables the monitoring of players to detect irregularities even before the player may be aware of an issue. For example, Assistant Athletic Trainer Richard Campbell shared a story about one basketball player who complained he wasn't "feeling it" in practice one day. The training staff checked the data from their biometric scanner and, as Campbell described, "found he'd done the effort of two practices in one." This scan helped flag a developing ankle injury and allowed coaches and trainers to make necessary adjustments to prevent further harm to the student-athlete. "We can apply scientific-based treatments," explains Campbell, "so they can perform as best as they can."









92%

of student-athletes said the APC makes their day better

ACADEMICS AND LIFESTYLE

The more efficient use of student-athletes' time and access to more resource spaces also helps with the academic side of being "student"-athletes. For some, simply having a quiet place to study has made the difference, whether in loose seating programmed into corridors and lobbies or on the outdoor terrace. Sarah Baumgartner, the Deputy Director of Athletics, observed how "academic tutoring and academic advising takes place on the fourth floor on the high stools [where there is] great daylight." The access to abundant natural light enhances the student-athletes' health and well-being. Associate Vice President Northrup noted that "nooks and crannies throughout the different floors provide space for student[-athlete] s to study." For others, spaces to meet with tutors is most important. For instance, a group of nonnative English speakers regularly meet for study sessions with their instructor in the Closing Room that overlooks the practice courts.

The social opportunities afforded by the Nutrition Center and Training Table also encourage healthy eating practices. As one staff member noted in the survey, "Having a dining area meant for all [student-] athletes is, I would say, the most beneficial part because this is where bonding and conversations happen and being able to provide meals is a top priority to fuel a [student-]athlete right." Studentathletes also reported that the services and support available at the APC have a positive impact, with 92% of the respondents saying the APC makes their day better.

"Everything is well organized and structured; whatever you need is right at your fingertips. So grateful for this building."

Rutgers University Student-Athlete

ONE-STOP-SHOP

The APC's easy access to resources and services, beyond the typical practice and training spaces (such as massage tables, nutritious meals, and medical services), has paid off. "Before [the APC], we had to make five or six different stops and it made the university seem too big to take on," explains Coach Salim-Beasley. "Having everything in one place is the biggest game changer."

Cumulatively, the time saved from moving between (e.g.) the film room, the Strength and Conditioning Room, and the trainer adds up. David Van Dyke, the Assistant Athletics Director for Strength and Conditioning, estimates that they are able to garner an additional fifteen minutes a day with each student-athlete-and that time difference makes a difference. "If you give me fifteen minutes before 80% of practices," he explains, "that's half a season of strength training." Scott Goodale, the Men's Wrestling Coach, put it even more simply: "This facility has allowed the guys to put in a lot more time." Working within NCAA requirements regarding student-athlete engagement with coaches, the greater efficiencies afforded by the new APC has reduced the down-time and travel-time that used to clutter up a student-athlete's day, maximizing the time available to practice and for training, rest, and recovery.

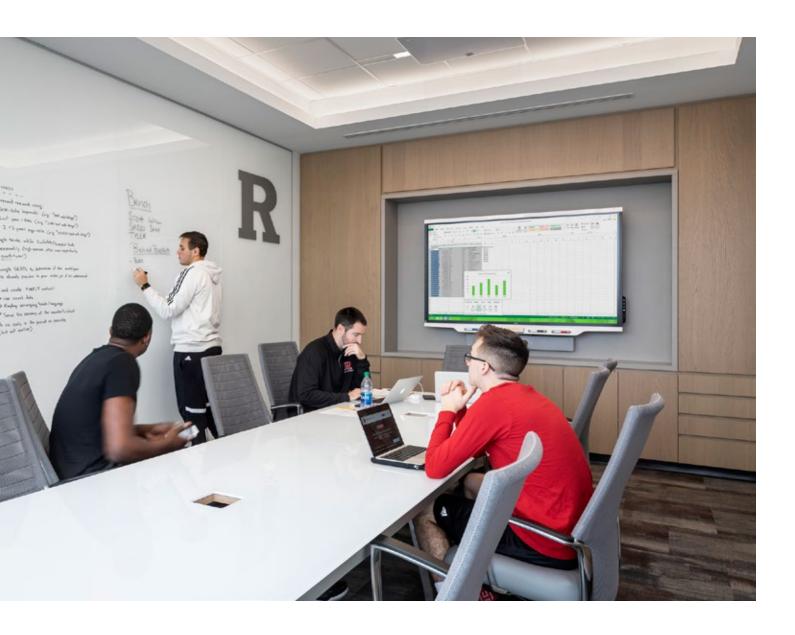
The advantages of being under one roof go beyond saving time. Through the Nutrition Center and Training Table, student-athletes are eating healthier and more regularly, and are connecting with one another more. Also, because student-athletes' days are so heavily scripted, the greater efficiencies allow them

moments here and there that add up to make their lives so much better. While it can be a challenge for some student-athletes to participate in campus/student life, the APC's relationship to the Livingston campus and its proximity to the Student Store gives the student-athletes a greater connection to the rest of student life and the Rutgers experience.

Beyond benefiting the student-athletes, the APC also creates opportunities for knowledge sharing among the coaching and medical staff, which is another huge benefit. Coach Goodale finds that having the opportunity to engage with his peers is a huge plus of the new facility. He explains, "I'm surrounded by Hall of Fame coaches every day. It's been great to pick their brains."

In addition, certain areas of the building have become known as crossroads that allow for casual and unscripted moments when one can "bump into" colleagues, where informal exchange and collaboration occur. For instance, the Nutrition Center and Training Table as well as the second floor lobby are two locations where such impromptu encounters take place. Coaches also spoke of intentionally working across teams, such as when the head coach of Women's Basketball was invited to address the Men's Basketball team in the wake of the shooting of Breonna Taylor. Drawing upon the diverse experiences of various teams' coaching staff helps not just with athletic performance, but the social and emotional development of student-athletes as complete individuals. The opportunities created by the APC for the exchange of ideas and information helps create a culture that benefits all.





72%

of staff said the design of the APC has a "Good" or "Very Good" impact on communications and collaborations among staff

"Before the APC, we practiced, lifted, and received treatment/medical care in all different places and on different campuses. The APC makes this so much easier and [I feel] more motivated."

Rutgers University Student-Athlete



RECRUITING + FUNDRAISING

Recruiting and fundraising have been improved by the new APC. There have been positive impacts on people's impressions and levels of confidence, Rutgers University's reputation, and the athletics program's championship culture.

Recruiting

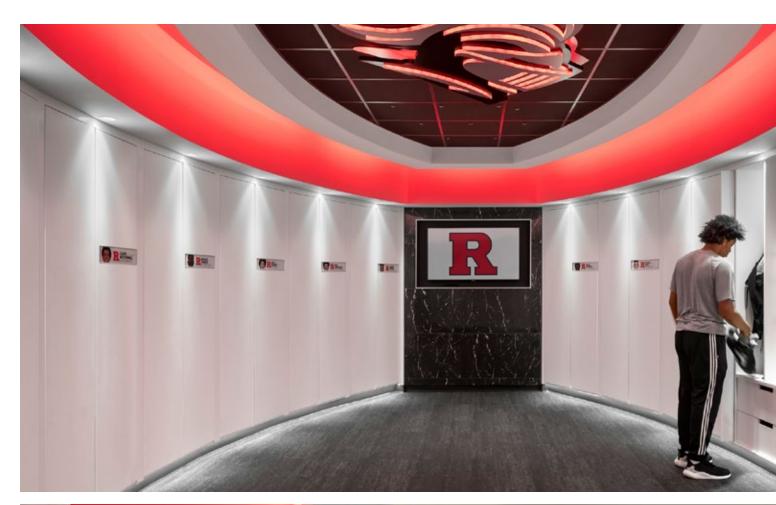
When Rutgers University joined the Big Ten Athletic Conference in 2014, it faced higher levels of competition—not only on the playing field but also for top-tier recruits. However, the opening of the APC represented a bold new direction: Coaches were now able to offer recruits and their families an impressive environment that provided a commitment to health and wellness that peer institutions struggled to match. As one student-athlete put it in their survey, "When I went on my visit, I was very impressed with the way it was set up. It had everything literally. It's by far the best center I saw out of every visit and every center I have seen."

In the past, Rutgers' coaches needed to be strategic with their tours to avoid showing lackluster attributes of the previous training facilities—but with the new APC there is nothing to hide; they want to show prospective studentathletes everything. The APC looks impressive, and this reflects the quality of the programs housed within. The building's clean lines and natural light always give a "wow" factor. Visitors are blown away by the lobby, extensive Strength and Conditioning Room, hydrotherapy spaces, and fourth floor terrace overlooking the Livingston campus. The practice facilities and onsite amenities are first-rate. As one staff member noted in the survey, "Having the locker room and lounge spaces has made a difference in our recruiting."

By the time a recruit reaches the Closing Room at the end of their tour, they are able to visualize a pathway to excellence supported by the University's clear commitment to their cause. Further, the recruit's parent(s) feel confident that their child will be taken care of here. "Last year, we had our best freshman recruiting class," stated Coach Pikiell, "and I'd give 95% of the credit to this building."

"Compared to our facilities before, we now hold a practice space that can compete with other schools in the country and attract better recruits."

Rutgers University Student-Athlete







Staff said the design of the APC has a "Good" or "Very Good" impact on...

95%

Recruitment of student-athletes

78%

Staff attraction/retention

69% of student-athletes said the APC was influential to their decision to attend **Rutgers University**

of student-athletes said they believe the APC will encourage future studentathletes to choose to attend Rutgers

"Last year, we had our best freshman recruiting class; and I'd give 95% of the credit to this building."

Steve Pikiell, Men's Basketball Coach

The new APC hasn't gone unnoticed by Rutgers' peers in the Big Ten, either. For instance, Rutgers' gymnastics facilities had previously been considered among the worst in the Big Ten, said Coach Salim-Beasley. However, she went on to say that "now that we have the APC, we can say we have one of the best." The building acts as a physical manifestation of the quality of and the university's commitment to the athletics program. Some coaches said that, before, critics would question Rutgers University's commitment to their athletics program; now, there is no question.

The APC has also brought with it a change in attitude. It has become the benchmark in elite intercollegiate practice facilities and now fosters a culture of winning. Further, as a state school, the excellence of the APC and the programs it hosts doesn't just speak to student-athletes and alumni, but to the State of New Jersey and the way it is represented. As explained by Coach Stringer, "The people of this state must feel really proud. This facility is second to none; and that's what should be happening here."



Two-thirds of staff said the design of the APC has a "Good" or "Very Good" impact on Rutgers University's fundraising/donations.



Beyond influencing recruits' first impressions, the new APC has also had a huge impact on donors' interest in supporting Rutgers University and its athletics program. As an embodiment of the school's commitment to the athletics program, the APC shows how donations can be transformed into real and impactful results. As Associate Vice President of Development Northrup says, "Donors can see their impact." In fact, 67% of the staff surveyed said the APC has a "Good" or "Very Good" impact on Rutgers University's fundraising/donations. Rather than taking a leap of faith, donors now have evidence that their investment will be spent in a meaningful way and put to good use. Matt Colgiovanni, the Department Director of Athletics for Facilities, notes that "any donor who has seen the APC thinks their money was well spent."

In addition, the APC offers momentum for fundraising, as other potential sponsors may see the quality of the APC and decide they want their name on the next building. It also creates a self-fulfilling prophecy for the Rutgers fundraising team, as they gain greater confidence in fundraising and are able to build on this success to bring in a new generation of sponsors, achieving the realization of their goals.

Ultimately, the benefits of the APC go far beyond the four teams hosted in the facility, as the gains extend to all of Rutgers University's athletic teams. The APC builds on Rutgers' overall championship culture, as the success of the APC can result in better support and more resources to achieve the goals of the entire Rutgers athletics program. Donors now have a greater level of confidence that good decisions are being made and design excellence is being pursued. As the saying goes, "The high tide raises all boats."





STRUCTURE + FLEXIBILITY

The programmatic layout and flexibility of the APC creates greater opportunities and positive outcomes for all of the building's users, and for the overall Rutgers University athletics program.

To achieve the experience that so many appreciate about the APC, the design had to incorporate a diverse range of components in a way that was both highly structured yet tremendously flexible. Teams needed dedicated access to certain spaces and resources, such that they would be available whenever needed. For instance, before the APC, the Men's and Women's Basketball teams had to share access to practice courts—with each other as well as a range of other athletic programs, including wrestling and gymnastics competitions and university events, from graduations to dance-a-thons to concerts. All of this undermined each teams' ability to schedule practice. Similarly, Men's Wrestling and Women's Gymnastics had to share their facilities with recreational users and events, meaning that critical time could be lost due to factors outside of their control. Now, not only are these issues addressed, but as one staff member explained in their survey, "The [APC] is an overall positive benefit to the athletics program and the university."



The key to achieving an appropriate balance and character of programs and experiences in the APC was to have a "spine" of shared areas that link key programmatic components. Elite intercollegiate practice facilities typically share many of the same programmatic components,

but in order to celebrate Rutgers and provide a custom experience, the "kit of parts" that comprise the APC was assembled in a unique way, such that there is a rhythm of public and private spaces. Access to dedicated practice areas and locker room suites occurs off the spine, and spaces for gathering and interaction were placed at key nodes throughout, plus indoor/ outdoor spaces available on multiple floors. Deputy Director Baumgartner explains that "each team in [the APC] has its own footprint, but there are spaces that bring people together... There's a synergy across programs that's really unique." Sharing resources and spaces not only allows for a more efficient use of investments, but also helps foster inter-team connections and a sense of community within the building. Achieving this balance required thoughtful and creative design.

The fourth floor terrace—one of the most dynamic outdoor spaces in the building-has served a broad range of functions. When equipped with large screens, it can host big events for its athletic programs or fundraising. On a day-to-day basis, however, it is used for informal meetings, study groups, and as a respite for fresh air and daylight. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it has enabled coach and team meetings to continue in a safe, socially distanced manner. Likewise, the Nutrition Center and Training Table has helped unify the teams by serving as a hub for nutrition and dining that has become a key place to socialize and connect.











The Strength and Conditioning Room is regarded as best-in-class, with a range of equipment and support for different training modalities as well as integrated Recovery program elements.

Another space that has exceeded expectations is the Strength and Conditioning Room. Designed with sliding glass walls that can completely open to the outdoors, the Strength and Conditioning Room has continued to serve as a place where student-athletes come together to train-even under pandemic-related restrictions. Well before the pandemic, the Strength and Conditioning Room was regarded as best-in-class, with a range of equipment and support for different training modalities. Assistant Athletics Director for Strength and Conditioning, Van Dyke, argues that "Our Strength and Conditioning Room is as good as any facility there is, [and] we have the flexibility to train a very broad range of [student-] athletes."

Trainers praise the design for how it was integrated with Recovery elements, as staff are able to observe student-athletes in an informal context and catch issues before they may turn into injuries. As with so many other aspects of the APC, the adjacencies and resulting encounters among studentathletes and staff result in positive outcomes for the teams, as a whole, and for student-athletes as individuals.

These shared environments are balanced with spaces dedicated to each team, i.e. the practice courts and locker room suites. Customizing each team's practice space has resulted in more effective training. The Women's Gymnastics team's dedicated area, for example, has helped reduce injuries by having an ideal and customized equipment configuration. Without having to accommodate other activities, it's possible to have superior protection and padding. Similarly, the customized spaces for Men's and Women's Basketball incorporate recording and biometric technology tailored specifically to their needs. The locker room suites for all sports also play an essential role in making student-athletes comfortable. With couches, TVs, and easy access to recovery equipment, these areas function as a protected space where teammates can relax and bond.

The building's kit of parts is arranged in a unique way, though consisting in some cases of somewhat standard programmatic components. The organization of the APC's spine of shared spaces and resources provides the rigid flexibility needed for this program while lending a level of richness. Together, the kit of parts and organizational elements work together to enhance the well-being, collaboration, performance, and experiences of all who use the building.

Pandemic Response

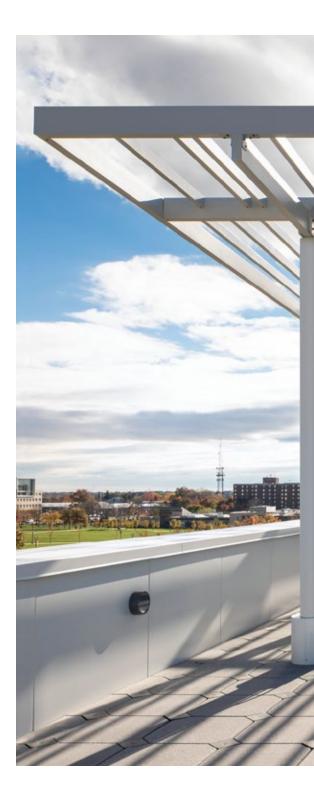
The COVID-19 pandemic that hit the United States in 2020 created unprecedented disruption to all aspects of our lives. Like everywhere around the country (and the world), Rutgers University had to act quickly and thoughtfully to safeguard its community. The APC played an active role in helping Rutgers respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, thanks to the integrated health clinic and the indoor/outdoor spaces found in various parts of the building.

With regard to the health clinic, the APC was able to function as a center for student-athlete testing at the university. Estimating that they have been able to do more COVID-19 testing than any other school in the conference, Athletic Director Hobbs said he "[doesn't] know how we'd be able to do what we [did] during COVID without the APC. It's where most of our tests are processed. Spacing [for social distancing] is easy. It's been a very workable building during COVID." While other organizations around the country had trouble operating, the APC was able to offer its typical clinical services while also adding on COVID-19 testing capabilities.

Beyond the healthcare infrastructure in place, the APC was also well served by the numerous spaces that had originally been designed to take advantage of the region's warmer seasons. The outdoor terrace, for example, played a significant role in hosting recruits and also provided a venue for socially distanced team meetings. For Men's Basketball, Coach Pikiell explained, "We have all our meetings outdoors on the terrace... we watch film outdoors on the terrace... People come here and the outdoor [space] gives them a wow factor."

Likewise, the Strength and Conditioning Room's ability to completely open its walls to the outdoors enabled student-athletes to train with equipment that otherwise would have been tricky to access. Deputy Director Baumgartner exults that "What we did with those [sliding glass] doors... It was brilliant before, but with COVID, it's even more brilliant." Even spaces that didn't open to the outside benefited from robust ventilation systems that provided sufficient hourly air exchanges to enable staff to continue working in the building relatively safely, with only modest adjustments in behavior.

The building's designed-in flexibility, indoor/outdoor venues, and innovative inclusion of a clinic normally would set the APC apart from similar collegiate facilities—but the COVID-19 pandemic has shown just how high-performing this building is, and what an asset it is to the Rutgers athletics program and the university, as a whole.



The building's designed-in flexibility, indoor/outdoor venues, and innovative inclusion of a clinic have enabled the APC to be an asset to the Rutgers athletics program and university throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.



"The impact of the APC has been tremendous for the players, coaching and support staff, alumni, recruiting, etc. It put Rutgers on the same level as the other Big Ten universities."

Rutgers University Staff Member



A FINAL NOTE

When starting this study, we set out to assess the APC's impact on the institution, athletics program, and building occupants. We wanted to understand how the facility affected occupants' performance, wellness, and experience. What we found was that, in its concept and execution, the Rutgers University RWJBarnabas Health Athletic Performance Center creates a place that is more than the sum of its parts. As one staff member put it, "The whole building is impressive." There are both dedicated and shared facilities, advanced technology and clinical

services, and places to come together to socialize and collaborate. Any single component of the APC makes sense—but when synthesized into a unified whole, the contribution to the community of student-athletes, coaches and staff, athletics program, and university campus exceeds the impact on any one aspect of athletic performance or experience. The APC truly can help make champions by fulfilling its vision of being an elite intercollegiate athletic performance center.



#WIBarnabes Health Athletic Performance Center

APPENDIX





ABOUT THE STUDY

This report is based on a post-occupancy evaluation (POE) research study that was conducted in 2020 on the RWJBarnabas Health Athletic Performance Center at Rutgers University. The goal of the POE was to understand the use of the facility and the impact of the design on the institution, athletics program, and building occupants (i.e., staff and student-athletes). The focus of the study centered on several key design goals, including the use of the facility and its impact on occupant performance, wellness, and experience.

This study relied on both quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry:

- **Staff Questionnaire:** an online questionnaire was used to collect feedback from APC staff about their satisfaction with and perspectives about their experiences working in the facility. The staff questionnaire received 18 responses.
- **Student-Athlete Questionnaire:** to understand the student-athlete perspective on the use and impact of the facility, an anonymous online questionnaire was distributed to student-athletes who regularly use the building. The student-athlete questionnaire received 49 responses, with participants from all four sports: Men's Basketball (N=11), Women's Basketball (N=5), Men's Wrestling (N=22), and Women's Gymnastics (N=11).
- **Staff Interviews:** one-on-one virtual interviews were held with select staff to further understand their perspectives on the use and impact of the facility. There were 11 participants, including coaches, trainers, and administrators.
- Archival Data: publicly available data was collected, with particular attention
 to before vs. after the facility opened. Data included such things as: team wins,
 winning streaks, record, tournament appearances, attendance, fundraising, and
 student-athlete recruiting metrics.



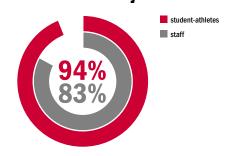




SURVEY DATA

To understand staff and student-athletes' use and perceived impact of the RWJBarnabas Health Athletic Performance Center at Rutgers University, an anonymous online questionnaire was distributed to APC staff and student-athletes who regularly use the facility. The staff version of the questionnaire received 18 responses; and the student-athlete version received 49 responses, with participants from all four sports: Men's Basketball (N=11), Women's Basketball (N=5), Men's Wrestling (N=22), and Women's Gymnastics (N=11). The following charts summarize the data collected by these two surveys.

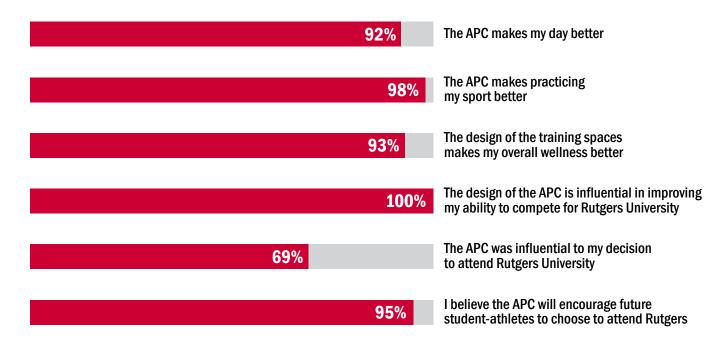
Overall design of the APC rated as "Good" or "Very Good"



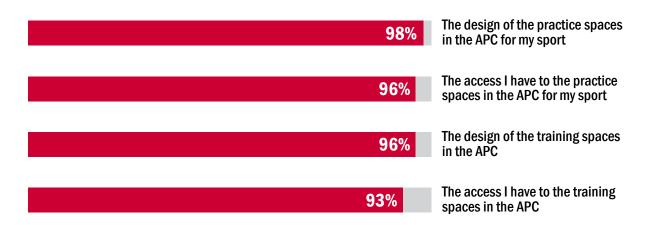
The design of the APC has a "Good" or "Very Good" impact on...



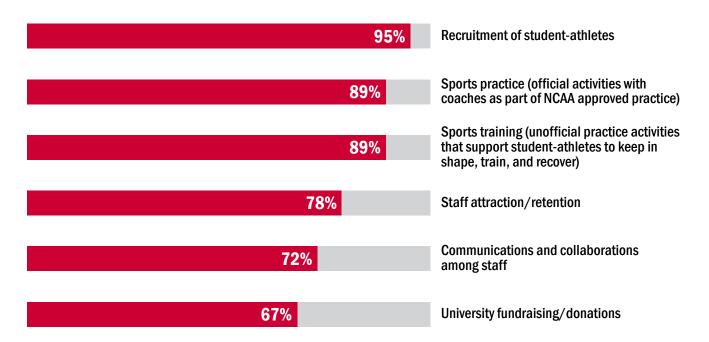
Student-athletes agree that...



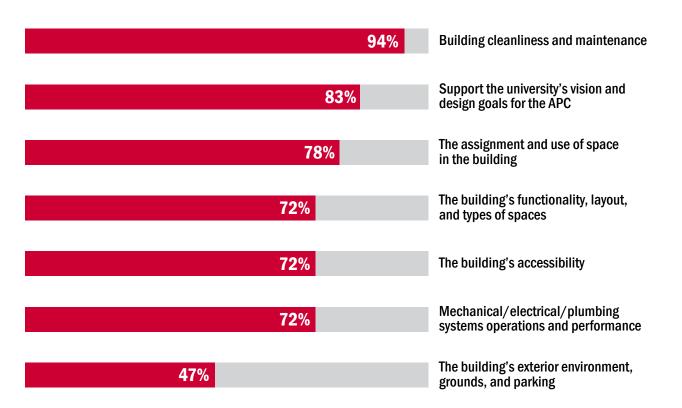
Student-athletes are "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with...

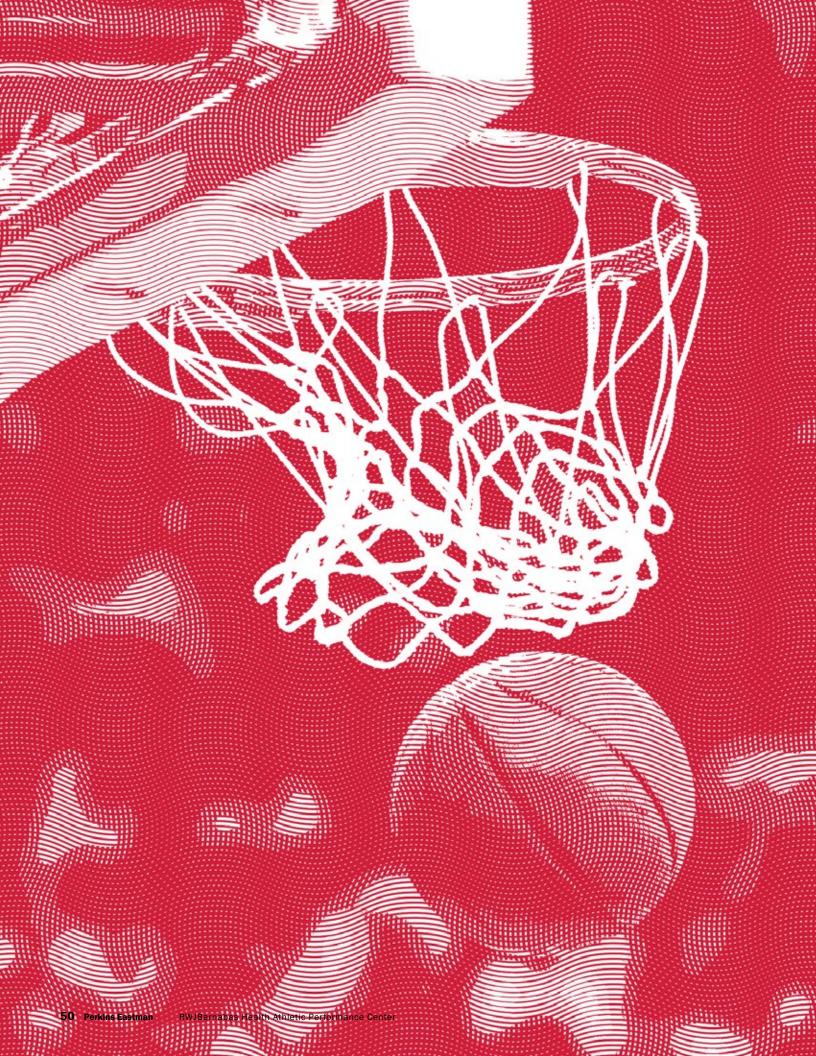


Staff said the design of the APC has a "Good" or "Very Good" impact on...

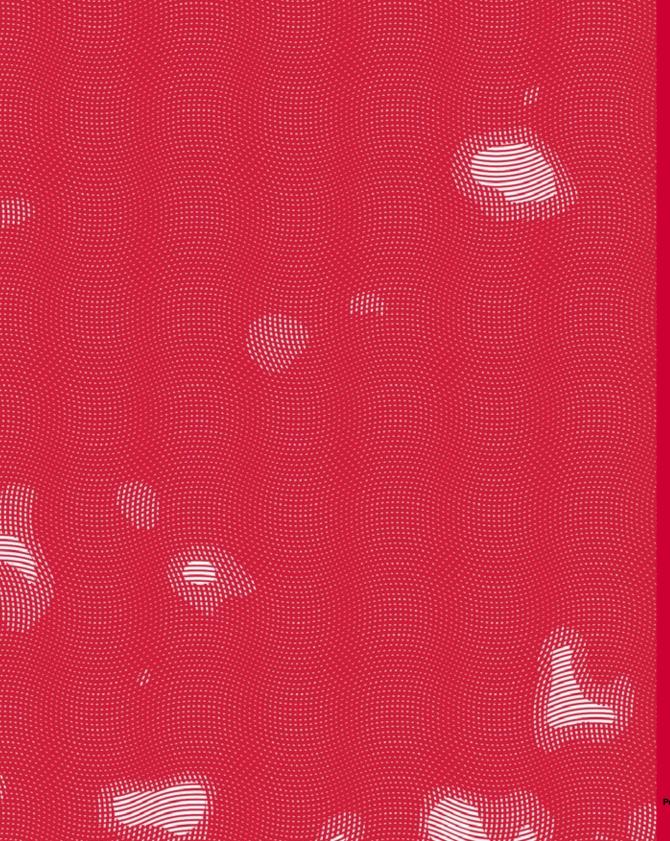


Staff are "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with...





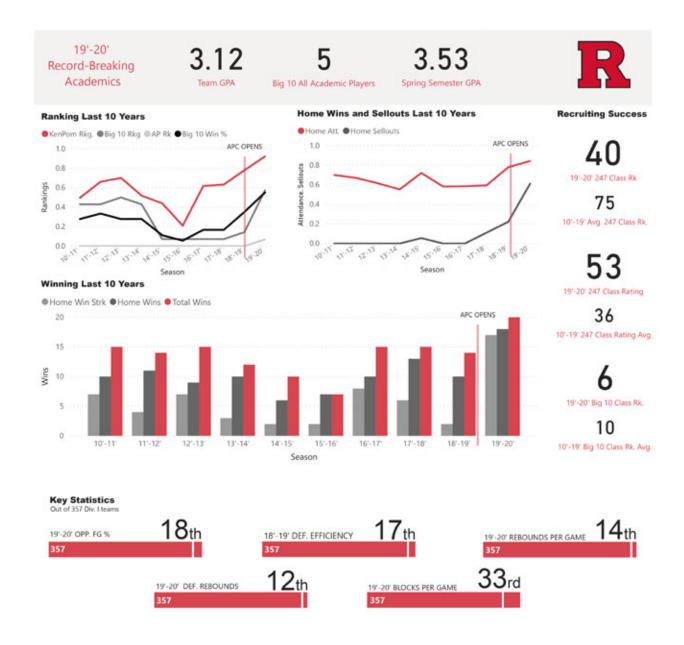
APPENDIX (



APPENDIX C: ARCHIVAL DATA FINDINGS

Rutgers Men's Basketball | A Decade of Data Analytics





SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to the Rutgers University student-athletes and staff members who participated in the surveys, and to the following staff who were interviewed:

- Pat Hobbs, Director of Athletics
- · Sarah Baumgartner, Deputy Director of Athletics
- Matt Colgiovanni, Department Director of Athletics for Facilities
- · Carly Northup, Senior Associate Director of Athletics and Associate Vice President of Development
- · Steve Pikiell, Men's Basketball Coach
- C. Vivian Stringer, Women's Basketball Coach
- · Scott Goodale, Men's Wrestling Coach
- Umme Salim-Beasley, Women's Gymnastics Coach
- David Van Dyke, Assistant Athletics Director, Strength and Conditioning
- Richard Campbell, Assistant Athletic Trainer
- · Katie Salmone, Director of Sports Nutrition
- · Robert Hoffman, Senior Project Manager

CONTACT US

If you would like to discuss the results of this research study or are interested in learning about our Sports & Exhibition practice, please contact Scott Schiamberg.



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