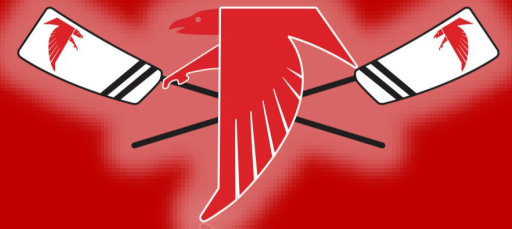




JAMES MADISON WARHAWK CREW

PARENT & STUDENT INFORM SESSION
9.16.2025



AGENDA

- WELCOME!
- WHY ROW?
- WHO IS WARHAWK CREW?
- *** BREAKOUT ***
- THE WORK BEHIND THE PROGRAM
- FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES & COMMITMENTS
- Q&A – JMCBO FOCUS GROUP



WELCOME TO THE WARHAWK CREW FAMILY!



CREW, A CLUB SPORT?

Warhawk Crew is a competitive high school club sport founded in 2002.

In 2013, the Virginia High School League (VHSL) removed crew rowing from its list of recognized activities.

At JMHS, and at all FCPS, crew is recognized as a self-supporting VHSL co-ed club activity. Meaning the organization is supported by booster organizations and parent volunteers.



ABOUT US

Throughout our 23-year history, Warhawk Crew has a reputation as a team built upon hard work and focused training, while maintaining academic excellence.

The club is 100% financed and managed through the **James Madison Crew Boosters Organization, Inc. ("JMCBO")**, a non-profit 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization.

Our fundraising efforts entirely support the team's costs.

23 Years of Rowing!

QUICK OVERVIEW

- **FUN & Competitive Racing Team**
- **Great complement to Fall & Winter Sports**
- Considered a Spring 'Club' Sport however, we have athletic **opportunities throughout the year.**
- Funded through Fundraising & Membership Dues
- Eligible to receive **varsity letters** and we partner closely with the JMHS Athletics Activities Office.
- **Governed by James Madison Crew Boosters Organization (JMCBO) – 100% Parent-run Volunteer Board of Directors**
 - Volunteer
 - Raise \$\$\$\$
 - Pay Bills
 - Organize Events
 - Boost the Team/Coaches



Ergatta / Erg-a-Thon 2025

WHY ROW?

“Rowing is perhaps the toughest of sports. Once the race starts, there are no time-outs, no substitutions. It calls upon the limits of human endurance.” -- George Pocock



GRIT, DETERMINATION, DISCIPLINE...

- **No prior rowing experience** is necessary to join!
- Rowers are recognized as some of the **hardest working and motivated student-athletes**.
- Rowing is one of the **fastest growing collegiate sports** in the United States – increased scholarship opportunities.
- Crew is the ultimate **team sport** and requires rowers exhibit not only great strength and stamina, but also the ability to work together to make a shell of many parts move as one.
- **Become a student athlete** – rowing is a total body workout, building cardio endurance and intensive strength. Great for Fall sport athletes to condition during Winter/Spring!
- **IT'S SO MUCH FUN!**



STUDENT ATHLETE EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHTS


LAILA WEEDMAN, SENIOR



SAM RICE, JUNIOR

2025 ALUMNI ROWING IN COLLEGE!

James Madison
WARHAWK CREW



Chris Lee

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
2025

The first spotlight features a male rower, Chris Lee, in a dark blue and white rowing suit. The photo is set within a red frame that includes a graphic of a red warhawk and two crossed oars. A small yellow rooster mascot logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the photo.

James Madison
WARHAWK CREW



Kate Oberg, Team Capt.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
2025

The second spotlight features a female rower, Kate Oberg, in a red and white rowing suit. The photo is set within a red frame that includes a graphic of a red warhawk and two crossed oars. Two logos are visible in the bottom left corner of the photo: a purple and orange shield with 'DISCE' and a green shield with a white emblem.

James Madison
WARHAWK CREW



Dillan Pakes, Team Capt.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
2025

The third spotlight features a male rower, Dillan Pakes, in a white and red rowing suit. The photo is set within a red frame that includes a graphic of a red warhawk and two crossed oars. A yellow and blue 'LASALLE' logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the photo.



2024 ALUMNI ROWING IN COLLEGE!

James Madison
WARHAWK CREW



Britain Fehd

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
2024

James Madison
WARHAWK CREW



NICHOLAS JOPECK

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
2024

James Madison
WARHAWK CREW



AVA DUFFY

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
2024

James Madison
WARHAWK CREW



THAD REMMERS

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
2024



2023 ALUMNI ROWING IN COLLEGE!

James Madison
WARHAWK CREW



Josephine Lightner

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
2023

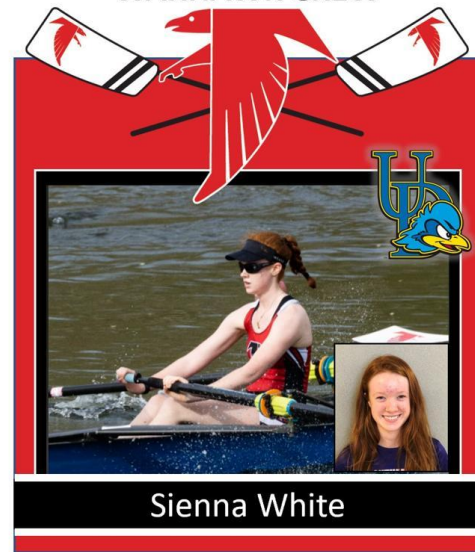
James Madison
WARHAWK CREW



Michael Swale

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
2023

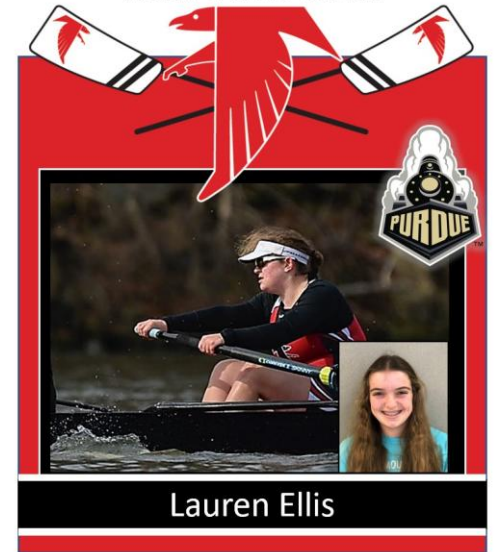
James Madison
WARHAWK CREW



Sienna White

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
2023

James Madison
WARHAWK CREW



Lauren Ellis

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
2023



WHO IS WARHAWK CREW?

Meet the Team and Coaches



MELISSA (MEL) GRIFFIN

EXECUTIVE ROWING DIRECTOR AND
MEN'S HEAD & VARSITY COACH

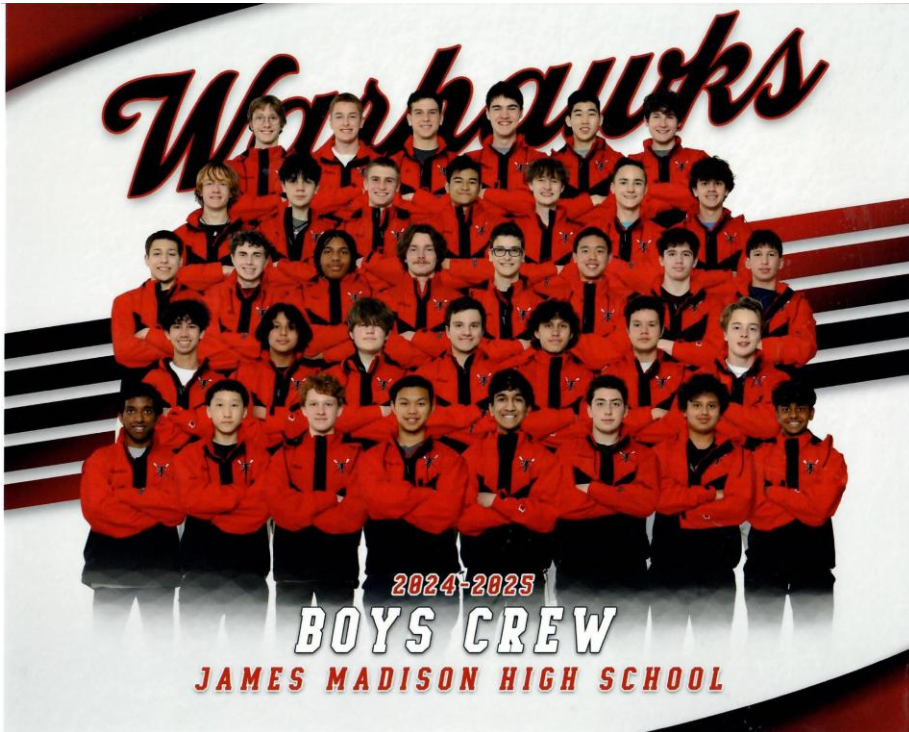
Coach Mel's coaching philosophy centers around fostering a supportive and growth-oriented environment for her athletes. She believes in the importance of developing both the person and the athlete, emphasizing the value of hard work, resilience, and teamwork.



2024-25 WARHAWK CREW TEAM

"The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team"
-- Phil Jackson

MEN'S TEAM



WOMEN'S TEAM



RECENT STATE CHAMPIONSHIP BOATS



2025 Women's FR 4+ State Champs



2025 Men's 2nd Varsity 8+ State Champs

MEET THE COACHES – MEN'S TEAM



MELLISSA (MEL) GRIFFIN
WOMEN'S HEAD & VARSITY COACH

Coach Mel has been with Warhawk Crew for 4 years now. She began her rowing career with South County High School and upon graduation she was recruited and rowed at George Mason University as a D1 athlete!

She has a passion for coaching and has been at Prince William Boating Club, TBC Racing, and Resilient during the scholastic off-season.

Widely known and respected for her dedication, passion, and commitment to the sport of rowing



GEORGE DOWELL
MEN'S NOVICE & FRESHMAN COACH

Coach George, joined our coaching staff in 2023. In high school, he rowed for TC Williams High School. For college, he attended the University of Washington where he was a member of their 1997 National Championship team.

Following college, Coach George coached rowing at the Gow School outside of Buffalo, NY. He is poised to build a strong foundation for our novice and freshman rowers. One of his sons currently attends Madison.



CONNOR NELSON
MEN'S JUNIOR VARSITY COACH

Coach Connor, joined our coaching staff in 2023. He began his rowing career with Lyman High School in Orlando FL. His passion for the sport and calling to mentor led him back to the rowing community.

Coach Connor will be leaning in with the Men's team and focus on the Junior Varsity this year. His commitment to developing young talent and fostering a competitive spirit will continue to be invaluable to our program.

MEET THE COACHES – WOMEN’S TEAM



DANE UNDERWOOD
WOMEN'S HEAD & VARSITY COACH

Coach Dane joined us in 2024 and has been rowing and coaching in the northern VA area since 1998. He began his coaching career at Oakton HS in 2004 where he worked to build the program from a small start-up to the competitive team they are today.

Coach Dane has led teams to great success with numerous medal finishes at VA ‘States’ and many of his athletes have found individual success with All-Met awards and collegiate rowing.

TBD
WOMEN'S NOVICE & FRESHMAN COACH

COMING SOON

TBD
WOMEN'S JUNIOR VARSITY COACH

COMING SOON

DOUGLAS BRUNE
WOMEN'S ASSISTANT COACH

Coach Brune, joined us in 2024 and will be filling in periodically as workload allows. He is a Madison Alumni and a D1 collegiate rower from Georgetown.

Before joining us, Brune served as the assistant coach for Oakton High School’s women’s team during the 2020-2021 season. In this role he led the Jr. Women’s double to a bronze medal at the VASRA State Championship. He also volunteered as an assistant coach at Davidson College.

JV / ASSISTANT COACHES WANTED!

Want to join our nationally recognized and sought-after coaching team? Or maybe you know someone who would be a good fit?

The Junior Varsity/Assistant coaching position provides a wonderful opportunity for a new or aspiring coach to gain valuable experience while working under the supervision of experienced coaches in a competitive high school program.

Check out the details at:

<https://www.warhawkcrew.org/jobs>

Email Resumes to:

EVP@warhawkcrew.org



2026 TENTATIVE SPRING REGATTA SCHEDULE

- 1/24: ANNUAL ERGATTA / ERG-A-THON (OAKTON OR JMHS)
- 1/31: 2026 ERGSPRINTS (ALEXANDRIA CITY HS)
- 3/21: POLAR BEAR (VARSITY ONLY)
- 3/28: WALTER MESS
- 4/4: DARRELL WINDSLOW
- 4/11: TED PHOENIX
- 4/18: RYZ OBUCHOWICZ
- 4/25: AL URQUIA REGATTA OR CHARLIE BUTT (POTOMAC)
- 5/2: VSRC 'STATES' DAY 1 (LOWER BOATS)
- 5/9: VSRC 'STATES' DAY 2 (UPPER BOATS)
- 5/14-5/17: STOTESBURY CUP (SCHUYLKILL, PA) * SELECT ONLY
- 5/21-5/23: SRAA (OAKRIDGE, TN) ** QUALIFIED BOATS
- 6/4-6/6: YOUTH NATIONALS (SARASOTA, FL) **QUALIFIED BOATS

* Select Boats Only

** Qualified Boats Only

Highlighted – Additional Expense Incurred outside of membership dues



2025-26 HIGH-LEVEL SEASONAL SCHEDULE

Year-round Training: To stay competitive, we are making every effort to provide year-round opportunities to improve our performance. Just like our competitors, we are training throughout the year.

▲ **FALL- Warhawk Crew Opportunities:**

- **Learn to Row (LTR):** Saturdays, 9/13, 9/20 & 9/27 (10A – 12P) @ [Sandy Run](#) (Transportation Provided)
- **Green Day Practice:** Tues & Thurs, Now – 10/30 (4-6:30P) @ [Sandy Run](#)
- **Weightlifting:** Mon & Thurs Now – 11/6 (7-8P) @JMHS Weight room

▲ **Winter Conditioning:** 24 Nov – 21 Feb (M-F 4-6:30P & Sat 8-10:30A) @JMHS

★ **Spring Race Season:** 23 Feb – 30 May (M-F 4-6:30P & Sat 8-10:30A*) @ [Sandy Run](#)

- *Times fluctuate on Regatta days – Qualified boats may go thru 8 June (Stotes, Nats, Youth Nats)
- **Mulch Day – all hands-on deck! (Delivery on 7 March, Alt Snow Day: 14 March)**
- **Spring Break Training (30 March – 6 April) Yes, we train during Spring Break – it is right in the middle of our race season**

KEY

★ Required

▲ Optional, HIGHLY Recommended



[Visit the Calendar](#)

WHERE WE ROW – SANDY RUN

- Warhawk Crew rows from the Sandy Run Regional Park boathouse, where we share space with several other local high schools.
- **Address: 10450 Van Thompson Rd, Fairfax Station, VA 22039**
- Sandy Run is on the banks of the Occoquan River ‘The Quan’.
- This is our primary ‘Home’ regatta location.
- Roundtrip transportation is provided during Spring (M-F only) – Other times, carpools are recommended.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS:** Bring Water, Snacks, TP, Hand Sanitizer, Sunscreen, Sunglasses, Extra Clothes, Sneakers, etc. with you for practice each day.



Athletes...IMPORTANT Topics

1. **HOCO Parade, Friday 9/26** – Meet at Vienna Presbyterian Parking Lot (124 Park St NE) between 1:15 – 1:45P
2. **OKTOBERFEST, Saturday 10/4**
Volunteers needed for children's area. Get a jump on fundraising & Volunteer Hours by supporting this event! Sign up on [DIBS](#) (Please)





BREAKOUTS

PARENTS/GUARDIANS – STAY HERE

STUDENTS & COACHES – ROOM 6A & B

THE WORK BEHIND THE PROGRAM

It REALLY Does Take a Village

- Community Engagement
- Membership Management
- Volunteer Coordination
- Event Organization
- Safety Policies & Practices
- Equipment & Maintenance
- And SO Much More...



JMCBO – BOARD OF DIRECTORS, PARENT/VOLUNTEER RUN!

President & VASRA Rep: Tarrin Pakes

Executive Vice President: Peter Rice

Operations VP: Adam Oliver & Jonathan Couchman

Fundraising VP: Kellie Brownlee & Lynda Mussa

Membership : Erin Prentice

Registrar: Mike Brownlee

Secretary: Ben Winter

Communications: Dana McCulloch

 **Outgoing/Senior Parent:**
Co-Chair Needed this year

Treasurer: Kito Mussa

Volunteers: Patrick Burke

Away Regattas: Tana Keefe

Hospitality: Andrea Paradise

Transportation: Catherine Williams

Uniform/Spirit Wear: Mara Gecan

President Emeritus: Aaron Georgelas

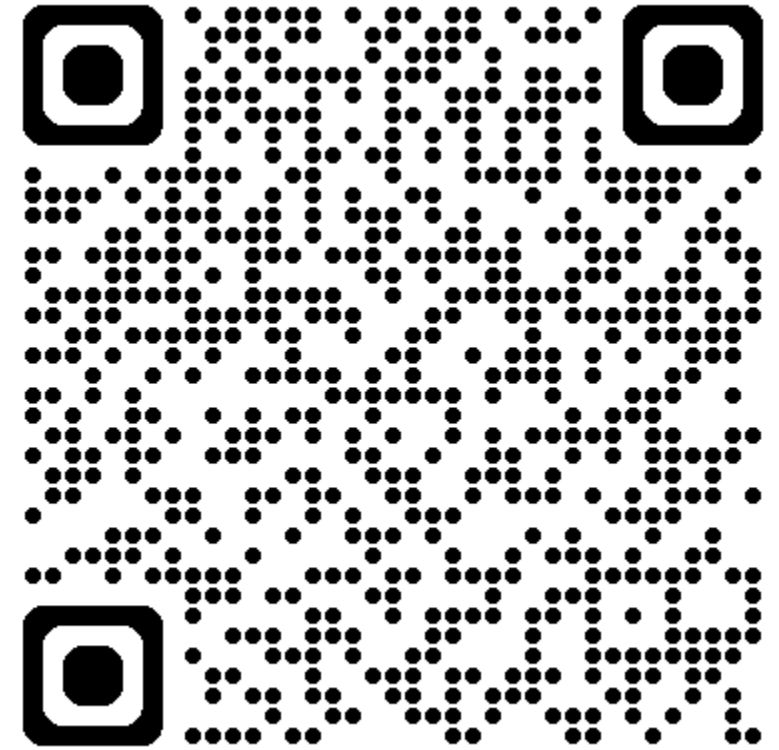
If you're interested in joining the board and helping to make this sport possible for our student athletes, please reach out to the JMCBO President at president@warhawkcrew.org.

COMMUNICATIONS

DANA MCCULLOCH

Warhawk Crew uses several tools to maintain year-round communication with members and the public.

- **Slack - #1 JOIN TODAY!**
- **Newsletters (Email)**
- **Social Media**
 - Instagram: [Warhawk Crew \(@warhawkcrew\)](https://www.instagram.com/warhawkcrew)
 - Facebook: [WARHAWK CREW | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/warhawkcrew)
- **Website:** www.WarhawkCrew.org
- **Questions?** Slack **Dana McCulloch** or email Communications@warhawkcrew.org



WARHAWK CREW: MUST READ DOCUMENTS

TRANSPORTATION

CATHERINE WILLIAMS

BUS:

Spring Season Only (Monday – Friday) Departure from JMHS at 3:15P and Return around 7:30P (later with the sunseting times). **Join Slack #bus-transportation-comms for ETAs.**

CARPOOLS:

Learn to Row, Green Days, Saturday Practices & Regattas, and Spring Break. **Join Slack #Carpools to engage.**

Parents are responsible for ensuring that privately arranged carpools to/from river are in accordance with VA driving rules.



STUDENT DRIVERS

Many upperclassmen drive themselves to/from practices & events and will be required to follow all school policies regarding driving to and from practices, home regattas and team events. This will include submitting school forms, identifying members of carpools, and following specified routes. These forms and documents will be given to and collected from student drivers before a student may drive to any crew practice or event.

Lastly, they **MUST** follow all state driving laws, specifically:

1. **If you are under age 18**, you may carry only **one passenger under age 21**, unless accompanied by a licensed parent, or other adult acting in place of a parent, in the front passenger seat. **However, after you have held your license for one year**, you may carry **up to three passengers under age 21** in the following situations:
 - **Travel to and from a school-sponsored activity;**
 - A licensed driver 21 or older is in the front passenger seat; or
 - In case of an emergency.
2. **NO Cell Phone Use while driving!**
3. **NO Student Driving Cross State Lines.** Students are **NOT** permitted to drive themselves to any away regattas or events that cross state lines.



FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES & COMMITMENTS

“To be in your children’s memories tomorrow, you have to be in their lives today.” – Barbara Johnson



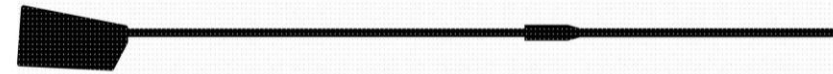
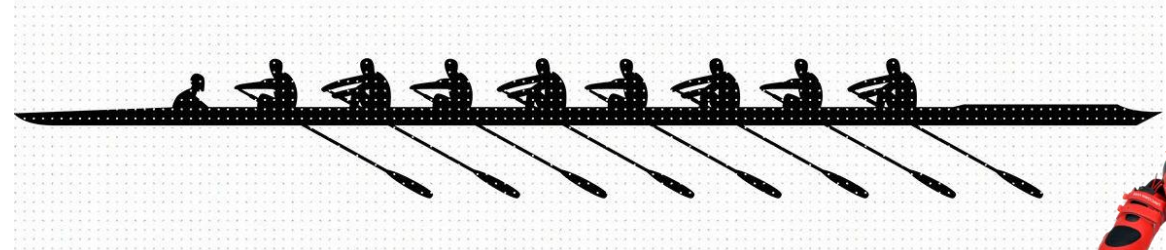
WHAT DOES IT COST TO ROW?



Please be reminded that the cost of our equipment is exceptionally high—higher than any other sport offered at James Madison, except for turf. It is crucial that we handle all equipment with the utmost respect and care - ALWAYS

Basic Equipment:

- Rowing Shell (8+): \$55k+ (New)
- Oars: \$5k/Set | \$450/Each
- Riggers: \$900 each
- Seats: \$140 | Shoes w/ mounting plates: \$120
- Launch Boats: \$13k | Engines: \$5k
- Insurance: \$20k | Maintenance of Equipment: \$5k+



Rowing Machines:

C2 Rower: \$1k Each | PM5: \$160

Coxswain Equipment:

Cox Boxes: \$900 | Speed Coach: \$500 | Microphones: \$120

Coaching Equipment:

Megaphone: \$500 | Interval Watch \$200 | Lifejackets \$200+



2025-26 MEMBERSHIP DUES/FEES

The membership structure is designed to 1.) be understandable and equitable, 2.) cover day-to-day and annual costs, and 3.) maintain dues at the lowest possible level while meeting our program goals.

Membership Dues (2 Options):

- **Tier 1:** \$2,500 & 6 Volunteer Points pledged
- **Tier 2:** \$3,100 & 3 Volunteer Points pledged

Fundraising Target: \$1,000/Rowers

Why is Volunteering Required?

If we didn't have volunteers, we would have to pay for the labor to perform the work, and our costs would increase significantly.

Summary of Athlete Membership Milestones	Tier 1	Tier 2	Due Dates
Membership Dues allow the club to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top notch racing shells • Spring Training (late Feb – May) • Transportation • Equipment Operation & Maintenance • Regatta Fees 	\$2,500	\$3,100	Full payment required NLT 16 February 26
Volunteer Points Pledged: Required by family regardless of number of athletes registered. Each unfilled point is worth \$200.	6 points	3 points	Complete or scheduled by 1 June 26
Fundraising: Necessary to keep membership costs low and contribute to our capital fund.	\$1,000		Complete by 15 June 26

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

INCLUDED

- Dedicated Coaching Staff
- 400+ hours of training
- Spring Bus Transportation (M-F)
- Equipment & Maintenance
- Rack Space
- Trailer Maintenance
- Insurance (Boats, Trailer, USRowing, etc.)
- Regatta Fees*
- Hospitality (Regatta, Mulch Day, Spring Break)
- Regatta Food & Snacks – Signup Genius
- Banquet (Athlete Dinner & Awards)

NOT INCLUDED

- Uniforms (Store will open in Oct & Jan)
- Saturday Practice & Regatta Transportation
- Specialized Away Regattas (3)
 - Stotesbury (Philly)
 - SRAA 'Nats' (OakRidge, TN)
 - Youth Nats (Sarasota, FL)
- Team Dinners (Fridays before Home Regattas) – Signup Genius
- Banquet (Parent/Guardian Dinner)

SCHOLARSHIPS

This year, we're asking all families seeking scholarship assistance to submit an application through the [Julia Shew Memorial Scholarship Fund](#). Applications are due **by January 10, 2026**.

Additionally, JMCBO scholarships may be available on an as-needed basis - Contact president@warhawkcrew.org.

If you're planning to request a scholarship from Warhawk Crew, we kindly ask that you apply through the Julia Shew Fund as part of that process. Additionally, we ask that **scholarship recipients participate in fundraising and volunteering efforts**, where applicable.

All requests will be held in strictest confidence

VOLUNTEERING

PATRICK BURKE

JMCBO is a parent run volunteer organization, family support is required beyond the prompt payment of fees. Other than coaches, there is no paid staff to operate the Warhawk Crew and perform support activities – **we need your support!**

- Crew is a required family participation sport
- Volunteer credit-based system (new in 2022)
- 6 credit minimum requirement per family (siblings consolidated)
- Two-tiered membership fee option (to buy down credits)
- Each credit is ~4 hours
- All opportunities will be posted in [DIBs](https://warhawkcrew.org/dib_sessions) (warhawkcrew.org/dib_sessions)
- We need help Now – Open Volunteer Positions are [HERE](#)

Providing food for team dinners, regattas, or events does not earn volunteer points.

BUS CHAPERONE – BADGING REQUIREMENTS

PATRICK BURKE

New this year...all bus chaperones and boat chaperones will be required to have cleared the FCPS background check process to be allowed to chaperone.

This process includes a background check and fingerprinting (free to volunteers) and is commonly referred to as getting "badged". We recommend at least one parent from each family undergo this background process.

We will need to begin this process soon to ensure we have enough parents 'badged' for Spring needs. Watch announcements on Slack or email for more information.

Good News, once you're 'badged', you will be automatically submitted for renewal next year. Board Members from last year who were badged should also qualify automatically this year.

FUNDRAISING

KELLIE BROWNEE & LYNDA MUSSA

- FY26 Fundraising Goal: \$120K - \$130K (last year we raised (\$112K)
- \$1,000 Target per Athlete
- We ask 100% participation (Raffle, Mulch Sales, and Ergatta / Erg-a-Thon)
- Fundraising Opportunities:
 - [Raffle Sales](#) – **Kicks off TODAY!**
 - [Ergatta / Erg-a-Thon](#) w/Oakton on 24 January
 - [Mulch Sales](#) (7 March Mulch Delivery Day – all athletes & at least 1 parent)
 - [Direct Donations](#)
 - [RaiseRight](#) – Gift Cards
 - [Corporate Sponsorships](#)
 - Company Matching (Benevity or other)



Fundraising Overview – Virtual Meeting
25 September | 7PM
Check Slack for meeting details!



FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

Year Long Fundraising Options (1 July – 30 June)

RaiseRight (Gift Cards)
Corporate Sponsorship
Direct Donations

Company Match Programs
Dining for Dollars
Snow Shoveling (if there is snow)

Spirit Wear Sales
Indirect Donations
Other Opportunities

(3) Major Seasonal Fundraising Campaigns

October

November

December

January

February

March

Raffle: Now – 1 December

Erg-a-Thon: 12/2 – 1/24

Mulch: 1/25 – 2/23

★
3/7 or 3/14
Mulch
Delivery Day
All Hands-On
Deck

PICK UP RAFFLE PACKETS

TODAY

In the Back of the Room!

NEXT STEPS TO SUCCESS

Must Read Documents



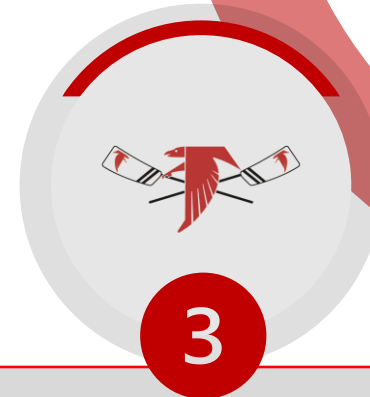
COMMUNICATIONS

- **Website:** www.warhawkcrew.org
- **JOIN SLACK:** Sign up by emailing Communications@warhawkcrew.org
- **Newsletter:** Sign up [HERE](#)
- **Follow Social Media:**
 - Facebook: [WarhawkCrew FB](#)
 - Instagram: [Warhawk Crew IG](#)
- **Questions?** Slack **Dana McCulloch** or Communications@warhawkcrew.org



REGISTRATION

- Registration is a multi-step process – START NOW
- warhawkcrew.org/registration-steps
- Fall L2R & Winter Conditioning – OPEN NOW (**No Cost**)
- Spring registration is Open NOW
- Purchase a UNI (October or January)
- **Questions?** Slack **Mike Brownlee** or Registrar@warhawkcrew.org



FUNDRAISING

- Begin fundraising NOW
- Pickup raffle packages today
- Next fundraising events:
 - Ergatta/Erg-a-thon (12/2 – 1/24)
 - Mulch Sales (1/25 – 2/23)
- Signup & leverage [RaiseRight](#)
- **Questions?** Slack **Kellie Brownlee & Lynda Mussa** or Fundraising@warhawkcrew.org

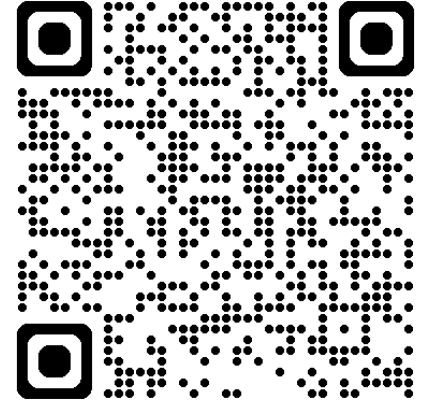


VOLUNTEERING

- Signup to volunteer & check opportunities often at: www.warhawkcrew.org/dib_sessions
- **Questions?** Slack **Patrick Burke** or Volunteers@warhawkcrew.org

TEAM SPIRIT – SPIRITWEAR / SWAG

MARA GECAN



- **Uniforms (Uni):** Required! Available for purchase in Oct & Jan, watch Slack for announcements.
- **Boathouse Jackets:** Nice to Have - also available for purchase in Oct & Jan
- **Other Swag:**
 - **In-Person:** Inventory is available at pre-season and in-season events or contact Spiritwear Chair, Mara Gecan on Slack to arrange for delivery
 - **Team Store:** [Madison Crew Spiritwear Store](#) – Delivered in 2 weeks
- **Recommendations:**
 - Rowing Pads (<https://rowingpad.com/>)
 - Detailed clothing recommendations will be provided in January during the water safety meeting (i.e., wool socks, performance gear, etc.)

WARHAWK TEAM SOCIAL

TOP GOLF

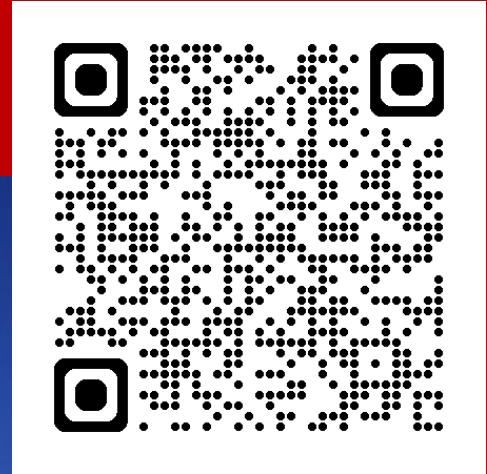
SUNDAY 5-7PM

DATE: 9 November

- ❖ Tickets are \$25 each
- ❖ 2 hours of unlimited golf
- ❖ Free fountain drinks
- ❖ Hangout with the team!

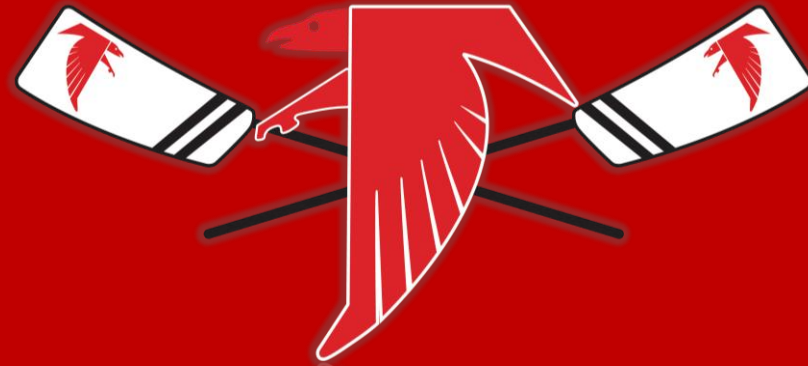
Buy Tickets HERE:

<https://pci.jotform.com/warhawkcrew/topgolf2025>



Network, Team-Build, Have Fun, and RAISE MONEY FOR CREW!

WARHAWK PARENT HAPPY HOUR



Bear Branch – Bear Cave

133 Maple Ave E., Vienna, VA

Wednesday, 5PM

DATE: 24 September





Q& A

JMCBO FOCUS GROUP