

2025-26 Annual Report

for Wellness, Recreation and Athletics

UVIC | Wellness, Recreation and Athletics



We acknowledge and respect the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees and Xʷsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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It is my pleasure to present this first-ever annual report for the Department of Wellness, Recreation and Athletics at the University of Victoria. This report reflects not only the breadth of services and programs we provide across clinical care, multifaith, recreation, and varsity athletics, but also the profound impact these interconnected areas have on the well-being and success of our students, our campus and the broader community.



Message from the Executive Director, Wellness, Recreation and Athletics

Over the past year, we have continued to advance our commitment to supporting the whole person, mind, body, and spirit. Our integrated model enables us to meet students and community members where they are, whether through clinical counselling, health services and programs, opportunities for physical activity and recreation, spaces for spiritual exploration, or pathways to excellence in varsity sport.

Our Student Wellness teams have responded to the sustained and growing need for students to receive complex care support. We have focused on improving access through a combination of in-person and virtual care, enhancing triage and intake processes, and strengthening partnerships across community and campus programs to ensure timely and appropriate support. While demand continues to stretch our capacity, our teams have demonstrated remarkable dedication and adaptability. Their compassion is evident in the way they walk alongside students, helping them navigate challenges and build foundations for long-term well-being.

At the same time, our multifaith team continues to build inclusive and supportive environments that reflect the diversity of our UVic community. Through programming, dialogue, and individual support, we foster belonging, connection, and understanding, an increasingly vital contribution in a complex and rapidly changing world.

Recreation services have seen strong growth in participation, reflecting a renewed prioritization of physical well-being and social connection. From intramurals, group fitness, informal recreation and community programs to youth camps and sport programs, we are proud to provide accessible opportunities that encourage lifelong healthy habits. Recreation remains a cornerstone of preventative wellness on campus, supporting both physical health and mental resilience.

In varsity athletics, our student-athletes have achieved excellence both in competition and in the classroom. Our programs continue to emphasize high

performance alongside holistic development, with a strong focus on academic success, leadership, and community engagement. The accomplishments of our coaches, teams and individuals are a source of pride for the entire university community.

Across all areas of Wellness, Recreation and Athletics, the data in this report demonstrates the scale and scope of our impact. We serve thousands of students and community members each year. These numbers tell an important story of reach and utilization, but they also represent individual journeys: students finding support during difficult times, building connections, pursuing excellence, and developing skills that will extend far beyond their time here at UVic.

This year has not been without its challenges. Increased demand for services, evolving student needs, and ongoing resource and facilities pressures require us to continually innovate and adapt. In response, we are strengthening our integrated approach, leveraging data to inform decisions, and exploring new models of service delivery and revenue generation to enhance access, effectiveness, and sustainability.

A key priority will be deepening our understanding of the student wellbeing landscape, both at UVic and across post-secondary institutions in Canada. Through this work, we will strengthen our use of data, research, and sector collaboration to inform decision-making and identify emerging trends and needs. This knowledge will cement our shared purpose and guide the development of UVic's first-ever comprehensive student wellbeing strategy, a significant milestone that will shape how we deliver integrated, proactive, and student-centred services in the years ahead.

Looking forward, we remain committed to advancing diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion across all our programs and services. This includes intentionally addressing barriers to access, strengthening culturally responsive and inclusive practices, and ensuring that our services reflect and support the diverse identities, experiences and needs of our community.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to our dedicated staff, coaches, clinicians, practitioners, and student employees whose passion and expertise make this work possible. I also thank our campus and community partners for their collaboration and shared commitment to wellbeing.



Looking ahead, the coming year will be an important period of growth and strategic development. We will expand our health promotion and outreach efforts, focusing on reaching students earlier, more consistently, and in ways that are responsive to diverse needs. We will also continue to prioritize harm-reduction education, ensuring students have access to accurate information, supportive resources, and programming that promote safer choices and community well-being.

Together, we are building a healthier, more connected, and more resilient UVic community.

Nicole Greengoe
Executive Director, Wellness, Recreation and Athletics
University of Victoria

Wellness, Recreation and Athletics (WRAD) is dedicated to advancing an integrated model of student health and wellbeing while upholding a strong commitment to excellence in varsity athletics.

Who we are

WRAD is central to the student experience at UVic. Our diverse range of recreational programs is designed to accommodate participants of all abilities and interests, from highly competitive athletes to individuals seeking general fitness, active living opportunities and connection. In parallel, our varsity teams consistently rank among the top programs in the country.

The Student Wellness team provides comprehensive, holistic care by bringing together professionals from counselling, medical services, nursing, and spiritual care, ensuring students have access to the support they need to succeed.

WRAD operates through a diverse staffing model that supports varsity sport, recreation programming, facilities operations, and services to support student wellbeing. WRAD is also one of the largest student employers on campus, providing valuable work experience and leadership opportunities.

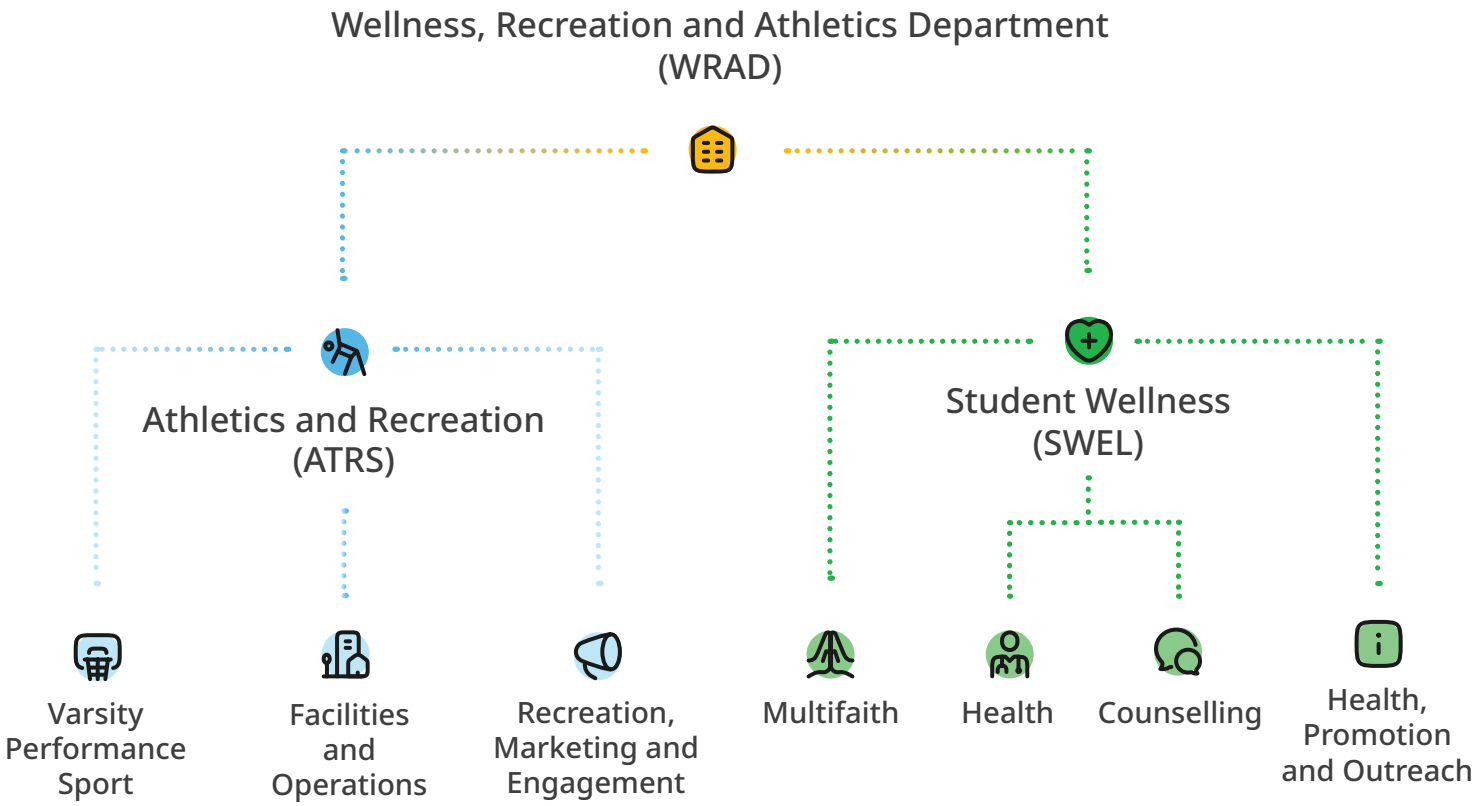
Staffing model

Wellness Recreation and Athletics' programs, services, and facilities are supported by a diverse network of staff, student employees, volunteers, practicum students, psychology residents, and peer leaders. Across athletics, recreation, and student wellness, these individuals help to create an active, inclusive, and supportive campus community.









Student employment and leadership

Students play a major role in delivering WRAD programs and services. WRAD employs over 460 student staff and volunteers each year.

Programs such as Advocacy for Inclusive Recreation (AIR) also continued to provide student-led recreation opportunities focused on accessibility and inclusion.

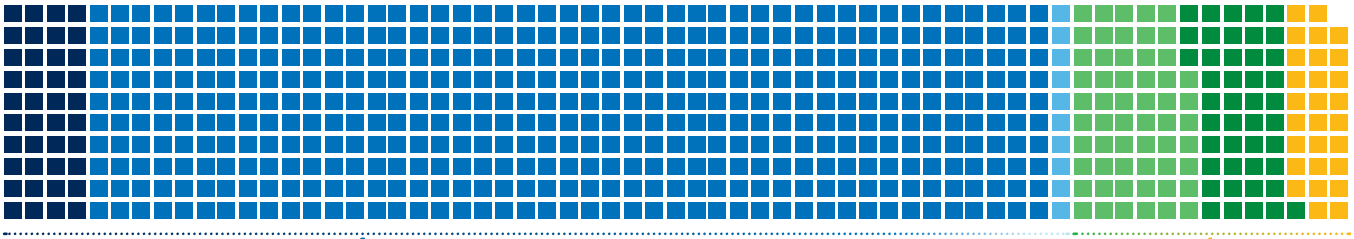
Experiential learning

WRAD provides diverse experiential learning opportunities that connect academic study with hands-on practice across recreation, athletics, and student wellness. Through placements, practicums, residency, and volunteering, students gain practical experience while supporting programs that enhance wellbeing and connections on our campus.

Students participated in placements in student wellness centre's and sport performance placements, including counselling, psychology residency, nursing, medicine, psychiatry, athletic therapy, and strength and conditioning roles. Additional opportunities included kinesiology practicums, co-op positions, and applied research experiences. Volunteers also contributed to harm reduction outreach, inclusive recreation, peer support, and multifaith programming, with spiritual care providers representing 13 faith communities.

These experiences support career readiness, skill development, and meaningful engagement, while strengthening WRAD programs and services across campus.

629 WRAD staff working during peak operational periods



500 term or casual staff

- **40** other
- **450** ATRS students
- **10** SWEL students

129 full-time equivalent staff

- **28** term positions
- **101** regular continuing staff
  - **44** SWEL
  - **57** ATRS

- **21** events staff
- **22** Vikes Nation ambassadors
- **75** youth camp leaders
- **60** intramurals staff
- **35** climbing wall staff
- **22** FWC attendants
- **30** membership services
- **65** facilities staff
- **27** varsity programs / camps
- **40** student-led club leaders
- **13** athletic therapy students
- **30** strength and conditioning interns
- **4** psychology residents
- **6** SWEL support roles



The Varsity Performance Sport portfolio is anchored by the Vikes Athletics program, one of the most accomplished in Canada, with a proud legacy of national success and athlete development. With 15 varsity teams across eight sports, Vikes student-athletes compete at the highest level while balancing academic excellence and community leadership.

Impact this year — Varsity Performance and student-athlete success

The portfolio supports this success through an integrated model of high-performance programs and holistic care, including comprehensive health and injury services delivered through the Sports Injury Clinic, as well as evidence-based strength and conditioning programs that enhance performance, recovery, and safe return to play. Student-athletes also benefit from dedicated academic and financial supports, alongside expanded community engagement through youth academies, development programs, and experiential learning opportunities for emerging professionals.

Multi-dimensional success

In 2025–26, Vikes student-athletes continued to demonstrate excellence in competition, academics, and community leadership. With 15 varsity teams, the program achieved significant success at both the conference and national levels while maintaining a strong focus on holistic student-athlete development.

The Vikes model emphasizes more than podium finishes—supporting athletes to thrive academically, contribute meaningfully to their communities, and transition successfully beyond sport.





Academic excellence

Vikes student-athletes continued to excel academically, with 105 individuals recognized on the Honour Roll for maintaining a GPA of 80% or higher while competing at the highest level of university sport. All eligible student-athletes also earned U SPORTS Academic All-Canadian status, reflecting the program's strong culture of balancing academic achievement with athletic excellence.

Applied Sport Science Pipeline

The University of Victoria's Applied Sport Science Pipeline (ASSP) has rapidly evolved into one of Canada's leading integrated high-performance sport systems, combining education, research, and athlete development into a unified model. Since its inception in 2018, the program has grown from a single course into a nationally ranked leader—now placed 17th globally and No. 1 in Canada in the 2025 Global Ranking of Sport Science Schools and Departments. Built through a partnership between Vikes Athletics, the Canadian Sport Institute Pacific, and UVic's School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education, the ASSP supports more than 500 varsity student-athletes annually while fostering a layered mentorship system that connects experts, graduate students, and undergraduate trainees in a dynamic, hands-on learning environment.

Growing community support

Support from alumni, donors, and the broader community continues to play a critical role in the success and sustainability of Vikes Athletics. In 2025–26, this support reached new heights, with more than $1.01 million in scholarships awarded to 351 student-athletes, alongside $819,012 raised through the Vikes Championship Breakfast and an additional $378,422 generated through 856 donations during Vikes Giving Day. Together, these contributions strengthen student access, retention, and the overall student-athlete experience.













Season highlights

- Women's cross country: U SPORTS national champions, U SPORTS individual gold medal and Canada West champions
- Women's track: U SPORTS 4x800m relay silver medal
- Men's cross country: Canada West champions
- Women's rugby: U SPORTS silver medalists and Canada West champions
- Women's field hockey: U SPORTS silver



medalists and Canada West champions
- Men's basketball: U SPORTS bronze medalists and Canada West champions
- Men's rowing: Canada University Rowing Championship individual gold medal, lwt 8+ silver and lwt 2x bronze
- Women's rowing: Canada University Rowing Championship lwt 2x, and lwt 4+ silver medals



BY THE NUMBERS

452 varsity student-athletes

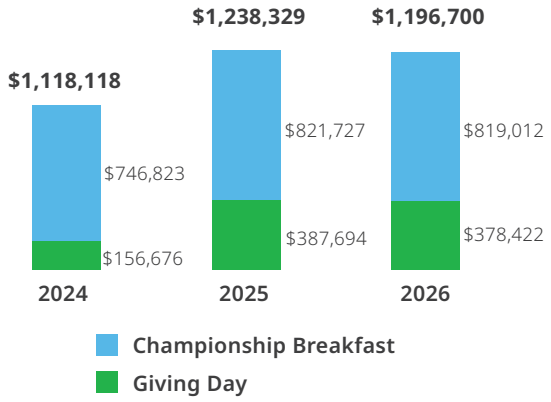
105 Honour Roll student-athletes

>$1M in scholarships awarded to **351** student-athletes

$819,012 raised via the Vikes Championship Breakfast

$378,422 raised from **856** donations during Vikes Giving Day

Fundraising totals



1 national championship banner

4 national silver medals

5 national bronze medals

2 individual national gold medals

6 conference titles

51 conference all-stars

16 All-Canadians

3 U SPORTS Athletes of the Year

5 Canada West Athletes of the Year

3 conference Rookie of the Year

1 Canada West Defensive Player of the Year

1 Canadian Men's Rugby Back of the Year

1 Canada West Goalkeeper of the Year

4 Conference Coaches of the Year

2 U SPORTS Coaches of the Year



A championship milestone

The Vikes women's cross-country team delivered a historic performance, capturing the 2025 U SPORTS national championship—its first national gold medal since 2001. This milestone marks a defining moment for the program and underscores its return to national prominence.

Leading the way was UVic Female Athlete of the Year Madelyn Eybergen, who claimed individual gold and was named U SPORTS Athlete of the Year. Her performance exemplified both individual excellence and team leadership at the highest level of university sport.

Following the team's success, head coach Hilary Stellingwerff was named U SPORTS Women's Coach of the Year, in recognition of outstanding leadership in coaching.

Together, these achievements reflect the effectiveness of the Vikes athlete development pathway, the dedication of its coaches and staff, and the commitment of student-athletes to excellence both on the field and in the classroom.

Recreation programs played a vital role in supporting student wellbeing, fostering campus connection, and promoting lifelong health and fitness in 2025–26.

Impact this year — Recreation

Through accessible fitness, sport, climbing, camps, and recreation opportunities, participation and membership demand continued to grow, reinforcing the importance of recreation as a cornerstone of the student experience.

Programs for all

In 2025–26, Recreation delivered diverse and inclusive programming that supported physical health, mental well-being, and community engagement. Across health and fitness, intramural sports, sport clubs, climbing, camps, and drop-in recreation, the department created flexible pathways for students and community members to stay active and connected.

The continued growth in participation reflects both strong demand and the department's commitment to evolving programming to meet the needs of a dynamic campus population.



Key outcomes

Growing participation and engagement

Memberships and program participation increased year-over-year across fitness, climbing, camps, and recreation programs, demonstrating sustained demand and strong engagement in recreation offerings.





Community building through recreation

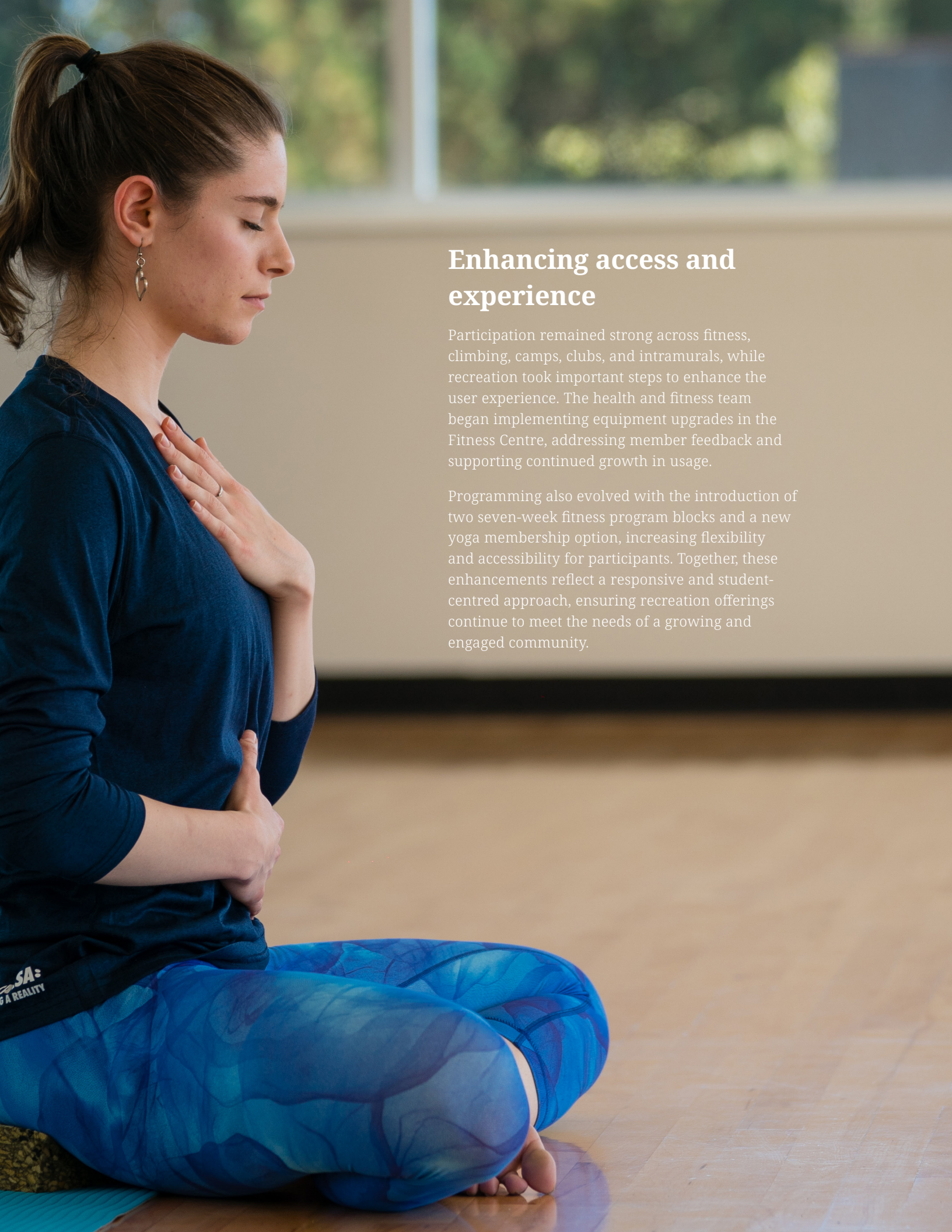
Intramural sports, clubs, and drop-in recreation programs provided accessible, inclusive opportunities for students to connect, build community, and enhance their university experience.



Expanded opportunities for lifelong health and fitness

Programming continued to evolve through diverse, flexible, and high-demand offerings, supporting participants at all levels and encouraging lifelong participation in physical activity.





Enhancing access and experience

Participation remained strong across fitness, climbing, camps, clubs, and intramurals, while recreation took important steps to enhance the user experience. The health and fitness team began implementing equipment upgrades in the Fitness Centre, addressing member feedback and supporting continued growth in usage.

Programming also evolved with the introduction of two seven-week fitness program blocks and a new yoga membership option, increasing flexibility and accessibility for participants. Together, these enhancements reflect a responsive and student-centred approach, ensuring recreation offerings continue to meet the needs of a growing and engaged community.

BY THE NUMBERS

26,085 memberships sold (**91%** are student)

+7% year-over-year membership increase

40% of UVic students purchase optional fitness membership

9,272 intramural participants (**4,520** unique) across **11** sports

Outdoor soccer	2686
Volleyball	1872
Basketball	799
Ultimate Frisbee	759
Ice hockey	571
Outdoor soccer	489
Softball	481
Flag football	234
Other	1372

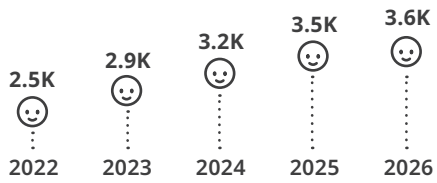
15,000 climbing centre visits

600+ youth climbing program and camp registrants

36 recreation clubs and **2,955** club registrations

+3,500 summer camp participants across **191** camps over **9** weeks

Camp registration growth



40.5% return rate for camp participants

16,733 guest passes sold



In 2025–26, marketing and engagement initiatives strengthened connections across campus and the broader community by bringing people together through sport, recreation, wellness, and shared experiences.

Impact this year — Marketing and Engagement

Through dynamic events, strategic partnerships, youth outreach, digital engagement and storytelling, WRAD continued to grow its reach and foster a strong sense of community and Vikes pride.

Community connection and brand growth

Marketing and engagement efforts focused on building awareness, driving participation, and creating meaningful experiences for students, fans, and the community. From large-scale campus events and varsity competitions to digital storytelling and social media growth, WRAD successfully expanded its audience while enhancing the visibility and impact of its programs.

These efforts reflect a coordinated approach to engagement—strengthening relationships, elevating the Vikes brand, and creating opportunities for connection both in-person and online.

Key outcomes

Expanded event attendance and engagement

Campus and varsity events saw strong attendance from students and community members, reinforcing the role of sport and recreation as key drivers of engagement and school spirit.

Strengthened partnerships

Partnerships with community organizations, schools, sponsors, and sport groups continued to grow, supporting program delivery, outreach, and long-term sustainability.



Increased digital reach and brand visibility

Social media channels experienced significant growth in followers and engagement, alongside the launch of a new UVic Wellness Instagram account, expanding WRAD's digital presence.

Through programs spanning adaptive recreation, harm reduction, multifaith services, and peer-supported wellness initiatives, WRAD continued to build a campus culture rooted in inclusion, respect, and care.

These initiatives reflect a commitment to meeting students where they are ensuring recreation and wellness spaces are accessible, supportive, and responsive to diverse needs and experiences.

BY THE NUMBERS

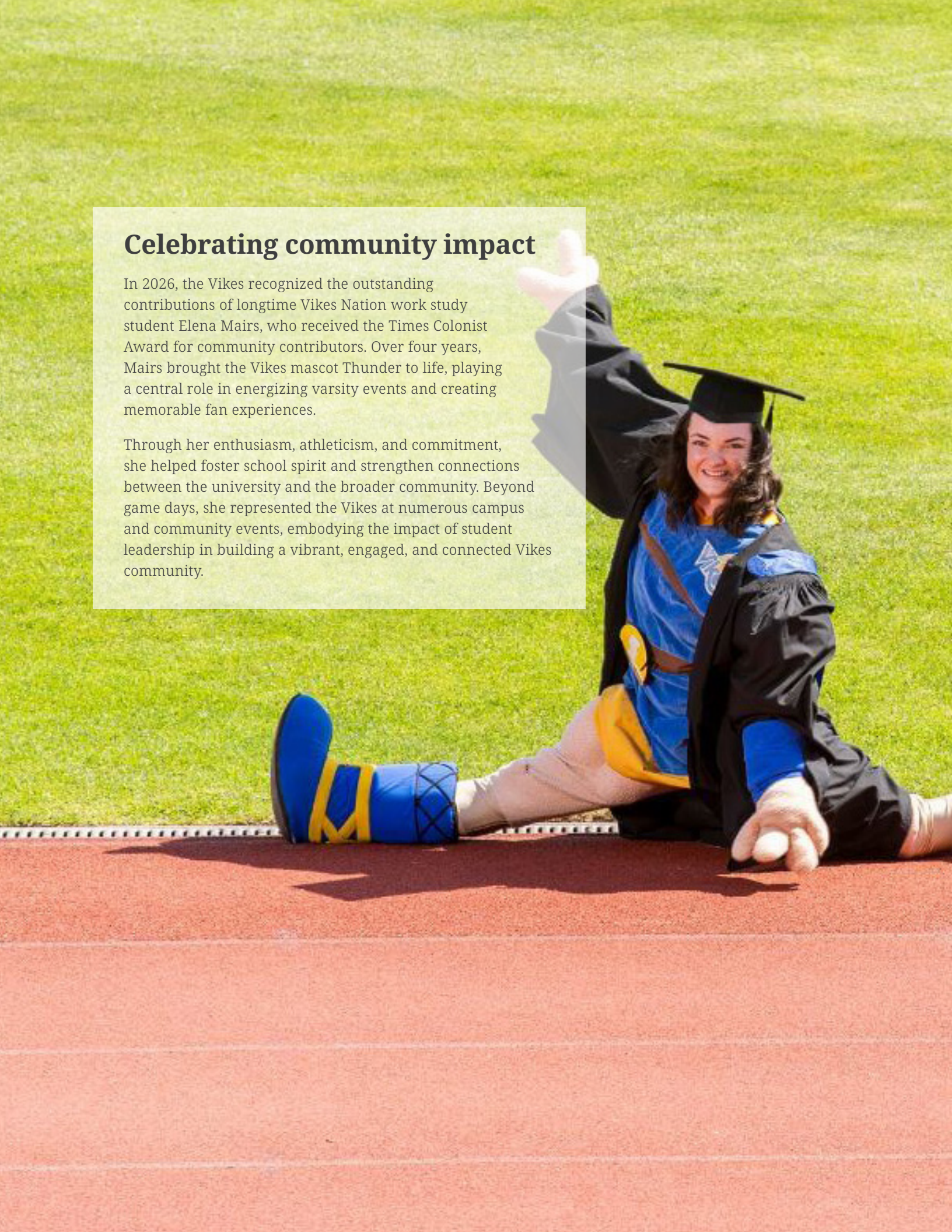
- **5,390** ThunderFest attendees
- **23,161** varsity tickets sold/ distributed across **34** games
- **$252,934** in revenue from **50** sponsors
- **16%** growth Vikes varsity Instagram followers
- **6.9M** Instagram views on UVic Vikes and **1.1M** on Vikes Nation
- **351K** TikTok views on Vikes Nation



Celebrating community impact

In 2026, the Vikes recognized the outstanding contributions of longtime Vikes Nation work study student Elena Mairs, who received the Times Colonist Award for community contributors. Over four years, Mairs brought the Vikes mascot Thunder to life, playing a central role in energizing varsity events and creating memorable fan experiences.

Through her enthusiasm, athleticism, and commitment, she helped foster school spirit and strengthen connections between the university and the broader community. Beyond game days, she represented the Vikes at numerous campus and community events, embodying the impact of student leadership in building a vibrant, engaged, and connected Vikes community.



Student Wellness places a highly integrated model of clinical counselling, clinical health and spiritual holistic care at the centre of the UVic student experience.

Impact this year — Student Wellness

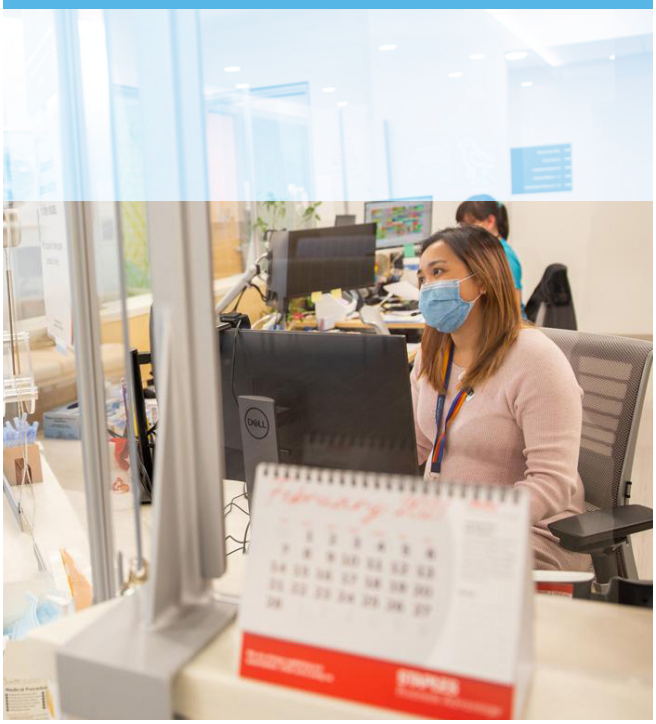
The Student Wellness portfolio includes a collaborative, inter-professional model that supports students' academic goals and personal development by fostering their well-being and skill development regarding personal wellness. Services include counselling, health care, spiritual support, and health promotion, delivered by highly skilled clinicians, spiritual care providers, and staff. Student Wellness collaborates closely with campus partners, including Centre for Accessible Learning, Equity and Human Rights, International Centre for Students, Office of Student Life and Residence Services.

Counselling

Counselling services play a critical role in supporting student success, engagement, and wellbeing through clinical care, crisis response, training, and program development. Counselling's clinicians provide culturally responsive psychological services to students through a brief intervention model and group programming, addressing personal, academic, and career-related concerns such as mental health, relationships, identity development, and learning strategies.

Beyond direct clinical care, counselling services contribute to broader campus wellbeing through consultation, outreach, and collaboration with campus partners, supporting a more integrated and accessible mental health system across the university.







Key outcomes

Expanded faculty partnerships

Strengthened collaboration with the Faculty of Law increasing access to embedded counselling supports within academic spaces.

Increased culturally responsive services

Expanded partnership with the First Peoples House through enhanced access to Indigenous counselling and culturally relevant supports for equity-deserving students.

Training and capacity building

Continued investment in training and supervision supported the development of psychology residents and counselling practicum students while increasing service capacity.

Highlights at Student Wellness Counselling in 2025–2026 reflect significant milestones for our team. We supported a long-standing colleague in completing their Ph.D. in Counselling Psychology and welcomed former Psychology Residents—now Ph.D. graduates—back to continue advancing interdisciplinary clinical programming. Their accomplishments strengthen our practice, enhance our services, and expand our capacity to supervise and mentor the next generation of clinicians.

BY THE NUMBERS

5,165 counselling appointments

5 trainees supported **272** students

over **75** students supported through First Peoples House counselling

2nd embedded Faculty of Law counsellor joined SWC

Health

Student Wellness clinical health programs provide primary health care services that support students' overall well-being throughout their studies. A multidisciplinary team—including physicians, registered nurses, registered psychiatric nurses, and psychiatrists, behavioural health providers—addresses a wide range of concerns including illness and injury, sexual and reproductive health, chronic condition management, mental health, and preventive care. Through accessible, student-centred services on campus, the clinical health programs help students stay healthy so they can thrive academically and personally.

Integrated care and student health

In 2025–26, Student Wellness advanced a coordinated and integrated approach to care, focused on improving access, strengthening collaboration, and supporting the diverse and complex health needs of students. Through enhanced care pathways, expanded group-based education, and multidisciplinary collaboration, services continued to evolve to provide timely, holistic, and student-centred care.

These efforts reflect a growing emphasis on proactive health support, meeting students where they are and ensuring they receive comprehensive care that supports both their academic success and overall wellbeing.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **13,980** student appointments (up **7%** year-over-year)
- **3,647** unique students served (up **4%** year-over-year)
- **363** group education sessions attendees
- **297** students supported through integrated care pathways
- **67** health appointments delivered through First Peoples House
- **1** student care coordinator role established

A legacy of care and leadership

Dr. William Dyson concludes an extraordinary 50-year career with UVic Student Wellness, leaving a profound legacy. He served as a trusted clinician, former medical director, School of Nursing educator, and supporter of Vikes athletics, while shaping campus health systems. His leadership during public health emergencies—including SARS, meningitis, rubella, and tuberculosis—set new standards for university response. Long before it was common practice, he championed a proactive, community-centred model integrating prevention, education, and compassionate care. Known for his ability to build trust, Dr. Dyson supported students with empathy and respect, helping them regain resilience and confidence. His lasting impact is reflected in the systems he strengthened, the colleagues he mentored, and the students whose well-being he advanced.



Key outcomes

Improved care coordination

New care pathways and the introduction of a student care coordinator role strengthened collaboration with campus partners, ensuring students—particularly those at higher risk—receive timely and well-coordinated support.

Collaborative clinical programs

Collaborative programming between Student Wellness Clinical Counselling and Health enhanced access to integrated care for students seeking support in areas such as gender affirming care, eating disorders, psycho-diagnostic assessment, and resource navigation.

Increased access through group education

Physician-led group education sessions expanded capacity and access to care, supporting skill development, peer connection, and self-management strategies in addition to group programming at Counselling and Multifaith over the years,

Top presenting concerns

Mental health, sexual health, and prescription management remained the most common reasons for visits, underscoring the continued importance of accessible and integrated health services.

Multifaith

UVic Multifaith supports students' spiritual well-being through inclusive, student-centred programming. Spiritual care providers, representing thirteen local faith communities, offer individual spiritual care, opportunities for communal faith and spiritual practice, and space for reflection. Through programming that fosters connection, belonging, and community, Multifaith helps students explore meaning, navigate life challenges, and feel welcomed and supported in their identities throughout their university experience.

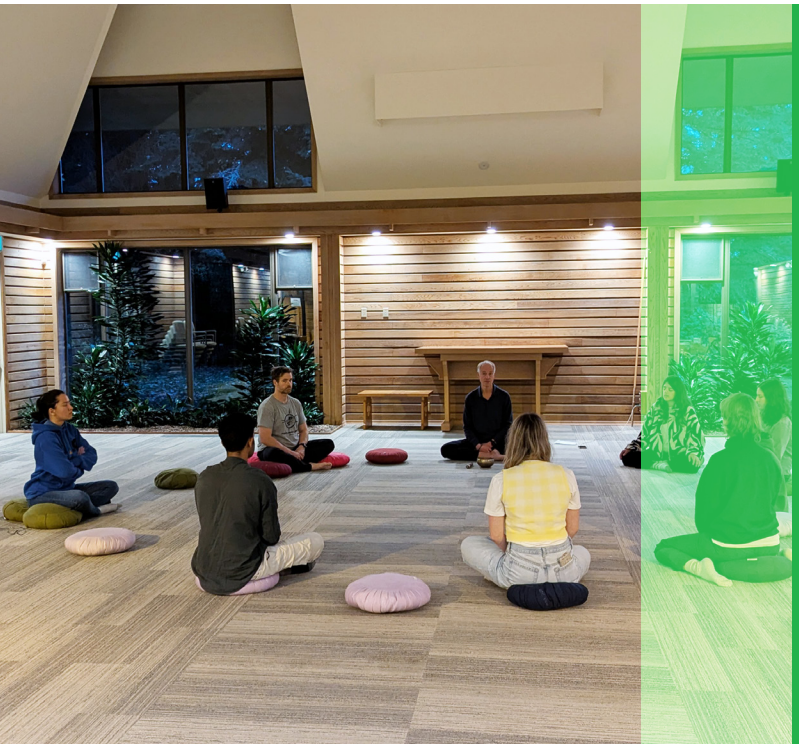
Community and spiritual wellbeing

In 2025–26, Multifaith continued to strengthen its role as a welcoming and inclusive space for spiritual care and connection on campus. Through expanded partnerships, community-based programming, and increased visibility, the centre fostered meaningful opportunities for belonging, reflection, and shared experience.

Key outcomes

Expanded awareness and engagement

Increased visibility through campus outreach and awareness activities strengthened student engagement and participation.





Strengthened community partnerships

Partnerships with faith communities expanded support for the Food Share program, enhancing access to essential resources for students.

New revenue and community access opportunities

The launch of Multifaith Centre rentals for weddings and celebrations of life created new opportunities for community connection and program sustainability.

Programs and community impact

Multifaith programming is supported by 13 member communities and dedicated spiritual care providers and volunteers. Together, they foster connection and belonging through religious services, shared meals, a community garden, a food share program, pet café, and individual spiritual care. These offerings create inclusive spaces for students to connect, reflect, and build community.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **15,783** program and event attendees (up **25%** year-over-year)
- **2** new faith community partners supporting FoodShare (**~40** students per week
- **7** community rental bookings

Health Promotion and Outreach

Health Promotion and Outreach initiatives on our campus play a vital role in supporting students to be well and stay well across all dimensions of well-being. Through the Harm Reduction Centre, mental health literacy training, a strong presence at campus-wide events, social media engagement, and collaboration both on and off campus, we increased awareness of key issues and available resources, encouraged early help-seeking, and engaged students in building their own capacities.

Highlight

Student Wellness co-hosted the Vancouver Island Regional Forum on Health-Promoting Campuses. The forum brought together 51 stakeholders from five campuses—including students, staff, faculty, administrators, and community organizations—to showcase the wide range of wellbeing initiatives already underway and to explore a shared path forward.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **40** mental health literacy training sessions for **900** participants
- **28** faculty-staff consultations
- **7** campus collaborations
- **48** orientation, harm reduction and others tabling events
- **602** open hours at the Harm Reduction Centre
- **313** harm reduction supplies distributed to individuals and campus partners

The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion portfolio supports inclusive participation by advancing accessible programming, strengthening community and cultural engagement, and advocating for equitable recreation and wellness opportunities.

Impact this year — Equity and Inclusion

In 2025–26, equity and inclusion initiatives within recreation continued to reduce barriers, foster belonging, and support holistic student wellbeing across campus. Through inclusive programming, community partnerships, and targeted supports, WRAD created safer, more welcoming environments that empower all students to participate, connect, and thrive.

Through programs spanning adaptive recreation, harm reduction, multifaith services, and peer-supported wellness initiatives, WRAD continued to build a campus culture rooted in inclusion, respect, and care.

These initiatives reflect a commitment to meeting students where they are—ensuring recreation and wellness spaces are accessible, supportive, and responsive to diverse needs and experiences.

Key outcomes

Expanded inclusive recreation and accessibility

Accessible and adaptive recreation opportunities continued to grow across programs and facilities, creating more inclusive pathways for participation.





Enhanced student wellbeing supports

Wellness outreach, harm reduction services, and mental health-focused programming increased support for student safety, wellbeing, and informed decision-making.

Stronger community partnerships and targeted supports

Partnerships with campus and community groups strengthened programming for diverse and historically underrepresented student communities, fostering connection and belonging.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **548** Advocacy for Inclusive Recreation (AIR) registrations
- Near **100%** fill rate in adaptive climbing programs
- **143** community youth registrations in Just For Kicks, Play For All and Youth Adaptive Climbing
- **40** FitConnect participants

Expanding access through FitConnect

In 2025–26, WRAD strengthened its commitment to inclusive recreation by enhancing the FitConnect program, which supports students who have historically experienced barriers to participation. For the first time, the program operated with a dedicated co-op position, allowing for increased oversight, improved participant matching, and expanded reach. As a result, participation doubled from the previous year.

FitConnect pairs students with trained peer volunteers who provide guidance, encouragement, and support in recreation spaces. Many participants join the program feeling intimidated or uncertain about accessing fitness facilities; through personalized support, they build confidence, develop healthy movement habits, and experience a stronger sense of belonging.

This growth reflects WRAD's broader commitment to reducing barriers, empowering students, and creating inclusive environments where all individuals feel welcome and supported in their wellbeing journey.

> Having navigated both early life obesity and chronic pain from sports injuries, I have developed a passion for helping others build safe, positive, and sustainable relationships with physical activity. I had a really good experience with my match, I could see how much of an impact it had on him. He really needed someone to motivate him to show up and just show him the machines and how to use them. Helping build that confidence in the gym was really cool to see.
>
> — FitConnect volunteer

WRAD's facilities and financial model support a wide range of programs and services across athletics, recreation, wellness, and community engagement.

Facilities, finances and sustainability

From varsity competition and student wellness to camps, fitness, and events, WRAD facilities serve students, staff, and the broader community throughout the year.

Facilities and infrastructure

Athletics and recreation

At the centre of WRAD is the Centre for Athletics, Recreation and Special Abilities (CARSA), a 190,000+ sq. ft. facility supporting recreation, wellness, and high-performance sport.

Key spaces include:

- Performance gym
- Fieldhouse
- Fitness weight centre
- CARSA Climbing Centre
- Studios for yoga, spin, TRX, and dance
- Squash and racquet courts
- CARSA Active Space
- UVic Sports Injury Clinic

Additional facilities include:

- Centennial Stadium
- Outdoor turf and grass fields
- McKinnon Gym
- Ian Stewart Ice Rink

Student Wellness

- Student Wellness Centre
- Multifaith Centre



Capital and accessibility improvements

In 2025–26, WRAD continued to invest in accessibility, maintenance, and long-term facility sustainability including:

- Significant repairs extending the operational life of the Ian Stewart Ice Complex through March 2027.
- Centennial Stadium scoreboard replacement
- Ongoing accessibility improvements, including wayfinding upgrades and tactile warning features.
- Expanded adaptive and inclusive fitness equipment, including accessible treadmills and seated cardio machines.

Facility usage

WRAD facilities continued to see strong participation numbers and community use throughout 2025–26.

Demand also continued to grow across recreation facilities and programs, including climbing, pickleball, group fitness, camps, and inclusive recreation programming.

BY THE NUMBERS

515,000 entry swipes at CARSA (**360,000** undergrad students)

10,354 facility bookings

7,018 rental hours from **1,824** external bookings

Top facility renters: Field Hockey Victoria, Racquet Club Figure Skating, Arbutus Global Middle School

Financial overview

WRAD operates within a diversified, hybrid funding model supported by multiple revenue streams. The unit's total annual operating budget is $20.4M, comprised of $15M for Athletics and Recreation and $5.4M for Student Wellness. Funding sources include university support, student fees, Island Health contributions, self-generated revenue, and external partnerships.

Athletics and Recreation funding model

Athletics and Recreation relies heavily on a balanced mix of earned revenue, student contributions, and institutional support:

- The majority of funding is generated through program and service fees, events, facility rentals, sponsorships, and fundraising. This revenue stream has become increasingly critical as operating costs have risen significantly over the past decade.
- Mandatory student fees support a wide range of offerings, including student-led clubs, inclusive recreation opportunities, subsidized programs and memberships, events, and facility maintenance.
- Central funding supports key administrative and facility-based roles.

Student Wellness funding model

Student Wellness operates with a distinct funding structure, supported primarily through institutional and health authority contributions:

- The university funds general operating costs and most staff salaries, excluding physicians and one nursing position.
- Revenue is generated through internal cost recoveries, vaccinations, MSP billing, and other services.
- Faculty of Law contributed the funding to the new embedded Law counsellor position



CARSA as a premier venue

In 2025–26, the CARSA Performance Gym continued to perform as a premier destination for high-performance sport and community events. Last summer, the facility played host to the Ball Don't Stop Pro-Am basketball showcase, bringing together NBA, professional, collegiate, and emerging talent for a high-energy showcase that drew strong community interest and a sold-out crowd.

Featuring a mix of elite athletes and local standouts, the event highlighted CARSA's ability to support world-class competition while connecting the university with the broader sport community. With a packed gym and national-calibre talent on display, the event reinforced CARSA's role as a hub for sport, community engagement, and memorable shared experiences.

BY THE NUMBERS

$40K raised during 2025 Golf Classic

$2.3M in CARSA memberships (up **7%** over last year)

$2.4M in total program sales (up **7%** over last year)

100% growth in pickleball participation (**1,427** to **2,840**)

Almost **$1M** in youth summer camp revenue (up **18%** over last year, up **89%** over 5 years)

Sustainability and future pressures

As participation and demand continue to grow, WRAD faces increasing financial and infrastructure pressures that require strategic planning and investment.

Key challenges include:

Rising facility costs

- Facility rental revenue totals approximately $1.0M annually, with the ISC rink generating 63% of all rental income (scheduled to close in Spring 2027).
- Total facility operating and maintenance costs are approximately $3.0M annually, including debt servicing (Field 1 and CARSA mortgage through 2042).

Aging infrastructure

- More than $8.0M in capital investment is required to address critical needs, including equipment upgrades, deferred maintenance, and infrastructure renewal—such as turf replacements, track repairs, and lighting system upgrades.
- Continued investment required for the Ian Stewart Complex ice rink, with operations extended to 2027.

Increasing operating expenses

- Varsity competitive team travel costs have increased by $1.0M over the past five years, effectively doubling.
- 70% of WRAD salaries are self- or externally funded, requiring internal revenue growth to absorb wage and collective agreement increases.

Revenue dependence and funding instability

- Department generated and fundraising revenue to support operations has increased by 110% over five years in Athletics and Recreation.
- Ongoing uncertainty in key funding sources, including:
    - Central university funding influenced by provincial grant allocations.
    - Student fee revenue tied to enrollment levels.
    - Affordability pressures impacting optional program fees and memberships.

Looking ahead

Future priorities include maintaining safe and accessible facilities, supporting sustainable program growth, and continuing to invest in recreation, wellness, and high-performance sport infrastructure that serves both the university and broader community.

Wellness, Recreation and Athletics Services is entering a period of continued growth and strategic advancement, with a renewed focus on expanding health promotion and outreach across campus.

Future outlook

Efforts will centre on engaging students earlier in their university journey and connecting with them more consistently through programming that reflects a wide range of needs, identities, and lived experiences. Harm reduction education will remain a core priority, ensuring students have access to accurate information, supportive resources, and practical tools that promote safer choices and community wellbeing.

Looking ahead, the department will deepen its understanding of the evolving landscape of student wellbeing at UVic and across the post-secondary sector. By strengthening data use, research, and cross-institutional collaboration, the team will be better positioned to anticipate emerging trends and respond proactively. This work will inform the development of UVic's first comprehensive student wellbeing strategy—an important milestone that will guide more integrated, evidence-informed, and student-centred programs. Central to this direction is an ongoing commitment to advancing equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion, ensuring services continue to reduce barriers and reflect the diverse experiences of the campus community.



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