

# SWEEP

THE WASHINGTON ROWING MAGAZINE

SUMMER  
2020



*ROWING*



# SWEEP

Volume 29 / Summer 2020

Sweep is published three times a year for dedicated donors, alumni and fans who value their impact on UW Rowing and their contributions to the storied history of Seattle as 'Rowtown USA'.

## IN THIS ISSUE

|                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Academic success .....             | 3   |
| A message from our coaches ...     | 4-5 |
| Women's Captain Marley Avritt. ... | 6   |
| Men's Captain George Esau .....    | 7   |
| 'Best buddies' .....               | 8   |
| From mountains to water .....      | 9   |
| In memoriam .....                  | 10  |
| Rowing award .....                 | 10  |
| A winning life .....               | 11  |

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## Dear stewards, supporters and friends,

In the blink of an eye, the road map for 2020 changed and our entire Washington Rowing team forged a new path, taking on the uncertainty with characteristic Husky bravery.

The unknown touched each student-athlete in different ways, and our coaches tapped their deepest reservoirs of ingenuity to address the needs of the team as well as each individual. This issue of Sweep delves into the ongoing complexity of the lost season as well as the ever-changing future for Washington Athletics and Washington Rowing.

Many of you have asked, how can Washington Rowing Stewards, alumni, donors and fans help?

- **Give thanks!** Be grateful for the excitement and fulfillment Washington Rowing has given us.
- **Salute!** Congratulate the 12 seniors who graduated this spring for their dedication and hard work.
- **Encourage!** Support the team and recent graduates undergoing such challenging times.
- **Bow down!** If you have season tickets for football, don't request a refund if your circumstances prevent you from being in Husky Stadium for every home game. That revenue supports UW Rowing and every Husky sport.
- **Rally!** Just like coming from behind at the Cal Dual or NCAA's, know that we all will power through this.

There is no question the Athletic Department budget is going to be substantially impacted this year, but we just do not know to what degree. For those of you who are in the position to help mitigate these losses, your donations will make a real difference for Husky student-athletes. Though the budgets are being greatly altered, many costs remain, including scholarships for fall-sport seniors who were granted a fifth year.

As always, we are eternally grateful for the extraordinary leadership of our coaches and captains, and for your generosity.

**Go Dawgs!**

*Jane Paul*

**Jane Powers**

**Paul Ramsey**

CO-CHAIRS, WASHINGTON ROWING STEWARDS



FINISH LINE:

# Academic excellence

PHOTO: Scott Eklund

We've missed the water, but fortunately, UW Rowers haven't missed a beat in their education. Safe at home, they excelled in their race to finish the school year with top academic achievements.

**3.54  
AND  
3.41**

Women's Rowing earned a 3.54 average GPA and the Men hit 3.41.



## ACADEMIC HONORS

The Dean's List included 25 men and 36 women, while the Pac-12 spring academic honor roll named 19 men and 18 women. The College Rowing Coaches Association honored Jenna Phillips, Brittani Shappell and Lark Skov as Scholar Athletes (3.50 GPA). The 101 Club designated Rachel McGlothlen and Elliott De Bruin as Scholar Athletes.



## ATHLETIC HONORS

Earning All-American status were Marley Avritt, Teal Cohen, Ella Cossill, Holly Dunford and Lark Skov.



## SCHOLARSHIP

Men's Rowing Captain George Esau earned the Pac-12 Post-Graduate Scholarship to fuel his fifth year of study as he returns for the 2020-21 season.



**22**

Virtual graduation day saw 11 men and 10 women earn degrees in fields such as: Computer Science, Political Science, Environmental Studies, Biochemistry, Psychology, Linguistics, Communication, Biology, Computer Science, Economics & History, Industrial and Systems Engineering, Mathematics and Education.



# Through adversity, strength

**MICHAEL CALLAHAN AND YAZ FAROOQ,**  
UW ROWING HEAD COACHES

**T**he dual societal challenges of COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter movement have spurred newfound strength and resolve for the young men and women of Washington Rowing. They will not only return to the boathouse in August as better students and athletes, but as wiser and more compassionate human beings prepared to change the world.

It hasn't been easy.



Seniors lost the chance to compete in their final seasons. Safely back at home across the nation and the world, rowers Zoomed for team meetings and worked out on their own — all while nervously wondering when, or if, they might ever get back in the boat.

As part of a global community confronting the persistent evils of racism, our rowers longed not only to empathize and understand, but to take action to rectify the inequities that continue to threaten lives and wellbeing.

Such adversity, such unusual and uncertain times, challenged millions of people all over the globe. How fortunate UW Rowers have been to have the University of Washington and caring supporters like you to help them emerge all the better for these experiences.

## A legacy of resilience

Perseverance. It's what has driven every UW Rowing team in history, many of them in times even more threatening than today — from weathering the economic deprivations of the Great Depression to challenging Hitler's perverted dynastic dreams to enduring the strife of the Vietnam War and 9-11.

Women's Rowing carried on the legacy by delving deeply into the heart and soul of who we are as individuals and as a team. For example, Commodore Ava Trogis led the team in writing letters to their future selves, expressing what they've learned from recent adversity, their commitments for the future, and their hopes for the new school year. They'll open those letters in the spring to find inspiration for the coming season.

Men's Rowing double-downed on the team's determination to enjoy the journey of their athletic experience, even amid bumpy roads and detours. We took inspiration from Zoom meetings with UW Rowing alumni who are past and present Olympians, focusing more on the mindset of the sport than its mechanics — dealing with stress, anxiety, the pressure of the moment, coalescing as a team while competing for spots in the boat.

Husky Rowing's top priority continues to be the academic achievement of each student-athlete. Our coaches and staff met regularly with each individual to support their schoolwork. See the article on page 3 and you'll be just as proud of them as we are!



PHOTOS: Scott Eklund





PHOTO: Alika Jenner

## Advancing social consciousness

UW Athletics has always been aware of the issues raised by Black Lives Matter. Recent events have heightened our focus and spurred a desire for further knowledge. The murders of George Floyd in Minneapolis and Rayshard Brooks in Atlanta at the hands of police fueled an urgency for action and enduring change.

To help Husky Rowers act from a place of knowledge, we brought in renowned experts in racial equality and social justice who helped us all take stock of white privilege and institutional racism.

One of our most enlightening experiences was a pre-release viewing of the film, *A Most Beautiful Thing*. Narrated and executive-produced by rapper Common, the documentary chronicles the nation's first African-American high school rowing team whose members included rivals from gangs on Chicago's west side. UW rowers were able to talk about the film with director Mary Mazzio and Arshay Cooper, one of the Chicago team members and author of the book.

In the coming year, we will work with our student-athletes to develop a plan of action to bring more diversity to Washington Rowing and to live the values of equity and inclusion.

## A future of uncertainty

The challenges are far from over. As we write these words, we are still unsure of how the 2020-21 school year and rowing season will proceed. We hope to reopen Conibear Shellhouse in early August and to welcome back rowers very soon afterwards. Practices might be confined to single shells or to pairs with roommates. We typically participate in a regatta or two in the fall, but perhaps not this year.

In addition, every UW athletic team is facing a 10 percent budget cut because of the economic impact of the coronavirus, and all staff members are taking pay cuts to help the cause. We hope each of you will

consider a donation to Husky Athletics at this critical time.

Our student-athletes, who have all weathered so much while maintaining their positivity and resolve, deserve the extraordinary UW Rowing experience that your generosity can provide. Please, go "all in" for your Huskies and make a donation today. Your gift will lift all boats for Washington Rowers and every Husky student-athlete, including funding scholarships for returning "super seniors" who lost their 2020 season.

Thank you for your uplifting words of encouragement, your thoughtful guidance and advice, and your loyal support over the past months. You are, as always, the foundation of UW Rowing.



PHOTO: Scott Eklund





# Captain Marley Avritt

SPECIAL MOMENTS ON AND OFF THE WATER  
INSPIRE THE LIFE AND FUTURE OF A LEADER



PHOTO: Alika Jenner



PHOTO: Alika Jenner



In the spring of her freshman year, both head coaches recognized Marley's potential to help rebuild the Women's program. So, she changed teams.

"Marley is the perfect mix of aspiration and inspiration," says Head Coach Yaz Farooq. "Since the day she joined the team, she's been full of energy, effort and desire, developing from our resident 'hype master' to a true leader and team captain. As a freshman, her raw energy and passion helped us sweep the NCAA Championships. That enthusiasm evolved into wisdom, compassion and commitment that helped deepen the trust and bond this team shares.

"Her skills as a coxswain improved exponentially as well. Marley's call in the Varsity Eight Grand Final at the 2019 NCAA's will go down as one the greatest in history and helped propel us to another sweep and NCAA title."

Marley is grateful for the praise and the rewards of her dedication.

*"After my freshman year, I earned a small scholarship and each year it's increased," she says. "That was a big deal for me and my family and I'm super grateful to our donors for making it possible."*

The cancellation of her senior season due to COVID-19 was a devastating blow. Still, she treasures her experiences and the lessons she learned from them.

"Yaz wanted us to create something special, to cherish every moment and every day," reflects Marley, who graduated last fall with a degree in political science. "Life, just like racing, is not about winning. It's about creating special moments with the people I love and doing what I love."

Even as a kid, **Marley Avritt** was LOUD. People were always telling her to shush — until she got into the boat.

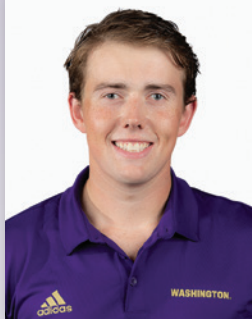
"Finding the role of coxswain was something I was always looking for, something where people weren't telling me to quiet down," says the captain of the 2020 UW Women's Rowing team.

The Southern California native grew up with three brothers, a stepdad who played football at UCLA and a mom who valued her daughter's independent spirit. Marley's sports-crazed family was skeptical of her decision to take up rowing, until she convinced them that a coxswain is like a quarterback who calls the plays.

Marley coxed her high school men's team and learned about UW's winning traditions from her coach. She signed on to cox the Husky Men's Team without the offer of a scholarship.

"It was my dream to go to Washington. I just knew that's where I had to be," says Marley. "But UW was out of state. Every day, my parents and I were trying to figure out how to make it possible with loans and financial aid."





# Captain George Esau

FOUR YEARS OF LEADERSHIP BY EXAMPLE  
CREATES A CONSUMMATE WASHINGTON OARSMAN

George Esau's rowing career at Washington didn't start out in captain-like style.

"I wasn't very successful my freshman year," he recalls. "In my sophomore year, with a lot of dedication to the sport and putting the time in, I found that I could inspire people around me. By my junior year, people began to recognize that I could lead by example both inside and outside of rowing."

With the cancellation of his senior season because of the COVID-19 pandemic, George's election as team captain was bittersweet.

*"With rowing, you put your entire year into seven races. There's so much build-up of anticipation," the Minnesota native says.*

*"At the end of all the winter training, when you're finally able to race, suddenly we were told we couldn't. But we also see this as a huge opportunity for our team to come out next season and prepare for a new year of possibility."*

Head Coach Michael Callahan calls George "a natural leader."

"He has earned his teammates' respect and trust by putting in the hard work and demonstrating consistent care for those around him," Coach Callahan says. "He knows when to provide humor and when it's time to grind."

Already a UW graduate with a double major in economics and history, George will return for graduate school and a fifth season in 2020-21. Under the coronavirus stay-at-home order in Seattle, he's pondered his future while hanging out with friends and "making a pretty killer homemade ravioli that I can finish off with a nice crème brûlée."



When his college rowing career ends, he will carry with him the wisdom he's gained from being a UW Rower and team captain.

"I've learned to set challenges for myself and to pursue them at 100 percent capacity," says George. "There's relentlessness, drive, discipline and knowing that if you have the initiative, you can achieve whatever you want in every aspect of your life."

And, he's learned to appreciate the generosity of others.

"Without our donors, our program would be greatly diminished," George concludes. "We heavily rely on the newest technology, amazing world class boats and facilities. Everyone here is so grateful."





# Best buddies

VOLUNTEERING BUILDS  
A LIFE BEYOND SPORTS  
FOR THE 'HEART AND SOUL'  
OF MEN'S ROWING

It's all about the smiles for **Steve Rosts**.

Amid the many hours of practice, conditioning, schoolwork and other demands on a UW Rower's time, Steve makes space in his life to be a Best Buddy to a young man named Yon. The friends met through an international nonprofit program that pairs volunteers like Steve with someone who has intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

"What do I get from Best Buddies?" the 2020-21 senior muses. "I get a friendship. It makes Yon smile. It makes me smile. It's gratifying, giving back and feeling like you can use your own agency to be involved."

Coach Michael Callahan calls Steve "the heart and soul of our program" — and just one conversation with the Ontario native proves why. Steve explains that student-athletes are so devoted to their sport, teammates and education, it can be difficult to view life through another lens.

"Best Buddies helps me build a stronger sense of community outside of rowing and the classroom," he says. "It gives me perspective. I can have all kinds of stuff going on, a long tough day of practice, then I hang out with Yon and he's so fun and loving and always happy to see me."

Steve and a few other UW Men's Rowing volunteers meet weekly as a group with Best Buddies. They play

games, watch movies, go on scavenger hunts and just hang. Steve also takes Yon fishing and to athletic competitions. During the stay-at-home days of COVID-19, he FaceTimes regularly with Yon.

Recruited by Canada's pro hockey league as a teenager, Steve gave up his lifelong passion for his country's favorite sport to follow in the wake of his three older siblings, who all rowed for U.S. colleges.

*"At a great institution like Washington and with the legacy of Husky Rowing, I could earn a great education while having a real chance to win a national championship," notes Steve, who serves as 2020-21 President of Student-Athlete engagement for the Washington Student-Athlete Advisory Council. "And the support we have from our community and donors is incredible. People really do care about us."*

Steve is double-majoring in education and communications through a program called Education, Communities and Organizations. He says it "teaches you to develop perspectives, go into new environments and conduct yourself with integrity. It's the foundation you need if you want to inspire kids and teach."

The perfect future career for a guy who likes those smiles.





# From the mountains to the water

A LIFELONG COLORADO GIRL TRADES HER SKIS FOR OARS

Music and the mountains shaped **Lark Skov's** young life, creating an instrumentalist and competitive skier who dreamed of following those passions into college. She never imagined shifting her goals from the peaks of Colorado to the waters of Montlake.

At summer music camp before her senior year of high school, Lark realized that the grueling work of studying to be a career musician might "become a chore" and destroy her love for the violin and viola. In addition, an earlier injury had sidelined her from the slopes and eventually dashed her hopes for joining a skiing team in college.

Suddenly, she had no sport and no potential major. What to do? Her skiing coach suggested trying out for a rowing team.

"UW was on my radar even before then," recalls Lark. "My main goal was to go to a big school in a big city because I'd grown up in a small Colorado skiing town and wanted something new. I had no idea UW had one of the best rowing teams in the country."

A friend of her dad's taught her to row on an ergometer, so she felt well prepared going into open tryouts for the Washington Women's Rowing team her freshman year.

"It was a three-week-long tryout — running, erging, strength training and working with the recruited freshmen," Lark says. "I got to be in a boat a few times in tryouts and it was an unreal experience. I was so excited to make the team."

To say she took to the water well is an understatement. Lark's career with the Huskies includes rowing in many championship boats along with earning a bronze medal in the U.S. women's eight at the 2019 World Rowing Under 23 Championships.

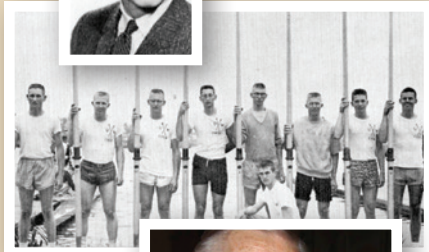
*"I love the team aspect of rowing, the relationship between the individual and the team, and the connection between the people in the boat and the oar in the water," muses Lark, who successfully received more generous scholarships in each of her last three years. "Every day, we're all in awe of what UW and our donors make possible for us."*

After earning a degree in linguistics (the music of language instead of strings), Lark will return for a fifth year of rowing and graduate studies in communications leadership this coming season.





# In Memoriam UW ROWING PAYS TRIBUTE TO OARSMEN WHO HAVE PASSED ON



## Bob Witter

June 15, 1932 – March 17, 2020

A consummate Pacific Northwest outdoorsman, Bob enjoyed swimming, mountain-climbing, hiking and boating with his wife of 65 years, Janet, and their family. Naturally, he was also at home in the boats of Washington.

The Tacoma native graduated from the UW with a degree in forestry in 1955. As a freshman coxswain, Bob and the crew rowed under Coach Stan Pocock and won the National Intercollegiate Rowing Regatta. "The friendships, sportsmanship and drive to win were a guiding light throughout the rest of his life," his obituary stated.

A U.S. Air Force fighter pilot, Bob worked for Weyerhaeuser for 20 years before retiring in 1992. In 1995, Bob and Janet set off in their 44-foot sailboat for the South Seas for two years.

## Paul Meyer

June 26, 1936 – April 19, 2020

Another lifelong Washington outdoorsman and 1950s UW Rower, Paul Meyer, continued to row three times a week throughout his entire life. According to his obituary, Paul maintained that rowing taught him "the importance of discipline, academic excellence, teamwork and trust."

After graduating from Washington with a degree in political science and a master's in public administration, he applied those principles to a career in public service and the private sector as well as an avid Rotarian, volunteer and churchman.

## Edward "Ty" Graham

April 27, 1962 – March 25, 2020

Washington native Ty Graham, a three-year letterman with UW Rowing, was inspired to travel the world by the international competition he enjoyed as a Washington oarsman.

A triathlete and hunter, Ty graduated from Washington in 1984, earned an MBA from Seattle University and started his career at Boeing. In his later roles as an executive with cellular companies, he managed mobile communications business development in more than 15 countries.

## Annual accolades recognize dedicated seniors

### TEAM CAPTAINS

While the COVID-19 pandemic prevented us from holding our annual Class Day celebration, UW Rowing virtually rewarded its standout crew members this past spring.



Marley Avritt



George Esau

### PIGOTT MOST INSPIRATIONAL AWARD



Chase Deitner



Lark Skov

### SCHALLER SCHOLARSHIP AWARD



Chase Deitner  
(3.81 GPA,  
electrical  
engineering)



Ava Trogus  
(3.90 GPA,  
computer  
science)



# The foundation of a winning life

## UW ROWING SPURS SUCCESS FOR LOCAL TECH ENTREPRENEUR

In his early 20s as a Silicon Valley innovator to his role today as CEO of SORSE Technology, Seattle native **Howard Lee** has relied on his experiences as a UW rower to help build a successful life. He shares what he learned and why he gives back to the program that helped shape him.



### What led you to the UW and Husky Rowing?

During a work assignment in the California High Sierras, between my senior year in high school and starting college, I met two Husky crew members who piqued my interest. I'm 5'8" and an unlikely candidate to row, but there were lightweights back then and I made the team.

### What did you enjoy most about rowing?

Being on the water, the spirit of going fast, the daily competition between teammates. There's no he/she in the boat; it's all us. When there's swing in the boat, eight bodies moving as one, there's nothing like it. It really is a team endeavor.

### What did you learn as a rower and how did it contribute to your post-UW life?

I learned discipline, the spirit of teamwork and the self-sacrifice to give up other 'things' for a later prize. I also learned how important it was to be 'in the game' for every practice. You can't slack off. There are so few races in a season for such sacrifice that it teaches you the lifelong lesson of winning, working long and hard toward something and then risking it in a prescribed moment. Even if you lose, the effort of doing your best is worth it.

As in rowing, the best business-people know how to grind it out and make progress every day.

Then, when the moment arrives, you know you've prepared your best to 'close' it. Sometimes you lose, but at Washington, you learn what it takes to be part of a winning culture.

### We all have many choices for where we choose to direct our philanthropy. Why do you give back to UW Rowing?

I like to see people become successful. I want to produce more winners. I support the program because I want to give young people the opportunity to prove themselves and learn from a winning environment. I would have never been as successful as I am today without the opportunities that other Rowing Stewards helped create.



## WASHINGTON ROWING STEWARDS

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